



**A CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' MASTERY OF PAST TENSE
AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENT IN WRITING RECOUNT
(The Case of the Eleventh Year Students of SMA I Weleri in the
Academic Year of 2006/2007)**

A Final Project

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan in English**

by

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2007

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Praise to be to Allah the Almighty, intended for the blessings, health, and also inspirations provided to the writer for the completion of the final project.

The writer would like to express her sincere appreciation to Drs. Januarius Mujianto, M. Hum., her first advisor, and Rohani, S.Pd., M.A., her second advisor, who have given invaluable help of great supervision, guidance, and advices during the writing of this final project. The writer special gratitude also goes to every lecturer from whom the writer has learnt during her study.

The writer is also deeply grateful to the headmaster and the English teachers of SMA N 1 Weleri for giving the opportunity to conduct the research and to the students for their cooperative work and support.

The writer would extend her special words of thank to her beloved family and all friends for their endless prayer and support.

Nothing in this world is without blemish, and this final project is no exception. The writer realizes that there are many shortcomings in this thesis in spite of all her efforts, so the writer wishes all of constructive comments, correction, and criticism to for its improvement.

Semarang, January 2007

Tias Evi Hidayah

ABSTRACT

Hidayah, Tias Evi. 2007. *A Correlation Between Students' Mastery of Past Tense and Their Achievement in Writing Recount: The Case of the Eleventh Year Students of SMA I Weleri in the Academic Year of 2006/2007*. Final Project. Undergraduate Program of English Department Semarang State University. Advisors: I. Drs. Januarius Mujianto, M. Hum., II. Rohani, S.Pd., M.A.

Key words: Correlation Study, Mastery of Past Tense, Achievement in Writing Recount.

The ability to write recount, which constitutes communicative competence, requires another supporting sub competences. The past tense should be acquired in order to be able to write recount well.

The objective of the study is to reveal whether there is a correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount. Furthermore, it attempts to find out the extent to which the students' mastery of past tense affects their achievement in writing recount.

To achieve the objectives of the study, the writer conducted a field research in which a test of past tense and that of writing recount were administered. The subjects of the study were the eleven graders of SMA I Weleri. There were 233 students from which 50 students were taken as the sample. With the intention of drawing representative sample, cluster random sampling was applied. The data were in the form of students' scores on both tests.

Since this study is a correlational one, the data was statistically computed using Pearson Product Moment correlation formula. The obtained r value was 0.724, while the critical value of r for two-tailed test with $\alpha = 5\%$ and $df = 48$ was 0.284. Because r value was higher than the critical value, the correlation coefficient was significant. Thus, the null hypothesis saying "There is no correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount" was rejected.

The obtained regression equation was $\hat{Y} = 18.585 + 0.774 X$ and the determination coefficient was 0.525. This indicates that 52.5% of the variation of students' achievement in writing recount was accounted for by the relationship with their mastery of past tense, while the remaining 47.5% was probably due to other relevant factors, which was excluded in this study.

It is suggested that further research in the same topic should take those relevant factors into consideration. Moreover, In terms of the relationship between past tense and recount, the writer recommends diary-writing practice as a means of enhancing students' mastery of past tense and recount.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	x
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION	
1.1 General Background of the Study	1
1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic	6
1.3 Statement of the Problem	6
1.4 Statement of the Hypothesis.....	7
1.5 Objective of the Study	7
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	7
1.7 Limitation of the Study.....	8
1.8 Organization of the Report.....	8
II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
2.1 Definition of Grammar	10
2.2 English Tenses.....	11
2.3 Past Tense.....	13
2.3.1 Description of Meaning, Form, and Function.....	13
2.4 General Meaning of Writing	18
2.5 Importance of Writing Skill.....	20

2.6	Writing Demanded by the 2004 English Curriculum.....	21
2.7	Text.....	25
2.8	Recount as One of Text Types in English.....	26
	2.8.1 Recount and Past Tense.....	28
2.9	Grammar, Text, and Writing.....	29
2.10	Theoretical Framework.....	31

III METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

3.1	Type of Research and Research Design.....	33
	3.1.1 Type of Research.....	33
	3.1.2 Research Design.....	33
3.2	Population, Sample and Technique of Sampling.....	35
	3.2.1 Population.....	35
	3.2.2 Sample.....	35
	3.2.3 Sampling Technique.....	36
3.3	Variable of the Study.....	36
3.4	Instruments.....	37
	3.4.1 Past Tense Test.....	38
	3.4.2 Writing Test.....	39
	3.4.3 Scoring Technique.....	40
	3.4.4 Try-Out.....	41
3.5	Validity of the Test.....	42
3.6	Reliability of the Test.....	44
3.7	Item Analysis.....	46

3.7.1 Difficulty Level.....	46
3.7.2 Discriminating Power.....	48
3.8 Data Collecting.....	49
3.9 Data Analysis.....	49
IV FINDING AND DISCUSSION	
4.1 The Normality Test of the Data.....	52
4.2 Test of Homogeneity.....	53
4.3 Linearity Test.....	54
4.4 Correlation Analysis.....	54
4.5 Regression Equation.....	55
4.6 Determination Coefficient.....	56
4.7 Interpretation of the Research Finding.....	57
V CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION	
5.1 Conclusion.....	58
5.2 Suggestion.....	59
BIBLIOGRAPHY	60
APPENDICES	63

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix		Page
1	Pre-Tryout Instrument and the Answer Key	63
2	Scoring Guidance of the Writing Test.....	71
3	Result of the Instrument Analysis	73
4	Post-Tryout Instrument	93
5	Students Scores on Past Tense and Writing Tests.....	97
6	Computation of Correlation and regression Analysis	98
7	Critical Value of r Product Moment.....	99
8	F Value	100
9	Letters	101

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background of the Study

The rapidly changing world will surely bring a lot of consequences. As the world is getting more and more open and people's needs increase, people's interacting with other people from different countries is inevitable. Moreover, the developments of economy as well as that of science and technology force people to cooperate and get along with one another.

