A CORRELATION STUDY BETWEEN STUDENTS MASTERY

OF PAST TENSE AND THEIR ABILITY IN EXPRESSING

PAST ACTIVITIES IN WRITING

**(A Case of Eleventh Grade of SMA 1 Kudus in the Academic Year
2006/ 2007)**

A Final Project

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Trust Yourself You Know More than You Think You Do
(Benjamin Spock)

Sometimes, Fate is What You Make It

It may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may

happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. ALLAH knoweth, ye

know not (Al-Baqarah: 216)

DEDICATION

The final project is dedicated to:

- ➢ **My beloved father and mother who always give me everlasting warm love.**

- ➢ **My two brothers and my one sister for the support and inspiration.**

- ➢ **All my big family members for the smile and spirit.**

- ➢ **My special friends in dershane for the true knowledge and friendship.**

- ➢ **Love and faith which wisely share and teach me how to life.**

- ➢ **My all friends indeed for the honesty and kindness you pour in. You are the best.**

ABSTRACT

The final project is about a correlation study between students' mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing their past activities in writing, a case study of eleventh grade students of SMA I Kudus in the academic year of 2006/2007.

The objectives of the study are to find out the students mastery of past tense and the students abilities in expressing past activities in writing, and also to find out whether or not there is a correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their abilities in expressing past activities in writing.

This study is a case study and the population of this study is the eleventh grade students of SMA I Kudus in the academic year of 2006/2007. The sampling process was administered by applying a purposive sampling technique. There were 400 students of the eleventh grade and I took 40 students as the sample.

I administered two kinds of tests, namely Grammar Test and Writing Test. Both of the tests were in written form. In Grammar Test, I used Multiple Choice test, while in writing test, I emphasized students to retell their past activities into a good writing construction. The instrument used for measuring the achievement was a test. Before the instrument was used, it had been tried out first. The main purpose of conducting it was to find out the validity, reliability, discrimination items and level of difficulties of the item of past tense in a multiple choice test. I then selected the items before they were used as the instrument of this research.

The result of this research showed that there is a significant correlation between the students' mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing past activities in writing. This result is obtained from the computation of the correlation between the students' mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing past activities in writing applied to the sample is 0.8107. The critical value of the Pearson r with the 5 % significant level is 0.312. It means that the result obtained from the computation is greater than its critical value. Therefore, I conclude that the correlation between the two variables above is significant.

In line with the result of the research, I suggest that to improve the students' ability in expressing past activities in writing, students should improve their mastery of past tense, because the mastery of past tense can support their ability in expressing past activities in writing. It is essential to the teacher to know that one of the factors affect the students ability in expressing past activities especially in writing is the students' mastery of past tense.

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Finally, I realize that my study is still far from being perfect. There are still so many expectations can be done to make it better. I have a great belief that my study will be beneficial and useful for anyone who is concerned in this final project.

Semarang, 27 June 2007

The writer

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is one of the international languages used by many people in the world. Most of source of information including book, science, and technology are written in English. Brumfit (1981: 1) states that English is an international language and the most widespread medium of communication, both because of the number and geographical areas of its speakers and the large number of non native speakers who use it for part of their international contact. Thus it is not surprisingly that English role is getting more and more important in our life.

Human beings start to learn language since they were born. Indonesian people acquire first language based on their mother tongue such as Javanese, and Bataknese. These first languages are used in their daily communication. A couple of years later they begin to learn Indonesian as their second language. In Indonesia, English is not only taught in SMP and SMA but also taught in the elementary school. In this case, English is studied as a foreign language. Thus it is clear that English is the first foreign language taught in Indonesia. Students are expected to use English and practice it in their daily life effectively after the class of English lesson over.

In order to be fluent English learners, the students have to master the four of English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in the language learning processes. All these language skills are related to each other. In this

relation, Alexander (1967: vii-viii) says that in order to be a skilled performer, the students must become proficient in using the units of a language. It means, they have to study about vocabulary, sound system and grammar.

The students must be trained adequately in all the four basic skills to make them easily practice and use the language. Although the learners have mastered the rules, they have not learned the correct distribution of rules yet. In fact, some students in Indonesia get some difficulties in learning English. They find many differences in grammar, sound system and culture concepts found in English but not in Indonesia. These differences can cause learning problems.

In my opinion's most students in Indonesia have problems in mastering grammar which can be considered complicated. Grammar is essentials as the rules of wording to make meaningful utterances. In the skill of writing for instance, at least students have to master not only vocabulary but also grammar well. In this case, verb tenses have essentials role, because they tell readers when actions are taking place. Careful and accurate use of tenses is important to clear writing. For instance, if the verbs in a passage refer to actions occurring at past actions, then the past tense is definitely needed to be used.

In line with the background of this study, I am interested in knowing how well students master grammar especially in past tense and how well they use it to express their past activities in the form of writing. In this case, I want to know how well are the eleventh grade students of SMA 1 KUDUS mastering grammar in the form of past tense and their ability in expressing past activities in writing. I limit the study by focusing on grammar at the level of past tense and writing past

activities only. Along with this, I want to know whether or not there is a correlation in students mastery of past tense and their abilities in expressing past activities in writing. So in conducting this study, I use a correlation study.

