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PROFICIENCY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS IN RELATION TO THEIR MASTERY OF VOCABULARY AND TENSE

Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui apakah kemahiran siswa dalam kosakata dan tenses berkorelasi, apakah kemahiran siswa dalam kosakata dan kemampuan menulis teks deskriptif berkorelasi, apakah kemahiran siswa dalam tenses berkorelasi dengan kemahiran mereka dalam menulis teks deskriptif, dan apakah kemahiran siswa dalam kosa kata dan tense berkorelasi dengan kemahiran mereka dalam menulis teks deskriptif. Metode deskriptif kuantitatif adalah pendekatan yang dilakukan. Ada 60 siswa yang tersebar di tiga ruang kelas. Terdapat 25 sampel. Pengambilan sampel acak proporsional berstrata adalah metode yang digunakan untuk pengambilan sampel. Tes berfungsi untuk mengumpulkan data. Para peneliti menggunakan rumus korelasi Spearman untuk menganalisis data dan memperoleh hasil berdasarkan analisis data. Peneliti juga memperoleh kesimpulan sebagai berikut berdasarkan analisis data: rhitung > rtabel = 0,79> 0,396 untuk α= 0,05. Ha masuk. Ini menunjukkan hubungan antara kemahiran siswa dalam kosakata dan tenses serta kapasitas mereka dalam menulis teks deskriptif. Para peneliti sampai pada kesimpulan bahwa jika siswa telah menguasai kosakata dan tenses, mereka dapat menyusun teks. Oleh karena itu, guru bahasa Inggris harus lebih fokus dalam membantu siswanya belajar dan mempraktikkan bahasa Inggris mereka.
Kata kunci: Tense, Kosakata, Kemampuan Menulis, Teks Deskriptif

Abstract

This study was conducted to determine whether students' proficiency in vocabulary and their tense are correlated, whether students' proficiency in vocabulary and their ability to write descriptive texts are correlated, whether students' proficiency in tenses is correlated with their proficiency in writing descriptive texts, and whether students' proficiency in both vocabulary and tense are correlated with their proficiency in writing descriptive texts. The descriptive quantitative method is the approach taken. There were 60 pupils spread throughout three classrooms. There were 25 in the sample. Stratified proportional random sampling was the method used for sampling. Tests were used to gather the data. The researchers employed the multiple correlation formula to analyze the data. The researchers obtained the outcome based on the data analysis. The researchers also obtained the following conclusion based on the data analysis: rcount > rtable = 0.79> 0. 396 for α= 0.05. Ha got in. It shows the relationship between students' proficiency with vocabulary and tenses and their capacity to write descriptive texts. The researchers came to the conclusion that if pupils had mastered vocabulary and tenses, they could compose text. As a result, English teachers should focus more on helping their pupils to learn and practice their English.
Keywords: Tense, Vocabulary, Writing, Descriptive Text

INTRODUCTION

Writing is the means by which a writer can convey a message to a reader for a certain objective. By reading the written message, one can obtain information and explain or describe

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things. Grammar and vocabulary are two aspects of language that can help pupils with their writing. One of the key components of language is vocabulary. Students should become proficient in a variety of words. Not only should children be able to recognize individual words, but also groups of words with meanings. The second ingredient is tenses, which are the fundamental building block of English. Sentences are arranged according to their tenses. Correct usage of tenses should be possible for the writer. The concepts that are written will be influenced by the inability to master English tenses. Additionally, the reader will find it difficult to understand.

Furthermore, as vocabulary is a collection of rules that students must acquire in order to study English both verbally and in writing, knowing grammar and vocabulary is crucial to learning the language. Thornbury (2002:13) argues that "very little can be conveyed without grammar and without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed." It implies that a person should have a vast vocabulary and sufficient grammatical expertise when writing. This study was conducted to determine whether students' proficiency in vocabulary and tense are correlated, whether students' proficiency in vocabulary and their ability to write descriptive texts are correlated, whether students' proficiency in tenses is correlated with their proficiency in writing descriptive texts, and whether students' proficiency in both vocabulary and tenses is correlated with their proficiency in writing descriptive texts.