Meanwhile, in interacting with others, people have to communicate; and in doing so, they need a medium. It is generally admitted that language is a means of communication. It is through language that we are able to interact with others in our world (Derewianka, 1990:3). Through language, people can express their ideas, wishes, thought, and desires. Most activities involving more than one person require a language. Language, therefore, plays a significant role in our life.

Problems, however, appear when people coming from different countries with different conditions, cultures and backgrounds meet and speak different languages. When they have to communicate and cooperate, they are confronted with a problem; they do not understand each other. They, therefore, have to master a certain language with which they can understand each other. In this case, they have to master an international language.

English is one of the international languages that is widely used in the world. English has been used by many people from different countries. Most of

non-native speakers use English to establish relationship with other people coming from different countries. Harmer (Harmer, 2001:1) states:

“Although English is not the language with the largest number of native or ‘first’ language speakers, it has become a lingua franca. A lingua franca is defined as a language widely adopted for communication between two speakers whose native languages are different from each other’s and where one or both speakers are using it as a ‘second’ language.”

In Indonesia, English has a very important role in technological and scientific advances; instruments such as computer and internet use English. Meanwhile, a lot of textbooks, newspapers and magazines are printed in English. English is also used as a means of communication within international trade and business. Consequently, people who want to have access to them should master English well.

Realizing the growing demand of English as an international means of communication, it is reasonable that our government places English as a crucial subject in our education system. Projects have been conducted in order to improve English teaching and learning in Indonesia; one of which is by revising the English curriculum.

It is the 2004 Competence-based Curriculum that, hopefully, could be an improvement in our educational system. As the name implies, it is developed on the basis of a certain competence, meaning that it is targeted to achieve a particular competence. Now, the question is, what kind of competence is this curriculum going to achieve? With regard to this, the curriculum (2003:2) states:

“Language is a means of communication; it is not only a set of rules. Consequently, the model of language competence being formulated is that preparing students to communicate through the language and to participate within the society of the language users. This model is formulated as

Communicative Competence in which the main competence to attain through language learning is discourse competence.”

Further, the curriculum defines discourse competence as the ability to communicate, either orally or written, in a communicative event. Meanwhile, in order to achieve discourse competence, there are other competencies that should be acquired. The competencies are those that support the mastery of discourse competence. They are, as the curriculum says, linguistic competence, actional competence, socio-cultural competence, and strategic competence.

Linguistic competence refers to the ability to use structure/grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation, punctuation, etc. Actional competence encompasses the ability to select the appropriate speech act and rhetorical development in every stage of communication, e.g., opening a conversation, interrupting, making conclusion, etc. Socio-cultural competence is the ability to use language in an acceptable way in terms of the context of English culture. The last one, strategic competence, constitutes the ability to solve communication problems through repetition, ignorance, or the use of words with similar meaning.

Consequently, English language teaching and learning is aimed at the attainment of those competencies. This means that students learning English should acquire those competencies. Specifying to linguistic competence, in addition to having the other three competences, in order to be competent in creating discourse, acquiring linguistic competence is a must.

Agustien (2004:31) points out that it is impossible to attain discourse competence if people do not possess linguistic competence such as pronunciation,

intonation, spelling, and punctuation, vocabulary, sentence structure, the structure of spoken and written language, connective words, etc.

Expressing this in a different way, we could say that in order to be able to communicate effectively in English, either spoken or written, we should master such language components as grammar or structure, vocabulary, sound system, etc. of English language.

Meanwhile, the curriculum says:

“This curriculum makes use of an approach to language which is systemic functional; it views language as a system used by people to exchange meaning through symbols. Language is a system that is created by human to communicate. Besides, this curriculum regards English lesson as a literacy education i.e. developing the skill of creating spoken and written discourse in their context.” (Kurikulum 2004, 2003:60)

From the statement above, it is obvious that Competence-based Curriculum is developed on the basis of a view that language is a means of communication. Thus, the main goal of the curriculum is that students learning English are able to communicate in English; that students are proficient in using it in real life and within various context, both orally or written. In other words, learning English means that they are capable of creating texts.

Consequently, the concern of English learning is no longer on the acquisition of language components i.e. grammar, vocabulary, and sound system in isolation. Rather, it is targeted at the students' learning and analyzing the whole text, at how it is constructed to achieve its purpose. Nevertheless, it does not neglect the learning of language components since after working with the whole text, students are encouraged to dismantle it, and automatically they have to work with such language components as grammar, vocabulary, and sound system from

which the text is constructed. It means that the language components they have mastered will foster their capability in engaging with various types of texts.

In his book entitled *Exploring How Texts Work*, Derewianka (1990:17) writes:

“A text is any meaningful stretch of language- oral or written. But of course not all texts are the same, [...]. One factor which accounts for differences in texts is the purpose for which the text is being used. Texts are structured in different ways to achieve its purpose. [...]. The purpose of a Recount, on the other hand, is to tell what happened. To achieve its purpose, the text will move through a different set of stages; an orientation letting the reader know who is involved, where, when, etc., the retelling of a series of events in chronological sequence.”

With regard to Derewianka’s opinion we come into conclusion that in order to achieve its purpose, a text is arranged in such a way that it becomes a meaningful stretch of language. It is this way that a recount, for example, is built up firstly by presenting an orientation as a starting point and by providing a sequence of events. Since its purpose is to tell what happened in the past, past tense should be utilized.

Considering the importance of grammar in a text construction, the writer wants to conduct an investigation on the correlation between students’ mastery of grammar, in this case, the past tense, and their achievement in writing recount. This is due to the fact that recounts use past tense (Anderson, 1997:55). Furthermore, since grammar also plays a significant role in enhancing students’ writing skill, the writer is of the opinion that there is a positive correlation between students’ mastery of the simple past tense and their ability in writing recount.