1.2 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

A number of considerations are proposed to the importance of conducting this research. They are as follows:

1. Most of students still get difficulty in using past tense even they have been learning it since junior high school. They can not use it properly when they make a writing text, especially in expressing their past experience. The past tense they use is still poor.

2. Writing is one of the English skills which is difficult to be mastered. Students need to have an extra exercise to have a good writing. By constructing a text expresses their own past experience; hopefully it becomes very helpful for students to have a good skill in writing.

3. There are not so many studies which concern deeply about analyzing a correlation between students mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing their past activities in writing.

1.3 Statements of the Problem

The study is conducted to address the following problems:

1. To what extent do the eleventh grade students of SMA 1 Kudus in academic year 2006/2007 master past tense?

2. To what extent do the eleventh grade students of SMA 1 Kudus in academic year 2006/2007 master at using past tense to express past activities in writing?

3. Is there any correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their abilities in expressing past activities in writing?

1.4 Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study can be stated as follows:

1. To find out the students mastery of past tense,

2. To find out the students abilities in expressing past activities in writing, and

3. To find out whether or not there is a correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their abilities in expressing past activities in writing.

1.5 Statement of the Hypothesis

Based on the problems above, the working hypothesis of the study can be stated as follows;

There is a positive correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their abilities in expressing past activities in writing of the eleventh grade of SMA 1 Kudus in the academic year 2006/2007.

However, since the way of testing is conducted by using statistics, the statement above is changed into Null Hypothesis as follows:

There is no positive correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their abilities in expressing past activities in writing.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1. The study will be useful for the students as the aims of this research. The aim is to improve their skills in past tense and writing their past activities in writing. I expect students will recognize and realize that mastering grammar, especially verb tense, is useful to have a good skill in writing.

2. By conducting this research, I hope that the result will reveal the following topics:

   a. The past tense's mastery of the eleventh grade of SMA 1 Kudus in academic year 2006/2007.

   b. The abilities of the eleventh grade of SMA 1 Kudus in academic year 2006/2007 in using past tense to express past activities in writing.

   c. Whether or not there is correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their abilities in expressing past activities in writing.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study is limited to the eleventh grade of SMA 1 Kudus in academic year 2006/2007 in using past tense to express their past activities in writing.

1.8 Outline of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. Each chapter explains different matters in line with the topic which is discussed.

Chapter I is introduction. It consists of the background of the study, the reasons of choosing the topic, the statements of the hypothesis, the objectives of the study, the significances of the study, the scope of the study and the outline of the study.

Chapter II deals with the review of related literature. It consists of the analysis of grammar, the importance of learning grammar, the English tense, the analysis of the past tense, the form of past tense, the use and function of past tense, the analysis of writing, the analysis of good writing, speech and writing.

Chapter III presents method of investigation which consists of the object of the study and the research design.

Chapter IV is the data analysis. It is the analysis to answer the statements of problem.

The last Chapter, Chapter V, consists of the conclusion and the suggestions of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Definition of Grammar

Grammar is the system of language. People sometimes describe grammar as the "rules" of a language. Actually the word grammar has several meanings and descriptions attempted by linguists. Different experts define the term grammar differently. Jeremy Harmer (2001: 12) defines the term grammar as the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language. Whereas Cook and Sutter (1980: 1) assume that grammar is a set of rules by which people speak and write.

In accordance with paragraph above, it is clear that grammar is absolutely necessary needed in using language both in spoken and written form. Hornby (1989: 517) defines grammar as the rules in a language for changing the form of words and combining them into sentences. In short, grammar is something that people can use to find their way in getting along with others in using language.

2.2 Importance of Learning Grammar

Many people in the world speak their own language without having study its grammar system. They speak natively and naturally without learning the rules. Children start to speak their native language before they even know the word grammar. But, if we want to study a second or foreign language the process will be different.

As one of the language components, grammar plays an essential role in the process of learning a second or foreign language. The importance of grammar as stated by Nasr (1978:52) that grammar is a part of any language. Grammar and language cannot be separated. Consequently, if language has no grammar, it will never be spoken, because people will be able to either use and learn a language if the language has its pattern as the grammatical rules. Grammar can help us to learn a language more quickly and efficiently. This is reasonable since studying grammar as something that tells us how to speak and write correctly. When a second language learner understands the grammar as a system of language, he will know how the language works. As a result, he will make sentences or statements grammatically correct and meaningful to other people.

2.3 English Tenses

We consider that tense is a system which we use to refer to time; past, present, and future. Many languages use tense to talk about time. In English, we use tense as a method that we use to indicate time. Other languages may have no tenses, but of course they can still talk about time using different methods. Hornby (1989: 1324) assumes that tense is any of the forms of a verb that may be used to indicate the time of the action or state express by the verb. In line with Hornby that says tense is verb form that shows time, Frank (1972:47) states that tense is special verb endings or accompanying auxiliary verb signaling the time an event takes place. From the statements above, basically they have some opinions about tense.