Vocabulary

As one of the elements of language, vocabulary is also one of the first areas of study for applied linguists, Richards (2001:4) says, "A person said to "know" a word if they can recognize its meaning when they see it." Based on the definition, vocabulary refers to a collection of words with a variety of meanings; therefore, pupils who learn vocabulary will be able to speak English fluently. In contrast, Nation (2001:40) categorized a number of language mastery indicators, which include the following:

1. Being able to recognize the word when it is heard
2. Being familiar with its written form so that it is met in reading
3. Recognizing that it is made up of the part under-develop- and –ed and being able to relate these parts to its meaning
4. Knowing that underdeveloped signal a particular meaning
5. Knowing what the word means in the particular context in which it has just occured.
6. Knowing the concept behind the words which will allow understanding in a variety of context
7. Knowing that there are related words like overdeveloped backward and challenged
8. Being able to recognize that underdeveloped has been used correctly in the sentence in the which occurs
9. Being able to recognize that words such as territories and areas are typical collactions.
10. Knowing that underdeveloped is not an uncommon word and is not pejorative word.

Since they can identify the word when they hear it, the researchers therefore think that vocabulary mastery is crucial for students learning English as a foreign language. Additionally, language use facilitates the growth of vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary knowledge facilitates language use, and so forth.

Tenses

Bhatia mentions (1995:95) the word tenses is derived from the Latin language "Tempus" which means time. It means verb tenses are used to express the action's timing. It implies that understanding tenses is crucial for understanding time and sentence construction. Joyce and Fees (2004:7) state that you must inform your readers when something happens in your writing. It means that tenses are crucial to the English language learning process because they indicate the time at which people wish to construct sentences or converse with others in the language. As tenses are a fundamental component of language, people should be aware of and mindful of structure in general and tenses in particular. As an addition, Azar (1992:5) claims, "Tenses are verbs that show time." Tenses can often be separated into three categories: present, past, and future tense. It indicates that there are numerous tenses and that a verb's tense depends on the moment of action. The researchers deduce that mastery of tenses refers to the capacity of an individual to construct sentences according to the role and pattern. Tenses play a crucial part in learning English and should be acquired by pupils in order to interact with others in the

language. Students only acquired three tenses—the simple present tense, simple past tense, and past continuous tense—according to the researchers' initial research in foreign language classroom.

The tenses are as follows:

1. Present tense
   The extended present is the typical temporal range for the simple present tense.
2. Past Tense
   Activities or situations that started and finished in the past are described in the simple past tense.
3. The past continuous tense
   At a certain moment in the past or during another event, it conveys an activity that was happening or in progress.

Students must master tenses in order to understand word structure patterns and principles. Students will be able to receive feedback on how the teacher teaches a given sentence by concentrating on grammatical structures. Students that are lack grammar will become confused, particularly when finding the blending words.

Writing

"Writing is a form of communication to deliver thought or to express feeling through written form," according to Harmer (2001:79). It indicates that kids are capable of indirect communication and textual expression of their ideas. "Writing is one of the communicative activities that needs to be encouraged and nurtured during the language learner course of study," added by Murcia (2001:207). It indicates that the instructor plays a vital role in instructing students in the writing process. It is our responsibility as student facilitators to support students in the teaching and learning process, particularly when it comes to writing.

Writing is one of the language skills that should be taught besides the other skills. According to Geyser (2007:1) writing allows students sufficient time to process information whereas speaking does not. Writing is also a way for the students who have limited confidence to speak in front of the class. It is regarded as a productive skill that aims at assisting students in expressing their ideas. The process of writing integrates visual, motor and conceptual abilities. Therefore, the students must have extensive knowledge if they want to write something. There are some texts which have to be mastered by the students who learn English as foreign language. One of the texts is descriptive text.