1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic

The writer chooses the topic because of the following reasons:

- (1) The newly- implemented Competence-based Curriculum takes us with it a lot of new things. Recount as one of its elements, therefore, is considered new. The simple past tense, on the other hand, is an element which students of senior high school are already familiar with. Therefore, the writer wants to know whether their mastery of past tense supports their ability in writing recount. It is assumed that if it is so, then their mastery other tenses, or grammar in general will support their ability to engage with other text types.
- (2) Among the four language skills, writing is considered to be the most difficult skill to acquire. We often find it hard even to write in our native language. Therefore, the writer wants to find out whether students' mastery of grammar, in this case, past tense, will be useful for improving their writing skill.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In order to make a systematic approach to solving the problem, the statement of the problem is further developed into the following question:

- (1) Is there a significant correlation between students' mastery of Past Tense and their achievement in writing recount?
- (2) To what extent does the students' mastery of Past Tense affect their achievement in writing recount?

1.4 Statement of the Hypothesis

Since there is always a possibility that the result of the study will show no relationship between the variables, the hypothesis is stated in the following null hypothesis:

“There is no correlation between students’ mastery of Past Tense and their achievement in writing recount.”

1.5 Objective of the Study

The research will be conducted to reveal:

- (1) The correlation between students’ mastery of the past tense and their achievement in writing recount.
- (2) The extent to which students’ mastery of Past Tense affects their achievement in writing recount.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study about the correlation between students’ mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount hopefully will be useful to give some contributions to English language teaching and learning, i.e.:

- (1) For teachers and teacher researchers, the finding of the research will inform them about grammatical components that need to be given emphasis to assist students to write a grammatically accurate recount text.

- (2) For the students, they can be motivated to practice more than they did before and they are encouraged to learn grammar seriously so that they can work with various text types without much difficulty.
- (3) For the readers, it can inform them about the correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

As the topic suggests, the study seeks to reveal whether or not there is a systematic relationship between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount. Therefore, it is limited to analyze the correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount of the eleventh graders of SMA I Weleri in the Academic Year of 2006/2007.

1.8 Organization of the Report

This final project consists of five chapters. The first chapter covers the background of the study, reason for choosing the topic, statement of the problem, statement of the hypothesis, objective of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study, and the organization of the report. The second chapter elaborates the theories underlying the study. It constitutes the review of related literature. In the third chapter the writer presents the research methodology, which includes the explanation about the population and sample, research instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, item analysis, data collection, and data

analysis process. The fourth chapter deals with the result of the study and their interpretation. It includes the details of the statistical analysis providing the correlation and determination coefficients and their interpretations. The last chapter the fifth one, provides conclusion of the study and some suggestions with reference to the result of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Definition of Grammar

Talking about the definition of grammar, there would probably be as many definitions as the number of linguists who manage to define it. Those definitions, however, essentially convey the same idea. Cook and Suter (1980:1) state:

“Grammar is a set of rules by which people speak or write. These rules are not always understood consciously, and if you asked people what the rules of English grammar were, they would probably offer one or two or say they did not know. The reason is that the rules we refer to are those that hardly anyone ever thinks about but which allow people to use their language easily and naturally most of the time”.

The statement indicates that grammar is a set of rules derived from a language; rules that most of its native speakers rarely care about. However, these enable them to communicate each other without creating misunderstanding and misinterpretation. They commonly do not realize that when they express themselves through writing or speaking, what they write or speak have patterns and they keep subconsciously applying the patterns in their communication.

Meanwhile in the context of education especially in the learning and teaching of foreign language, grammar is usually considered one of the language components other than vocabulary and sound system which students should acquire. As foreign language learners commonly do not have much direct exposure to the language, mastering language components is one of the ways to support the mastery of foreign language skills. This is indicated by Veit's statement (1986:26) that grammar is what

enables people to understand the very words they are reading as well as to speak or write words or sentences of their own.

This means that even in order to be able to read a piece of text in a foreign language well, we should know the grammar of that language. Knowing grammar means understanding what the text means correctly. In addition, the role of grammar becomes more important when we have to speak or write in a foreign language. When we read, even though we keep thinking, we do not produce or writing. Rather, we merely try to understand and interpret the text. When we speak or write, on the other hand, we have to produce utterances or writing and at the same time try to get our message understood so that we can get the intended response.

Considering those definitions and explanations, the writer comes into conclusion that grammar is a set of rules derived from a language that enable people to understand what they read or to be creative in constructing sentences or expressions when they communicate.

2.2 English Tenses

In the area of English as a second language learning, especially the learning of grammar, tense has probably been a quite complicated and demanding element to learn. In English, when we have to deal with tense, we must automatically work with verb form changes. Moreover, the fact that in some languages, including Indonesian language, tense system does not occur has resulted in students' negative perception towards English, i.e., that English is a difficult subject.

Discussing tense, we may say that we refer to time; and the shifting of time is indicated by the changing of verb forms. Frank (1972:47) states that tense is special verb ending or accompanying auxiliary verbs signal the time an event takes place. Supporting her opinion, Hornby (1995:1231) defines tense as any of the forms of the verb that may be used to indicate the time of the action or state expressed by the verb.

The main points here, regarding tense, is that we change the verb forms while we are changing the time. Consequently, we may judge when an action takes place or when a state exists by seeing the forms of the verb. It means that different forms of verb show difference in time.

Meanwhile, Cook and Suter (1980:47) point out that the present tense indicates that something is taking place now, whereas the past tense indicates that something was completed in the past. This indicates that tense is classified into two kinds i.e., present and past tense. This dichotomy is, therefore, considered the basic categorization of tense. However, those two tenses are, then, re-categorized into several different tenses.

Another linguists may agree that there are three tenses in English i.e., present, past, and future tenses. Even sometimes tense is classified into twelve or sixteen or even more. Which classification to choose however is not important. The thing is that they are all true because every linguist proposes different points of view.

Summing up those definitions and elaboration above, tense is a particular form of a verb indicating the time of an action or a state. It is, thus, categorized into different kinds on the basis of the time changing.

2.3 Past Tense

As pointed out in the previous section, based on the verb forms, tense is basically categorized into two, namely present and past tenses. As the name suggests, present tense indicates present happenings, something that is still related to the present, or a general truth. Past tense, on the other hand, is usually used to express an action or condition that occurred in or during the past time.