The description of verb form differs according to the way term tense is interpreted. The most common interpretation of tense is semantic interpretation and the other is based on the verb form itself. On the basis of semantic interpretation, most grammarians present three tense systems; present, past, and future. Each of them expresses time in relation to a particular point in the present, past and future respectively. These different tenses are signaled by verb ending or by their auxiliary verb.

The second basis of the tense is on the basis of verb alone. There are only two tenses; present and past tense. Each of them is marked by different forms in the lexical verb itself or in the auxiliary used with verb.

2.4 Definition of Past Tense

The past tense indicates definite events happened in the past. There are many definitions of past tense. According to Frank (1972:73) the past tense indicates definite time terminating in the past, whether a time word is given or not. While Cook and Suter (1980: 51) write that past tense are actions or states that usually occurred or completed in the past.

The term past tense then can be concluded as an activity or situation began, happened, and ended in the past, whether the time signals were mentioned or not. Most grammarians agree to divide the past tense into four forms; simple past, past continuous, past perfect, and past perfect continuous.

2.5 Form of Past Tense

2.5.1 Form of Simple Past Tense

The simple past tense is the most common tense in English. The simple past tense is formed by using the simple past form of the verb. Firstly, for the regular verb, the past form is made by adding –ED to the verb (Azar, 1941:18). The examples are (walked, smiled, worked, danced…). The following is the other pattern to add –ED which change the ending a little.

VERB ENDING IN	HOW TO MAKE THE SIMPLE PAST	EXAMPLES
E	Add –D	Live- lived Date- dated
Consonant + Y	Change Y to I then add -ED	Try- tried Cry- cried
One vowel + one consonant (not W or Y)	Double the consonant, then add –ED	Tap- tapped Commit- committed
Anything else	Add -ED	Boil- boiled Fill- filled

Cited from web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/ek/studyzone/330/grammar/pasted.htm

Although many verbs in English form their past tense with –ED, some do not. We call this second form as irregular verbs. They have some patterns. The only way to know how an irregular verb will change in the past tense is to learn all of the important verbs. The following is a list of three main categories of irregular verbs.

CATEGORY	EXAMPLES
Verb which do not change	Cut- cut- cut

Hit- hit- hit |
| Verbs which change their vowel | Get- got- got

Sit- sat- sat |
| Verbs which change completely | Catch- caught- caught

Bring- brought- brought |

Cited from web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/ek/studyzone/330/grammar/irpast.htm

The three most important irregular verbs are BE, HAVE and DO. BE is ordered to be most difficult one, because its form are different depending on the subject.

PRONOUN/ S	BE
I	Was
You	Were
He, She and It	Was
We	Were
They	Were

HAVE and DO are simpler.

BASE FORM	PAST TENSE
Have	Had
Do	Did

Cited from www.englishpage.com/verbpage/simplepast.html

The form of past tense can be affirmative, negative and interrogative.

Affirmative   : Ryan <u>went</u> to the cinema last night.

Negative   : Ryan <u>did not go</u> to the cinema last night.

Interrogative   : <u>Did</u> Ryan <u>go</u> to the cinema last night?

2.5.2   Form of Past Continuous Tense

The past continuous tense is commonly used in English for actions, which were going on (had not finished yet) at a particular time in the past. We use it to say what we were in the middle of doing at a particular moment in the past.

This tense was formed using two components. The verb BE (in the past tense) and the –ING form of a verb. Here are the rules using the example of Sing.

SUBJECT	BE	-ING ORM
I	Was	singing
You	Were	singing
He, She and It	Was	Singing
We	Were	Singing
They	Were	singing

.

Affirmative   : I <u>was singing</u> a love song.

Negative   : I was <u>not</u> singing a love song.

Interrogative   : <u>Was</u> I singing a love song?

2.5.3 Form of Past Perfect.

The past perfect tense is quite an easy tense to be understood and used. This tense tells about the "past in the past". The past perfect tense in English is composed of two parts had + the past participle of the main verb.

SUBJECT	HAD	PAST PARTICIPLE
We	had	decided

Affirmative   : She <u>had</u> studied.

Negative   : She had <u>not</u> studied.

Interrogative   : <u>Had</u> she studied?

2.5.4 Form Past Perfect Continuous.

The past perfect continuous tense is composed of two elements; the past perfect of the verb (had been) + the present participle (Verb+ Ing).

SUBJECT	HAD BEEN	VERB –ING
They	Had been	graduating

For negative sentences, we insert <u>not</u> after the first auxiliary verb. For question sentences, we exchange the subject and the first auxiliary verb. Look at these example sentences with the past perfect continuous tense.

Affirmative   : You <u>had</u> been watching a Cartoon Movie.

Negative   : You had <u>not</u> been watching a Cartoon Movie.

Interrogative   : <u>Had</u> you been watching a Cartoon Movie?

2.6 Use and Function of Past Tense

2.6.1   Simple Past Use and Function.

1. The simple past is used to talk about a completed action in the past (Frank, 1972:73).

Duration is not important. The time of the action can be in the recent past or distant past. For example,

   a. My father died last year.

   b. I visited my friends last week.