A descriptive text is one that describes the characteristics of a person or an object. Whether its form, its properties, its amount and others (Marhamah, 2017). Furthermore, Larson (1984) defined descriptive text is a text which lists the characteristic of something in detail. Its goal is to reveal and describe a certain individual, location, or object. Additionally, according to Hartono (2003), descriptive text is a text how people, animals, or things are described. Since writing involves the senses of hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, and touching, descriptive text is a text which says a thing clearly and neatly so the reader knows the aim of content of the text, because writing involves the sense, such as hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting and touching (Marhamah, 2017). Consequently, the descriptive text can be described as a sentence that describe people, things and animals.

According to Brown (2001:343), there are a few markers of writing proficiency, including:
1. Generate English's graphemes and orthographic patterns
2. Write at a pace that is effective for the task at hand.
3. Use a suitable word order pattern and get a core of terms that are acceptable.
4. Make use of proper grammatical structures, such as agreement, tense, pluralization, pattern, and rules.
5. Use several grammatical forms to convey a certain concept.
6. In written speech, employ cohesive devices.
7. Make use of written discourse rhetorical patterns and norms.
8. Adequately carry out written texts' communicative purposes in accordance with their form.
9. Communicate linkages and relationships between events and communication, including new information, explication, generalization, main idea, and supporting thought.
10. When writing, distinguish between implicit and explicit meanings.
11. Accurately express culturally distinctive references within the text's context.

12. Create and apply a variety of writing techniques, including correctly estimating the audience's interpretation, employing prewriting tools, writing fluently in initial drafts, utilizing synonyms and paraphrases, asking for and utilizing teacher and peer feedback, and using feedback for editing and revision.

According to the above theory, the researchers would like to use a number of indicators to create a tool for writing descriptive texts and to cultivate a way of thinking. These indicators include: Using a core of words that are acceptable and appropriate word order patterns; using acceptable grammatical systems (e.g., tense, agreement, pluralization, patterns and rules); and using cohesive devices in written discourse.

1. Title (Optional) Orientation: Create an orientation schedule and list. Students at least present the main character during the orientation; to make things easier, they can provide certain questions, such as: Who is participating in this story? Where did it occur? When did it occur?
2. Occurrences: Students record a sequence of occurrences in chronological order. The first event comes first, then the second, and finally the last event.
3. Reorientation: Not all of the students retell the text that has been concluded by reorientation, but they do make a conclusion or comment about the story during this phase. It is not required.

Additionally, the following linguistic features are typically present in descriptive texts (Anderson, 1998):
1. The past tense is used in a personal account.
2. Connectors are also used in a personal descriptive to arrange the occurrences.
3. A firsthand account explains what happened. Thus, a lot of action verbs and action nouns are used.
4. First-person pronouns (I or We) are primarily used in personal narratives.
5. Using descriptive language to provide information about who, what, where, when, and how
6. Action verbs, like stayed, climbed, etc., describe the action or events.
7. Action verbs, like stayed, climbed, etc., describe the event or events

METHOD

In this instance, the researchers used statistics to assess the data and summarized or presented it in numerical form. The association between writing abilities and vocabulary and tenses is also described and tested using descriptive quantitative research. The study's population consisted of 60 third semester students of Communication Science study program from University of Bandar Lampung in 2024–2025. As the population is diverse, the researchers used the stratified proportional random sampling technique to select the sample. They employed a multiple-choice objective test. There are fifty exam items in all. Every item has a score of two. Zero is the lowest possible score, and one hundred is the highest.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Result
1. The Correlation between X_1 and X_2

To find out and to prove whether there is correlation between X1 and X2, the writer used Product Moment formula. Based on the result of calculation above, with N=25 for significant level 5%, it was obtained rcount = 0.785 that was higher than rtable = 0. 396 so there is high correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and tenses mastery.

2. The Correlation Between X_1 and Y

To find out and to prove whether there is correlation between X1 and Y, the writer used Product Moment formula. Based on the result of calculation above, with N=25 for significant level 5%, it was obtained rcount = 0.745 that was higher than rtable = 0.396. So there is high correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their ability in writing descriptive text.