In terms of definition, different linguists define past tense differently. However, the definitions are more or less the same. According to Frank (1972:83) “The past tense indicates time terminating in the past, whether a time word is given or not. While Cook and Suter (1980:51) define past tense as actions or states that usually occurred or completed in the past.

It should be clear from the definition that past tense is used to indicate something that happened in the past and this is showed by the past form of the verb. And on the basis of the definitions above, there are four tenses indicating past form, they are simple past, past progressive, past perfect, and past perfect progressive tenses. They are discussed in details in the following subsection.

2.3.1 The Description of Meaning, Form, and Function

(1) Simple Past Tense

Simple past tense generally expresses events or situations that existed or happened at a particular point in the past. They began and ended in the past. Thus, they have nothing to do with the present.

The simple past tense is formed by using the simple past form of the verb. For regular verbs, the past form is made by adding –ed to the simple form (want + ed =

wanted, enjoy + ed = enjoyed); for irregular verbs, the past forms are more or less idiosyncratic (write – wrote, catch – caught). The same form is used for all persons except with the verb be (They were....., She was.....). Negative statements and yes/no questions in the simple past tense include the word “did” and “did not” and the verb form used is the simple form of the verb (Lisa did not go to Malang; Did you find your book?).

In common, simple past tense is used to express something that happened in the past. It, however, has also specific uses. We can state a single event that completed in the past using simple past tense. For example, *We visited Uncle Sam in December*. Here, we find a time expression. It clearly shows that the event or the activity of visiting occurred in the definite time in the past, i.e. December. Nevertheless, past tense can also be used to express a past happening without giving any time expression. Yet it is clear from the context. For instance, *I worked in Jakarta*. In this case, no definite time expression is used, but it tells us that the action of working was in the past.

Additionally, past tense is used to show a series of past actions. The following sentences represent this use:

He got out of bed, stretched himself, walked to the window and opened it.

This shows us that all those activities were done in the past and they were done consecutively. Besides, simple past tense usually expresses a single duration. It indicates an event with duration that applied in the past with the implication that it no longer applies in the present. The duration is usually represented with such expressions as “for four years”, “for a long time”, etc, e.g. *Professor Nelson taught at*

the university for 30 years. In addition, simple past tense is also used to indicate a past habit. It suggests that the habit stopped in the past and no more appears in the present, which also means that some changes in this habit have taken place. Therefore, such expression as “.....when I was a child, never, always, usually, and often” are usually included. For example, *I stayed with the family quite often when I was a child.*

Last but not least, past tense is used to express a conditional sentence of unlikely type, e.g. *If he took better care of himself, he would not be absent so often.* Moreover, in indirect speech, simple past tense is used to replace simple present tense of direct speech, e.g.

Direct speech : “I know what it means,” he said.

Indirect speech: He said that he knew what it meant.

(2) Past Progressive Tense

Past progressive tense commonly describes an action that was in progress during a particular time in the past; or an event that was in progress when another event interrupted or when two or more events were still in progress at the same time.

The past progressive (sometimes called past continuous) is formed by using a past tense form of the verb “be” with the progressive form of the verb. The verb “was” is used for singular subjects and “were” is used for plural subjects.

As the name suggests, past progressive tense generally indicates something that was in progress at a specified time in the past. Hence the sentence “*He was walking to school at 8.30 o’clock this morning*” shows that the action of “walking” was in progress at the time mentioned. It is also possible to use past progressive tense to

express an action that was happening while another action interrupted, and it usually in simple past tense. For example, *Karen was washing her hair when the phone rang.* Or when actions were simultaneously in progress, e.g. *While the band was playing, the people were dancing.*

Another usage of past progressive tense is to express a frequently repeated action in the past which often annoyed the speaker, e.g. *Mary was always losing her pen.* This statement implies that the speaker feels irritated with Mary's keeping losing her pen. In addition, we frequently use past progressive tense in description. It is usually used to express a situation or atmosphere in the past. Note the following example of past progressive to show description.

“The library was very crowded that morning. Some people were reading books and some others were busily walking from one shelf to another, trying to find the books they needed. Meanwhile in another part of the library some people were just talking.”

(3) Past Perfect Tense

Past perfect tense gives an idea that one thing had happened before another time or before another event happened in the past.

The past perfect tense is formed with “had” and past participle and it is used for all subjects.

Generally, past perfect tense an action completed in the past before another time or action in the past. However, past perfect tense can be used to express a recently completed action in the past. Usually, the word “just” is used to show that the action occurred immediately before the time of speaking. For instance, *When I arrived, Bob*

had just left. Besides, when “since or for” is used, past perfect tense shows an action which began in the past or was still continuing for a period of time before something in the past. For example, *We had had the car for ten years before it broke down*.

Furthermore, past perfect tense indicates that something happened before another action in the past. Besides, it can also show that something took place before a specific time in the past, e.g. *I had never visited the museum before I moved here*. Moreover, in conditional sentences, past perfect is used to indicate the impossible type, e.g. *If you had told him, he would have helped you*. When it is used with “if only, wish, etc,” it expresses a past wish that was not realized like in “*I wish that I had brought my torch with me*.” It is also usually used with “as if” when referring to a real or imaginary action in the past. For example, *he talks about Rome as if he had been there himself*. In indirect speech, past perfect tense is used to replace simple past and present perfect in direct speech.

(4) Past Perfect Progressive Tense

In general, past perfect progressive tense indicates that one event was in progress immediately before, up to, or until another event in the past. The tense is used to express the duration of the first event.

The past perfect progressive tense is formed with “had been“+ the present participle. It, therefore, is the same for all persons.

Past progressive tense basically has the same relation to past perfect in that it is used to express something begun in the past. However, it emphasizes continuity of past action. So, the example such as “*She was tired because she had been working since dawn*” shows that at the time of speaking, her activity of working still

continued. Past perfect progressive is also used to indicate an action or habit taking place over a period of time in the past prior to some other past events. For instance, *He had been walking to school before his father bought him a bicycle.* This means that before he had a bicycle he used to walk to school.