   We always use the simple past tense when we say something happened in the past. So it is associated with certain past time expressions.

   a. Frequency

      (Often, sometimes, always)

   b. A definite time in the past

      (Last week, when I was child, yesterday, six weeks ago)

   c. An indefinite time in the past

      (The other day, a couple years ago, a long time ago)

2. A series of completed action (Frank, 1972:73).

We use the simple past to list a series of completed actions in the past. These actions happen in 1st, 2nd, 3rd,

       Example   -   She finished work, walked to the beach, and found a nice

            place to swim.

3.   Single duration (Frank, 1972:73).

Past   Present   Future

The simple past can be used with a duration which starts and stops in the past. Duration is a language action often used with expressions, like "for two years, and all day"

       -    Shawn studied Japanese for five years.

4.   Habit in the past

XXXXX

Past   Present   Future

The simple past can also be used to describe a habit which stopped in the past. It can have the same meaning as "used to". To make it clear that we are talking about a habit, we often used expression, such as "always", "when I was child …"

       E.g.   - I studied French when I was child.

2.6.2   Past Continuous Use and Function.

1.   The past continuous describes actions or events in a time before now, which began in the past and was still going on at the time of speaking. In other words, it expresses an unfinished or incomplete action in the past (Frank, 1972:73).

.

2.   Interrupted action in the past (Frank, 1972:73).

We use the past continuous to indicate that a longer action in the past was interrupted. The interruption is usually an action in the simple past which can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.

>   E.g.   - I was watching TV when my mother called me.

3.   Specific time as an interruption.

The Past Continuous is interrupted by an action in the Simple Past. However, we can also us a specific time as interruption.

>   E.g.   - Last night at 6 p.m, I was eating dinner.

4.   Parallel

When we use the past continuous tense with two actions in the same sentence, it expresses the idea that both actions were happening at the same time. The actions are parallel.

>   E.g.   - I was studying while he was making dinner.

2.6.3   Past Perfect Use and Function

1. Completed Action Before Something in Past

Past   Present   Future

The Past Perfect expresses the idea that something occurred before another action

in the past. It can also show that something happened before a specific time in the

past.

      E.g.   - I <u>had</u> never <u>seen</u> such a beautiful beach before I went to Kutai.

2. Duration before something in the past (Non- Continuous verbs).

Past   Present   Future

With Non- progressive and some non progressive uses of mixed verbs, we use the

past perfect to show that something started in the past and continued up until

another action in the past.

      E.g.   - We had had that car for ten years before it broke down.

3. Specific time in the past perfect.

Past   Present   Future

In past perfect, it is possible to use specific time words or phrases with the past

perfect. Although this is possible, it is usually not necessary.

      E.g.   - She had visited her Japanese relatives once in 1993 before she

                moved with them in 1996.

2.6.4   Past Perfect Continuous Use and Function

1. Duration before something in the past.

Past   Present   Future

We use the past perfect continuous to show that something started in the past and continued up until another time in the past. "For two weeks" and "for five minutes" are both durations which can be used with the past perfect continuous. Again, we are more interested in the "process".

> E.g.   - They had been waiting there for two hours before Tony finally arrived.

2. Cause of something in the past.

Using the past perfect continuous before another action in the past is good way to show cause and effect.

> E.g.   - Jason was tired because he had been working all day.

2.7 Definition of Writing

People consider that writing skill is the most difficult skill to develop. In the process of studying and acquiring new languages writing process is more complex than other skills. Writing has been a central topic in applied linguistics for many years and remains an area of lively intellectual research or debate. Many forms of enquiry have been summoned to clarify both how writing best works and how it should be best taught. Its complex structures seem constantly need adequate description and explanation. According to Hyland (2002:5) there are three main

approaches to researching and teaching writing, focusing in turning on theories principally concerned with texts, writers and readers.

1. The first approach focuses on the products of writing by examining texts in various ways, either through their formal surface elements or their discourse structure.

2. The second approach, loosely divided into expressivity, cognitive and situated strands, focuses on the writer and describes writing in terms of the process used to create texts.

3. The third approach emphasis the role that readers pay in writing, adding a social dimension to writing research by elaborating how writers engage with an audience in creating coherent texts.

People realize that writing can not stand alone without any other supported skills, for instance, writing has relations with reading. All writers rely on their skills as readers, because all writers must be readers. You can not write without acknowledge your experience through reading. Through reading you can understand how the language work to communicate ideas, through reading you can evaluate how vocabulary constructs together as a certain rules of grammar or how the use of spelling , grammar, punctuation, word choices, and other elements construct as a good written text. Reading helps you to be a good writer.

Good writing skills are essential for effective communication. Learning to write well of course takes time and practice. There are at least five stages in constructing a good written text (Boardman and Frydenberg, 2002: 27-28):

1. establishing topics

2. organizing ideas

3. writing first draft

4. revising first draft

5. proofreading the final draft

Each step has its own purposes, for example is revising. In revising, you can evaluate and change words you think inappropriate yet. You still have an opportunity to open your mind to get the other better ideas.