3. The Correlation Between X_2 and Y

To find out and to prove whether there is correlation between X2 and Y, the writer used Product Moment formula. Based on the result of calculation above, with N=25 for significant level 5%, it was obtained rcount = 0.75 that was higher than rtable = 0.396. So there is high correlation between students' tenses mastery and their ability in writing descriptive text.

4. The Correlation between X_1 and X_2 with Y

To find out and to prove wether there is correlation between X1 and X2 with Y , the writer used Product Moment formula. The result of calculation showed with N = 25 for significant level 5%, it was obtained rcount = 0.79 that was higher than rtable = 0. 396. So there is also a significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and students' tenses mastery with their ability in writing descriptive text.

Discussion

According to the study's findings, students will find it easier to express their feelings, ideas, and thoughts if they are proficient in vocabulary, including both word meaning and context-based usage. Brown claimed that "good writers will learn to take advantage of the richness of English vocabulary" (2001:342) lends credence to it. Based on the result of students' scores in this study, if they scored highly on vocabulary, they also scored highly on composing descriptive texts. Overall, students' proficiency in writing descriptive texts is 67.36 and their vocabulary mastery score is 68.07. The maximum score for pupils' proficiency in composing descriptive texts and vocabulary knowledge is 80. The capacity of students to write the texts is correlated with their vocabulary mastery, it can be stated.

Students can organize sentences according to a good pattern if they have mastered the tenses. It helps the reader comprehend the researchers' meaning. Therefore, pupils can effectively convey their feelings, thoughts, and ideas if they are proficient in the tense. In order to convey to readers, the time of events, tenses are very crucial in writing. Joyce and Feez (2004:7) provided support for this claim, saying that "you need to let your readers know at what time things occur when you are writing." The tense of the verb groups is one way to indicate the time. Based on the result of the research, the students who scored highly on tenses also scored highly on writing descriptive texts. The average score for students' mastery of tenses is 65.43, and their writing proficiency for descriptive texts is 67.36. Students' grasp of tenses scores the best at 78, while their ability to write descriptive texts scores the most at 80. It can be inferred that pupils' proficiency with tenses and their capacity to compose descriptive texts are related.

Students must learn vocabulary in order to write descriptive texts. They must also be able to utilize the terms correctly depending on the situation. In addition, learning tenses is crucial for creating well-structured sentences that follow a decent rhythm. The students' test results indicated that the hypothesis test found a 0.79 correlation between the students' proficiency in tenses and vocabulary and their ability to write descriptive texts. This indicates that there is a very high correlation between the two competencies.

The result of the research shows that students may struggle to articulate their views in writing, such as when composing descriptive texts, if they lack a solid command of terminology and tenses. The learning and teaching method should focus on the technique that works best for the students in order to improve their performance in English, particularly in the areas of vocabulary mastery, tenses mastery, and the capacity to write descriptive texts. Using effective teaching strategies can help students avoid becoming disinterested in the process of learning and instruction. Additionally, the reader ought to hone and expand their writing skills. Since studying English involves language components, the reader should first become proficient in vocabulary and tenses. It is beneficial for the readers if they are proficient in writing. It assists students in learning a lot of terms and using the proper tenses when writing.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The researchers came to the following conclusions: students' mastery of vocabulary and tense are significantly correlated, the students' mastery of vocabulary is positively and significantly correlated with their ability to write descriptive texts; students' mastery of tenses is positively and significantly correlated with their ability to write descriptive texts; and students' mastery of tenses and vocabulary are correlated with their proficiency in writing descriptive texts.

Suggestion

The researchers advise students to practice reading books or writing letters on a daily basis in order to improve their mastery of vocabulary and tenses. The teacher should provide additional tasks to help students understand vocabulary and tenses so that they can apply them

in acceptable written and spoken English sentences. This will make it easier for them to produce writing texts

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