Besides, we use past progressive tense to express past action that was in progress getting interrupted by another past action. For example, “*We had been planning to visit our family in Aceh but we changed our mind because of the Tsunami.*” We can also use past progressive to indicate duration before something in the past. Therefore, such word as “for” is usually used, e.g. *Mr. William had been teaching there for ten years before he retired.* It is also common to use past perfect progressive to show cause of something in the past, e.g. *Jim was out of breath because he had been jogging.*

2.4 General Meaning of Writing

It can be said that writing is a crucial part in our global society. Let us imagine how this world is without writing. Through writing, we can learn a lot of things, from the simplest one such as how to make a glass of milkshake until how this earth is formed, for example. In short, writing plays a significant role in our life.

The statement above is probably from the readers’ point of view. To writers, on the other hand, writing can be a means of communication. Through writing, they can express his ideas, experiences, thoughts, and feeling. It is even through writing that they can communicate over long distance and period. This is in line with Ramelan’s

opinion (1994:11) “Writing is very important as a part of man’s culture because it can be used to preserve thought, ideas, and also speech sounds.”

White as quoted by Nunan (1989: 36) points out:

“Writing is not a natural activity. All physically and mentally normal people learn to speak a language. Yet, all people have to be taught how to write. This is a crucial difference as well. Writing, unlike speech, is displaced in time. Indeed, this must be one reason why writing originally evolved since it makes possible the transmission of a message from one place to another. A written message can be received, stated, and referred back to at any time. It is a permanent in comparison with the ephemeral ‘here one minute and gone the next’ of spoken language- even of spoken language that is recorded on tape or disk.”

From the quotation above, it is obvious that one thing which may account for the difficulty of writing the difference between speech and writing. In speeches, the language being used usually informal and very context dependent. Written language, on the other hand, needs to be explicit because the audience may be unknown to the writer, particularly with writing intended for publication.

Consequently, the amount of shared knowledge between writer and reader is much less than that usually found between speaker and listener. In conversation, the participants often share background knowledge about a topic, and so a great deal can be left unsaid or merely implied. Not only verbal expression but also facial expression and body movements are used while people are conversing. Thus, while having a conversation, they do not need to say the intended utterances the way it is considered grammatically correct. In writing, however, no such assumption can usually be made.

This is in line with Harmer’s opinion (2004:3) that although almost all human beings grow up speaking their first language, as a matter of course, writing has to be

taught. Spoken language is acquired naturally as a result of being exposed to it, whereas the ability to write has to be consciously learned. Moreover, we often find out that writing in our first language is not an easy thing to do. Consequently, to be able to write in foreign language, greater effort and absolutely should be made and much practice are needed.

2.5 Importance of Writing Skill

Undoubtedly, writing has become a prominent part in people's everyday life. In almost all aspects of life, writing in whatever form it be, proves to be an effective way of communication. Simple notices at shopping centers, printed media such as newspaper, magazine, etc, educational and scientific sources like books, journals, and encyclopedia, and literary works such as poem, novel, such story, and the like show us that writing in any form serves different but essential function in day-to-day activities. We can imagine how hard people carry out their duties without writing. Surely, there will be too much information unsent; lots of knowledge will be left

Moreover, as the societies grew larger and more industrialized, the need for citizen to be able to write and read becomes vital for buerucratic organizations to be successful. In addition, writing skill can be a ticket to better college grades and greater academic achievement since good writing skill is badly needed in the academic context. Besides, most jobs nowadays as well as future jobs will require writing skill; even to apply for a job, good writing skill is demanded.

Meanwhile in the smaller scope of educational setting, i.e. at schools, most of examinations require students to use their writing skill. In other words, students'

success at school is partly determined by their writing skills. Furthermore, it is commonly known that good writing will foster good thinking and vice versa. When students are trying to write they should automatically think because they develop their ideas and sometimes revise what they have written. On the other hand, good thinking, if being properly applied, gives rise to what so-called good writing.

The fact that writing skill clearly gives many advantages to those possessing it suggests that having good writing skill will be of benefit to people. In addition to being able to take part in today's information culture, a writer can express himself well through writing; he can communicate his ideas, thought, feeling, and experiences and at the same time, let it known by others.

As a closing remark of this section, the writer quotes Chris Tribble's statement (in Harmer, 2004:3):

“to be deprived of the opportunity to learn to write is..... to be excluded from a wide range social roles including those which the majority of people in industrialized societies associate with power and prestige”.

This shows that writing is closely related to the society. To be successful in whatever field we are in, having writing skill is very much helpful. Thus, writing, especially in a foreign language is one skill which all teachers or educational practitioners should pay attention to.

2.6 Writing Demanded by the 2004 English Curriculum

The switch of foreign language learning target in Indonesia, which is primarily shown by the development of the new competence-based curriculum, has automatically changed the concern of English language teaching and learning. The importance of

communication ability and the fact that we can rarely find Indonesian student being able to speak or write English have encouraged educational practitioners especially those who concern with English language teaching to revise the curriculum.

So, it is now clear that communicative competence or the ability to communicate is the base underlying English language teaching in Indonesia. It means that language learning is directed towards the achievement of communicative competence so that students can communicate in English either orally or written. The two modes of communication, i.e. spoken and written are, thus, reflected by the two cycles in English language teaching recommended by the curriculum.

Meanwhile, since communication is achieved while people creating texts, students learning English are demanded to be able understand and create authentic texts created by native speakers of English. Each text differs in terms of their purposes and therefore, has different structures and language features. Those are more or less the aspects that teacher and students should pay attention to.

With that consideration, each cycle in English language learning is then divided into four stages namely building knowledge of the field, modeling of text, joint construction of text, and independent construction of text. Concerning the written cycle, in the building knowledge stage, students are indirectly brought to come to a text by introducing them all stuff related to the text. In the modeling stage, students learn the text in details; what the purpose of the text is, how the text is structured, what language features are included in the text, etc. Once the students get the knowledge related to the text, they are encouraged to create a new text together based on what they have learned. They, however, can be creative in creating a text as far as

it does not deviate the rule of the authentic text. After they create a text together, they are prepared to make a text on their own.