2.8 Definition of Good Writing

In accordance with http://writingcenter.emory.edu good writing expresses a clear point, is tightly structured, grammatically and syntactically correct, substantive, and interesting. Each of the classifications is obviously explained in these ways; to express a clear point means to convey the writer's main idea or--in the case of descriptive writing--the significance of the object, place or person described; in other words, an attentive reader should be able to grasp the writer's purpose. To be tightly structured*,* writing should contain logical or associative connections and transitions which clearly express the relationship of the ideas described. To be grammatically and syntactically correct, writing should stick to the rules of Standard American English, including proper punctuation and spelling. If writers choose to use unconventional syntax, they should be able to justify their choices. To be substantive, writing should convey the impression that the writer is informed about the subject. The writer need not be an authority on the subject but

should demonstrate awareness of its significance and its implications within a specified context. Informed writing might include any or all of the following: citations of authorities, experiential evidence, and discussion of debatable issues related to it, and relevant questions it raises. To be interesting, writing should engage its readers through original insights and precise, uncliched language expressed in a "human" voice. It should demonstrate the writer's awareness of the specific audience for whom she or he is writing (the audience's degree of knowledge of the subject as well as its age, ethnic background, gender, and assumptions).

2.9 Speech and Writing

People always face two kinds of communication in their daily lives, speech and writing communication. When people communicate orally they use speech as the media to send the messages and if they use written texts, letter for example then they use writing as the media. Both of them are common used in the social live to establish communicative society.

Writing is special since many structural features involved and indeed have major impacts on the process of writing. Grammmmatical feature is the one of the parts in writing skills affect the sense of writing become either better or bad. Spotting grammatical case and mechanical problems is only a minor concern in writing.

Writing in some cases has differences with speech.

Speech	Writing
a) more hesitations, interruptions and self-corrections	a) more subordination and passives
b) no spelling and punctuation conventions	b) longer sentences
c) relies on gestures and paralanguage	c) more explicit coding of logical relations
d) concrete, informal and context-dependent	d) less modal codification
e) characterized by turn-taking	e) structurally elaborate, complex, abstract and formal
	f) characterized by monologue

Cited from Hyland (2002: 50)

Since your words can be changed and revised later, you do not need to worry in making mistake in your first draft. That is one of the other specialties in writing. In the other words, if you write inappropriate; however you can still has an opportunity to change it. In speaking, you only have a one chance, whatever you have said whether appropriate or not, you have said that. In writing you have second, third, fourth chance to revise. It also helps you to know the better constructions.

Richards (1990: 101) states that the goal of language is convey information accurately, effectively and appropriately. And to do this, written language has to be more explicit than spoken language. Written language needs to

be explicit because the reader do not have any contact and may not know the writer. Consequently, the written text has to clear understand. The amount of shared knowledge in written text is much less than that usually find between speaker- listeners. All of these then increase the difficulty in writing.

In general, the rules of speech and written language are different. Speech is acquired through conversation and does not require complicated skill instruction. In fact, the rules of writing are largely need to be learned.

2.10 Writing Skill in 2006 English Curriculum

Based on the 2006 English Curriculum (Depdiknas: 24), the standard of competence of English for Senior High School is spoken and written by using kinds of language which suitable fluently and accurately using common utterances in the daily life. Whereas in writing, the standard of competence is: to express various meanings fluently and accurately (interpersonal, ideational and textual) in various writing texts, to read interaction and monologue particularly in forms of description, narrative, spoof, recount, reports, news item, anecdote, analytical exposition, explanation, discussion, commentary, and reviews. These various writing texts are called genres. The objective of the writing skill in this curriculum is: students can express their daily life activities into a writing text. The indicator that shows students achieve the goal of the skill is they can produce a simple text in the notion of daily life context.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

3.1 Object of the Study

3.1.1 Population

The first step in selecting sample is to determine the population. A population is the entire group of individuals that the researcher wishes to study. Irianto (1989:18) says that a population consists of every number of group that researcher would like to study. The objects in a population are investigated, analyzed, concluded in such away and then the conclusion made is valid to the whole population. In this study the population is the eleventh class of SMA 1 Kudus in Academic year 2006/2007.

3.1.2 Sample

A sample is a portion of a population that is selected for observation (Irianto, 1989:18). Representativeness of a sample determines the validity of the generalization of the result. This sample must have the characteristics that represent the whole population. A research according to Arikunto (1996; 120) may take 10-15% or 20-25% or more out of population. In this study, there were ten classes of the eleventh class of SMA 1 Kudus. Each class consists of 40 students. All students of eleventh class were 400. I took 10% of 400 students. It meant that I had to take one class because purposive sampling technique was used.

3.1.3 The Method of Data Collection

Although I thought the random sampling technique was the best way to take the sample, at last I used the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique is a judgment sampling in which sample element judged to be 'typical' or representative or chosen from the population (Ary, 1985:145). This technique was chosen because it was hard for me to enter each class, took some students and gathered them as samples in random. I worried to disturb the teaching learning process. Another problem was related to the place. If I used random sampling, he had to find a certain place/class for the respondents to do the test, and I considered that there were small possibilities to get such facility. So finally, I decided to use the purposive sampling technique.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Instrument

According to Arikunto (2002: 136), research instrument is a device used by the researcher while collecting data to make his work become easier and get a better result, complete and systematic in order to make the data easy to be processed. In this research I used a test method as the instrument. Test is a set of questions or other practices or devices used to measure the skill, intelligence, ability and talent of an individual or a group. The type of test used here was achievement test. Achievement tests attempt to measure what individual has learned – his or her present level of performance (Best, 1981: 193). To get the empirical data of the students mastery of past tense and their abilities in using past tense to express past

activities in writing, I administered two kinds of tests, namely Grammar Test and Writing Test. Both of the tests were in written form. In Grammar Test, I used Multiple Choice test. The reason for using multiple choice tests were; the technique of scoring was easy and it was more practical for the students to answer. The multiple choices item consists of premise and a set of alternative answers. Premise known as the stem is presented as incomplete statement, which the students asked to select only one true answer. I gave 50 questions and 60 minutes for students to do. While in writing test, I emphasized students to retell their past activities into a good writing construction. The tense that is requested to be used is past tense which makes up some sequences events about to retell or inform the reader what happen. The example of writing are diary, letter for friends in retelling holidays activities and etc. I asked students to make up 15 sentences in 45 minutes.

In finding out the correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their abilities in expressing past activities in writing, I applied the product-moment correlation. The formula is:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N\sum xy - \left(\sum x\right)\left(\sum y\right)}{\sqrt{\left\{N\sum x^2 - \left(\sum x\right)^2\right\}\left\{N\sum y^2 - \left(\sum y\right)^2\right\}}}$$

Where,

r_{xy} = Correlation coefficient

N   = the number of students/subjects participating in the test.

$\sum x$ = the sum of score in grammar test

Σx^2 = the sum of the square score in grammar test

Σy = the sum of score in writing test

Σy^2 = the sum of square total score in writing test

Σxy = the sum of multiple of score from grammar test and writing test in each number.

Frequently, textbook authors present a criterion for the evaluation of a coefficient (Best, 1981: 255).

Coefficient	Relationship
0,00 to 0,20	Negligible
0,20 to 0,40	Low
0,40 to 0,60	Moderate
0,60 to 0,80	Substantial
0,80 to 1,00	High to very high

3.2.2 Try-Out

The quality of the data, whether it is good or bad, is based on the instrument to collect the data. A good instrument must fulfill two important qualifications. Those are valid and reliable. So, before the test was used as an instrument to collect the data, it had been tried out first to the students in other class. Students were given 60 minutes in doing each test. After scoring the result of the try out, I made an analysis to find out the validity and reliability of the item of the try out. All of them were used to decide which items should be used in making instrument.

The Specification Table of Past Tense Test used in Try Out

No	Past tense type	Item Format
1.	• Simple Past Tense Regular verbs	• 14 items
2.	• Simple Past Tense Irregular	• 11 items
3.	• Past Continuous	• 10 items
4.	• Past Perfect	• 10 items
5.	• Past Perfect Continuous	• 5 items
		50 items

The distribution questions of items were arranged as listed below:

1. Simple Past tense Regular   : 8, 12, 16, 21, 26, 31, 36, 38, 40, 41, 44, 45, 48,

      and 49.

2. Simple Past Tense Irregular   : 1, 2, 5, 7, 30, 32, 35, 37, 39, 42 and 50.

3. Past continuous   : 3, 11, 13, 15, 18, 19, 22, 27, 33, and 47.

4. Past Perfect   : 4, 10, 14, 20, 23, 25, 29, 34, 43 and 46.

5. Past Perfect Continuous   : 6, 9, 17, 24 and 28.

3.2.3 Validity of Instrument

Validity is a standard or criterion that shows whether the instrument is valid or not. A test is valid to the extent that it measures what it claims to measure (Ary, 1985: 143). To calculate the validity of each item I used the product moment formula:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N\sum xy - \left(\sum x\right)\left(\sum y\right)}{\sqrt{\left\{N\sum x^2 - \left(\sum x\right)^2\right\}\left\{N\sum y^2 - \left(\sum y\right)^2\right\}}}$$

Where,

r_{xy} = coefficient of correlation between x and y variable or validity of each item.

N = the number of students/subject participating in the test.

$\sum x$ = the sum of score in each item

$\sum x^2$ = the sum of the square score in each item

$\sum y$ = the sum of total score from each student

$\sum y^2$ = the sum of square total score from each students

$\sum xy$ = the sum of multiple of score from each student with the total score in each item.

3.2.4   Reliability of Instrument

Reliability shows whether the instrument is reliable and can be used as a device to collect the data. Reliability means the stability of test scores when the test is used. Best (1981: 199) says that a test is reliable to the extent that is measures consistently, from one time to another. To measure the reliability of the test, I used the K – R. 20. The formula is:

$$r_{11} = \left(\frac{n}{n-1}\right)\left(\frac{S - \sum pq}{S}\right)$$

r_{11} = the reliability

n   = the number of items in the test

p   = porpotion of the subject answering the item correctly

q   =.porpotion of the subject answering the item incorrectly

s^2 = Standard deviation of the test

3.2.5 Difficulty Level

After conducting and getting the result of the try out, then I classified and selected

the items by using this formula:

$$P = \frac{B}{JS}$$

where,

P   = item difficulty

B   = number of students who answered the item correctly

JS   = number of students

The criteria used here are:

Interval	Criteria
$P \leq 0.00$	Too Difficult
$0.00 < P \leq 0.30$	Difficult
$0.30 < P \leq 0.70$	Medium
$0.70 < P \leq 1.00$	Easy
$1.00 < P$	Too Easy

3.2.6 Discriminating Power

The discriminating power measures how well the test items arranged to identify the differences in the students' competence.