Of course, in the learning process, teacher and students are not restricted to the above-mentioned way. Various media, techniques, and methods can be used to enhance the students' understanding. A series of pictures, for example, can be utilized since they are interesting and thus will help the students to catch and express their ideas clearly. Furthermore, since writing usually in the form of subjective test which requires students to think and generate ideas by themselves, the use of pictures is beneficial in that in that they help to frame and restrict the students' task. With regard to this, Harris (1969:69-70) writes:

“Composition tests are unreliable measure because (1) students perform differently on different topics and on different occasions; and (2) the scoring of the composition is by nature highly subjective.....in writing compositions, students can cover up weaknesses by avoiding problems (e.g. the use of certain grammatical patterns and lexical items) they find difficult. Such evasion is impossible with well-prepared objective test.”

Attempting to give solution to the subjectivity problem of essay-type test, Dangerfield (1990:161) suggests that test items can be only objective to the extent that they are included on the syllabus and that the formats used are those with which the students are familiar.

Meanwhile, Dangerfield (1990:161-162) further points out that guidance of the students' answers in the test will reduce subjectivity. This guidance can be in the following three forms:

(1) Information guidance

This means giving the students information they to use in their writing. The information can be provided through a reading text, a listening text, a list of

points to be included in the students' writing, and an individual picture or a series of picture.

(2) Linguistic control

This can be provided by arranging the information given by means of the information stated in number 1 above. For example, the students are required to use certain kinds of tense such as past tense, present tense, etc. besides, it can be given by stating explicitly the language that the students should use or giving the opening words of each paragraph.

(3) Organizational guidance

This can be provided among others by stating the form that the writing should take, e.g. a story, a letter, etc and by telling the students how many paragraphs to produce and which info to include in each paragraph.

Summarizing Dangerfield's suggestions, it can be said that subjectivity of essay test can be reduced by controlling the linguistic content and organization and limiting the students' response so that the students' works will more or less be the same so that the scoring will be fair. Referring to Dangerfield's suggestions, the writer constructed a picture-based writing test with a series of pictures included and by stating the form that the writing should take (a recount) and also by providing some words to use.

2.7 Text

In general sense, text is any form of written material. Halliday and Hasan (1984:10)

states:

“What do we mean by text? We can define text, in the simplest way, perhaps, by saying that it is a language that is functional. By functional we simply mean language that is doing some job in some context, as opposed to isolated words or sentences that I might put on the blackboard. So any instances of living language that is playing some part in a context of situation, we shall call it a text. It may be either spoken or written, or indeed in any other medium of expression that we like to think of”.

This definition surely tells us many things about text. First, our general understanding that text is always in the written form is not true. A text can be either spoken or written, can be a word or as thick as a book in length. So, a text has nothing to do with form or size. Second, a text is not isolated words or sentences being put together. On the other hand, it constitutes a meaningful message that a person tries to communicate through his use of certain in certain acceptable structure. So, it has something to do with meanings, meanings forming a stretch of language working together as a unified whole.

Related to this, Joyce and Feez (1998:5) cite some examples showing how a stretch of language that is called a text differs from that which is not. Here, the writer intends to show the latter. Below is the example:

“Once upon a time there was a little white mouse called “tiptoe”. The boys lived in a large brick house with a roof at the end of the longest street in town. That morning Mrs. Smooks left home in a great hurry. But, too late, William realized that the car had no brakes. So they ran and they ran and they ran until eventually the giant got

tired out so that he couldn't follow them anymore. "What an exciting day," she sighed. And so he never goes alone to the shops anymore".

Once we read the "text" above, we will directly realize there is something wrong with it. Every sentence in the paragraph does not relate to each other so that there is nothing meaningful that we could catch from it.

The third consideration of Halliday and Hasan's statement about text is that a text is language that is functional. It means that language in a text serves a certain function; this function is the one that finally differentiates and determines our choice of words to construct a text. And concerning this, Derewianka (1990:17) points out texts differ in terms of the purposes they carry. The term purpose here is more or less similar to what Halliday and Hasan termed "functional" above. Functional means a stretch of language, or a text, is in use. It has a function or in Derewianka's words, it has a purpose, i.e., we use language because we have a purpose.

Meanwhile, as we use language for various purposes, numerous types of texts are resulted. And these different types of texts are often labeled "genre"; types of texts that vary across culture.

Summing up what has stated above, it can be said that text is a meaningful and purposeful stretch of language, either spoken or written, represented through the use of words (lexis), the appropriate way they are arranged (grammar), and the structure of which is affected by the purpose it has.

2.8 Recount as One of Text Types in English

Since texts are constructed in order to achieve different purposes, they are constructed in different ways. Consequently, there are a lot of text types in English. They,

however, are categorized into two kinds, namely literary text and factual text. There are three main text types in the literary texts, i.e. narrative, poetic, as well as dramatic. Meanwhile, such text types as recount, explanation, discussion, information report, exposition, procedure, as well as response belong to factual texts.

Recount as one of the factual texts can be said as the simple text type because it even can be about familiar and every day things or events. It, however, can be more demanding if it is used on formal contexts such as report of a science experiment, police report, news report, historical account, etc.

According to Anderson (1997:48) recount is a piece of text that retells past events, which are usually told in order in which they happened. Getting along with Anderson's idea, Derewianka (1990: 14) states:

“In a Recount we reconstruct past experience. A Recount is the unfolding of a sequence of events over time. We are using language to keep the past alive and help us to interpret experience”.

He further argues that in order to achieve its purpose i.e. to tell what happened, recount will move through some stages. The first stage, which is usually called orientation, is the step in which the writer presents the background information that is needed to understand the text. It is the starting point or the introduction in which the writer introduces the participants involved in the event, where and when it happened, etc. the next step is the presentation of the event in details in the order of the happening. Everything happened in the event is presented one after another in a chronological sequence. This stage is actually the main point of a recount.

As the closing, usually a personal comment regarding the event is presented. However, it is optional. So, it is up to the writer to add it or not. Beside a personal comment, a recount is usually ended by stating what finally happened.