The formula is:

$$D = \frac{BA}{JA} - \frac{BB}{JB}$$

where,

D = discriminating power

BA = number of students in the upper group who answered the item correctly

BB = number of students in the lower group who answered the item correctly

JA = number of all students in the upper group

JB = number of all students in the lower group

The criteria are:

Interval	Criteria
$D \leq 0.00$	Too Poor
$0.00 < D \leq 0.20$	Poor
$0.20 < D \leq 0.40$	Medium
$0.40 < D \leq 0.07$	satisfactory
$0.07 < D \leq 1.00$	Excellent

3.2.7   Scoring System

In grammar test, scoring were arranged in such way: 1 for correct answer and 0 for wrong answer. There were 50 questions and if the answers were all corrects the maximal score were 50. To reach 100, the maximal score was multiplied by 2.

While in writing test was a litlle more complicated, where so many methods were suggested like TWE methods, holistic scoring, primary trait scoring and analytic scoring (Brown, 2004: 241-243). I decided to use analytical scoring which considered best evaluation of learning six major elements in writing. Brown and Bailey (1984: 39- 41) design an analytical scoring scaled that specified five major categories and a descriptions of five different levels in each category. Since the major study of this study is grammar, then the scoring was in line with grammar level suggested by Brown and Bailey. The scoring system are:

20 – 18	17 – 15	14 – 12	11 – 6	5 – 1
Excellent to Good	Good to Adequate	Adequate to Fair	Unacceptable	Not College – level work
Native- like fluency in English Grammar	Advanced proficiency in English Grammar	Ideas are getting through to the reader	Numerous serious Grammar problems	Severe Grammar problems

In classifying the score, I used the measurement of student's achievement suggested by Harris (1969: 134).

Student's achievement	
Test Score	Class Performance
91 - 100	Excellent
81 - 90	Very good
71 – 80	Good
61 – 70	Fair
51 - 60	Poor
Less than 50	Very poor

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION AND RESULT

4.1 Discussion

The purpose of the data analysis in this research is meant to measure the significant correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing past activities in writing of the eleventh grade students of SMA 1 Kudus in the academic year 2006/2007. To measure those things, it is important to take the preparatory of measurement as follows:

Table of the score of the test to measure the students' mastery in past tense (X)

Students number	Score Answer
1	82
2	56
3	60
4	44
5	70
6	36
7	90
8	44
9	82
10	82
11	54
12	76
13	90
14	80
15	76
16	42
17	90
18	80
19	76
20	56

21	86
22	60
23	56
24	46
25	56
26	60
27	90
28	46
29	82
30	62
31	76
32	70
33	46
34	60
35	56
36	52
37	80
38	42
39	94
40	60
Average	66.15

Table of the score of the students' ability in expressing past activities in writing

(Y)

Students number	Score Answer
1	95
2	40
3	75
4	60
5	75
6	57
7	89
8	68
9	90
10	85
11	64
12	90
13	93

14	85
15	75
16	47
17	87
18	80
19	74
20	78
21	85
22	70
23	60
24	75
25	63
26	66
27	78
28	65
29	77
30	60
31	70
32	81
33	55
34	72
35	64
36	55
37	75
38	49
39	87
40	65
Average	71.075

The Square and multiplied of X and Y

Students Number	X	Y	X^2	Y^2	XY
1	82	95	6724	9025	7790
2	56	40	3136	1600	2240
3	60	75	3600	5625	4500
4	44	60	1936	3600	2640
5	70	75	4900	5625	5250
6	36	57	1296	3249	2052
7	90	89	8100	7921	8010
8	44	68	1936	4624	2992

9	82	90	6724	8100	7380
10	82	85	6724	7225	6970
11	54	64	2916	4096	3456
12	76	90	5776	8100	6840
13	90	93	8100	8649	8370
14	80	85	6400	7225	6800
15	76	75	5776	5625	5700
16	42	47	1764	2209	1974
17	90	87	8100	7569	7830
18	80	80	6400	6400	6400
19	76	74	5776	5476	5624
20	56	78	3136	6084	4368
21	86	85	7396	7225	7310
22	60	70	3600	4900	4200
23	56	60	3136	3600	3360
24	46	74	2116	5625	3450
25	56	63	3136	3969	3528
26	60	66	3600	4356	3960
27	90	78	8100	6084	7020
28	46	65	2116	4225	2990
29	82	77	6724	5929	6314
30	62	60	3844	3600	3720
31	76	70	5776	4900	5320
32	70	81	4900	6561	5670
33	46	55	2116	3025	2530
34	60	72	3600	5184	4320
35	56	64	3136	4096	3584
36	52	55	2704	3025	2860
37	80	75	6400	5625	6000
38	42	49	1764	2401	2058
39	94	87	8836	7569	8178
40	60	65	3600	4225	3900
Σ	2646	2879	185820	214151	197458

To interpret the research findings, I use the Pearson Product Moment Correlation

Formula to compute the data that have been obtained as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N\sum xy - \left(\sum x\right)\left(\sum y\right)}{\sqrt{\left\{N\sum x^2 - \left(\sum x\right)^2\right\}\left\{N\sum y^2 - \left(\sum y\right)^2\right\}}}$$

$$r_{xy} = \frac{40(197458) - (2646)(2879)}{\sqrt{\left\{40(185820) - (2646)^2\right\}\left\{40(214151) - (2879)^2\right\}}}$$

$$r_{xy} = \frac{7898320 - 7617834}{\sqrt{\left\{7432800 - 7001316\right\}\left\{8566040 - 8288641\right\}}}$$

$$r_{xy} = \frac{280486}{345967.093}$$

$$r_{xy} = 0.8107$$

From the computation above, it was obtained that r_{xy} is 0.8107 and then r_{xy} is consulted to the critical value for r table of Product Moment to examine whether r_{xy} value is significant or not. The value of r table with N = 40 and the 5 % significant level is 0.312. Therefore, it can be concluded that r_{xy} is greater than r table in the other words, 0.8107 is greater than 0.312.

Relating to that matter, I take a conclusion that there is a correlation between the students' mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing past activities in writing.

Did every student with good score in the test of mastery in past tense also have good score in expressing past activities in writing? From the analysis above, it could be seen that among the sample of 40 students, there were 1 student got excellent, 9 students got very good, 7 students got good, 3 students got fair, 12 students poor, and 8 students got very poor in the test of mastering past tense. Among the sample of 40 students, there were 2 students got excellent, 9 students

got very good, 11 students got good, 9 students got fair, 6 students poor, and 3 students got very poor in the score of the students' ability in expressing past activities in writing. The students who had high score in the score of mastering past tense affect the students' ability in expressing past tense in writing. This is proved by the fact that the students who passed the test of mastering past tense well, also can express past activities in writing well. Lets look at the table of comparison of the students who had very good and excelent level score below.

Students Number	Score of students' mastery in past tense	Score of students' ability in expressing past tense in writing
7	90	89
13	90	93
17	90	87
21	86	85
27	90	78
39	94	87

In contrast, the students who could not pass the test of mastering past tense well, also had poor level to express past activities in writing. Lets look at the table below to see it clearly.

Students Number	Score of students' mastery in past tense	Score of students' ability in expressing past tense in writing
4	44	60
6	36	57
8	44	68
16	42	47
24	46	75
28	46	65
33	46	55
38	42	49

By looking at the table above, we can see it clearly that almost all the students who failed to pass the test of students' mastery in past tense well also got poor or poor to average result in expressing past tense in writing.

According to the criterion of SMA 1 Kudus taken from the English Curriculum 2006, the students are considered to be success if they get at least 68 of the highest possible score 100 and they are considered to be failed if the score they get are under 68. In this case, 19 (47.5 %) students got successful result in past tense test and 25 (62.5%) students got successful result in writing test. While 21 (52.5%) students failed in past tense test and 15 (37.5%) students failed in writing test.

4.2 Result

The research findings indicate that there is a significant correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing past activities in writing. From the statistic analysis, it was found out that there was a positive correlation between the students mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing past activities in writing. It was proved by the value of r_{xy} of the correlation was greater than r table. The value of r_{xy} was 0.8107. When we consulted it to the r table with N = 40, we found that r table had a value 0.312. It could be seen obviously that the value of r_{xy} is greater than the r table.

These facts imply that the students' mastery of past tense give a useful contribution in their ability in expressing past activities in writing.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the result of the study, it can be concluded as follows:

a. The average score of the students's mastery in past tense is 66.15. One student (2.5 %) gets excelent level, 9 students (22.5%) get very good, 7 students (17.5 %) get good, 3 students (7.5 %) get fair, 12 students (30 %) get poor and 8 students (20 %) get very poor.

b. The average score of the students' ability in expressing past activities in writing is 71.075. Two students (5 %) get excelent level, 9 students (22.5%) get very good, 11 students (27.5 %) get good, 9 students (22.5 %) get fair, 6 students (15 %) get poor and 3 students (7.5 %) get very poor.

c. There is a significant correlation between the students' mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing past activities in writing . This result is obtained from the computation of the correlation between the students' mastery of past tense and their ability in expressing past activities in writing applied to the sample is 0.8107. The critical value of the Pearson r with the 5 % significant level is 0.312. It means that the result obtained from the computation is greater than its critical value. Therefore, I conclude that the correlation between the two variables above is highly significant.

5.2 Suggestion

Based on the result of the research, I would like to offer some suggestions to improve the students' ability in expressing past activities in writing . The suggestions are:

a. The students should improve their mastery of past tense because the mastery of past tense can improve their ability in expressing past activities in writing .

b. The students should read as much as possible in order to enrich and support their knowledge and improve their ability in expressing past activities.

c. It is essential to the teacher to know that one of the factors affect the students ability in expressing past activities especially in writing is the students' mastery of past tense.

d. The teacher should provide an opportunity for students to have an extensive writing practice in the class and give students more writing assignments.

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