On the basis of the structure of a recount, we can at least guess what language features which are usually found in a recount. To indicate the participants involved in the text, the use of proper nouns is common. Besides, as the purpose of the text is to tell what happened, descriptive words giving details about who, what, when, and how the event took place are usually used. Again, referring back to the purpose of the text, i.e. telling past events, past tense must be utilized. Furthermore, words showing the order of events such as first, next, then, afterwards, finally, etc. are commonly included.

2.8.1 Recount and Past Tense

The best way to show how recount and past tense are inseparable each other is probably by showing or presenting a true example of recount. Below is an example of recount that hopefully will give rise to deeper understanding of what recount is, how it is structured and what language features from which a recount is usually constructed:

Earthquake

I *was driving* along the coast road when the car suddenly *lurched* to one side. At first I *thought* a tire *had gone* but then I *saw* telegraph poles collapsing like matchsticks. The rocks *came* tumbling across the road and I *had to* abandon the car. When I *got* back to town, well, as I said, there *wasn't* much left.

(Gerot and Wignel, 1994:195)

The words printed in *italic* indicate the past tense. They show how the text is built up by a series of past events. All verbs are in the past tense form so that the text holds together in the same way. So, there would be no recount without past tense. Recounting means using past tense to recall past events or experiences. Recounts are bound up with past tense since in recounts; “past happenings” are told or written. Here, the writer uses tense agreement to make the text cohesive.

With reference to this phenomenon the writer feels that it is desirable to conduct a study in order to prove recount and past tense relationship. This is from which this study is rooted.

2.9 Grammar, Text, and Writing

In the area of English as a foreign language learning, writing has been the most difficult and complex skill to acquire. That is why it is normal if the process of teaching and learning in the classroom reflects that written cycle should be given after the spoken cycle has been done. It is with the assumption that the students are ready to write after they are prepared with a certain amount of vocabulary or words and the way they are arranged through which their communication purposes are represented. Beside, it is so with the reason that they have had it in mind and they have practiced it when they are doing the spoken cycle. Thus, when they have to write, they can communicate and develop their ideas through their writing.

Meanwhile, this also implies that in order to master the four language skills i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing, mastering language components is a must. That is why the teaching of language components, namely grammar, vocabulary, and

sound system (pronunciation, intonation, etc) should be targeted as much as possible to enhance the mastery of language skills. With regard to this, Larsen-Freeman and Celce-Murcia (1983:2) assert that grammar affects the students' performance in all four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To be able to write well in foreign language, for example, students first of all have to master the vocabulary they need and more importantly know how to arrange them in an appropriate manner.

Another thing that should be highlighted here is that text, in order to achieve its purpose, is always represented through the use of vocabulary with particular way of organizing words meaningfully. So, having a purpose in mind without mastering a certain amount of vocabulary and grammar to express and communicate it is nonsense. In other words, the acquisition of vocabulary and grammar is important in communication or saying it in different way, in creating texts.

Meanwhile, concerning the nature of written communication, Harmer (2004:6-7) explains:

“When we are engaged in spoken communication, we often decide what to say as the conversation continuous on the basis of what our co-participant are saying.....instead of being able to get our points across unhindered, we may be constantly interrupted and so have to proceed in a less structured way than we had anticipated.....writing, however, is as we have seen, significantly different”.

The statements indicate that in speaking, it is usually no problem to use ungrammatical expression since clarifications and repetition are possible. Beside, spoken communication is usually supported by its context such as the speakers' tone, gestures, and facial expression so that saying everything in an exact grammatical way is unnecessary. In written communication, however, the case is different. The readers

are totally dependent upon what they read without being able of questioning something weird or confusing they come across in a piece of written work.

Again, the writer here would like to point out that in order to be able to write well, meaning that we can convey our ideas and opinions to the readers well without leaving misunderstanding and misinterpretation, mastering grammar is very significant. Indirectly, this indicates that relationship between grammar and writing does exist.

In addition, some empirical studies conducted in the area of grammar and composition reveal that the teaching of grammar and composition support each other. Holbrook (1983), Smith (1982), Sealey (1987a) and others (Cotton, 2003) have found out that grammar instruction, which relates directly to students' writing can enhance writing achievement. Sealey (1987a:2) further points out:

“We.....need...to make a distinction between teaching writing and teaching grammar and mechanics... Research tells us that grammar instruction in response to students' needs is effective in improving writing. Grammar instruction that is concrete, relevant to the students' own writing, and focused on the process of writing develops mature writers.”

Hence, grammar, text, writing, however indirectly, are dependent each other. Writing texts in an appropriate way is unlikely without possessing the means for constructing them.

2.10 Theoretical Framework

As the topic of this study indicates, it attempts to reveal whether or not there is a correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing

recount. Therefore, it seeks to find out the possible relationship between the two variables through correlational statistics.

Past tense constitutes one of the English tenses that gives an idea that something occurred in the past. So, achievement in past tense here is reflected by the students' ability to understand and use past tense correctly in the appropriate sense. Past tense includes simple past, past progressive, past perfect, and past perfect progressive tenses.

Meanwhile recount is one of English text type the purpose of which is to tell past events in a sequenced order. Therefore, a recount is structured of an orientation stating who are involved, when and where the event occurred, etc. It indicates the introduction or the starting point of a recount. An orientation is commonly followed by sequence of events. Here, what happened are sequenced in order of happening from the beginning until the end. A recount is ended up with a comment stating the writer's opinion about the event. Therefore, the ability to write recount here means the ability to retell past events on the basis of the generic structure of a recount stated above. Since the purpose of writing a recount is to retell past events, mastering past tense is a must. Besides, in the 2004 English curriculum the ability to write recount constitutes the ability to communicate or communicative competence. On the other hand, past tense is the linguistic competence required by students in order to communicate well. It constitutes one of the competences which support communicative competence. Therefore, the writer wants to conduct a study which is aimed at finding out whether or not there is a relationship between students' ability in past tense and recount.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

This chapter discusses the research methodology applied in this study. It deals with the description of the type of the research and the research design being adopted, the population and sample of the study, variables of the study, the research instrument and its analysis, data collecting and data analysis procedure.

3.1 Type of Research and Research Design

3.1.1 Type of Research

On the basis of the nature of the data being analyzed, scientific research is categorized into two, namely quantitative and qualitative researches. Quantitative research is research carried out by collecting numerical data from sample drawn from a certain population. It, thus, finally attempts to generalize the research findings to the whole population through statistical analysis. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is one which collects some type of non-numerical data to answer a research question. It usually studies verbal data through intensive study of cases.

Regarding the nature of the study and the type of data being gathered, this study constitutes a quantitative research.

3.1.2 Research Design

Defining the research design in advance is the most essential part of conducting a research since the research design determines the statistical decision being made. As the topic indicates, the primary aim of the study is to reveal the correlation

between students' achievement and past tense and their ability in writing recount. So this study seeks to identify the possible relationship between the two variables. In other words, this study is a correlational research.

According to Gall and Borg (2003:320), correlational research refers to studies in which the purpose is to discover relationship between variables through the use of correlational statistics. They further explain that the basic design of correlational research is very simple, involving nothing more than collecting data on two or more variables for each individual in a sample and computing a correlational coefficient.

Correlation coefficients (usually represented by r) are indices indicating both the direction of the correlation (either positive or negative) and the strength or the degree of the relationship between variables. The calculation of the correlation coefficient between a pair of scores results in a value that ranges from -1.00 to +1.00. A correlation coefficient of -1.00 indicates a perfect negative relationship, whereas a value of +1.00 implies a perfect positive relationship and the midpoint of this range zero, indicates that there is no relationship at all.

Concerning the above elaboration, the writer wants to assert here that this study is a correlational research. Thus, the main objective of this study is to discover the relationship between the two intended variables, i.e. students' achievement in past tense and students' ability in writing recount. In addition, it attempts to figure out how much the mastery of past tense affects their achievement in writing recount, and this is accomplished through regression equation. From the regression equation, the determination index indicating the

percentage of the overlap between the two set of scores (scores on past tense and writing recount) can be obtained.

3.2 Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

This section discusses the population of the study, the sample which was drawn from the population, the sampling technique applied and the variables of the study.

3.2.1 Population

The population of this study was the eleventh graders of SMA N 1 Weleri in the academic year of 2006/2007. There were 233 students from 6 classes. The following is the number of the students from each class:

XI.IPA1:32	XI.IPS1:46	XI.IPS3:45
XI.IPA2:32	XI.IPS2:45	XI.BHS:33

It should be clear from the above data that the population of the study consisted of students from Natural Science class (IPA), Social Science class and Language (BHS) class. The students of IPA and IPS class were taught using the same textbook and materials with the same curriculum while those of the language class were not. Consequently, this affected the sampling technique applied in the study.

3.2.2 Sample

It should be noted that quantitative research focuses on studying sample and population and attempts to generalize the result of the study to the entire population from which the sample is drawn. Consequently, when it is unlikely for

the researcher to study the population, carrying out research to a representative amount of sample is acceptable under certain requirements.

Since it was impossible for the writer to manage the whole population as the subject of the study, the writer took 20% of the population. That was equal to more or less 50 students.

3.2.3 Sampling Technique

With regard to the data the writer obtained from the English teachers that IPA and IPS class were given the same treatment and taught using the same textbook and materials while the language class was not, the writer applied cluster random sampling. The primary consideration of drawing sample from a heterogeneous population is that sample should represent the population and that each member of the population should have equal chance to be selected.

More or less 20% of the students from each class were taken. 7 students were taken each from XI.IPA1, XI.IPA2; XI.BHS; 10 students were chosen each from XI.IPS1 and XI.IPS2, and 9 students from XI.IPS3. The way of choosing the sample was this way: the writer used lists of the students' names of each class and then randomly selected their names by making interval of 4 starting from number 1 for each class list until she got the desired number of the students from each class as stated above.

3.3 Variables of the Study

A research is basically conducted in order to find out the relationship between two or more variables or the influence a variable has on another variable. Therefore,

research variables are usually labeled independent variable and the dependent one. The former is one that affects the other, whereas the latter is one that the independent variable has effect on.

As indicated by the topic of the study, the writer wants to reveal the possible relationship between the students' achievement in past tense and their ability in writing recount. She is of the opinion that the better the students master past tense, the better they achieve in writing recount. Here, she assumes that students' mastery of past tense affects their achievement in writing recount. There are other factors such as the frequency of practice, the length of study, their motivation and interest in learning writing, etc. which affect their achievement in writing recount. In this study however, the writer intends to investigate the relationship between the variables mentioned above and the effect one has on the other.

So, it is notable that here, students' mastery of past tense serves as the independent variable while the students' achievement in writing recount constitutes the dependent variable.

3.4 Instrument

In a study, instrument as a tool for collecting data plays a very significant role in that it greatly determines the result of the study. Thus, constructing research instrument carefully and in an appropriate manner is greatly fundamental. With regard to the different desired data, research instrument may differ from one study

to another. Research instrument may be in the forms of test, questionnaire, observation sheet, records of interview and interview sheet, etc.

Because there were two variables that the writer wanted to observe namely students' achievement in past tense and their ability in writing recount, two instruments were utilized. Both were in the form of test. And in this study the writer used two types of tests; objective test in the form of completion test and cloze test to test students' past tense mastery and essay type test for testing students writing ability.

3.4.1 Past Tense Test

As the writer wanted to assess the students, achievement in past tense, a past tense test was developed and used. The test was in the form of completion and cloze test. It consisted of 50 items; 30 completion items and one passage consisting of 20 deleted parts which the testees were supposed to complete.

The preference of using completion and cloze test as the instrument of the study which was supposed to measure the students' real mastery of past tense was on the basis of the following considerations:

- (1) They are quite easy to prepare and easy to score.
- (2) They provide sensitive measure of achievement.
- (3) There is no exposure to incorrect grammatical forms.

(Madsen, 1983: 47 & 52)

In addition, with the aim of accomplishing high validity, the test was constructed in such a way that the result of the test really reflects the students' ability in past tense. The thing to be taken into consideration was the students'

level and ability. In this case, the writer consulted it to the English teachers regarding the vocabulary and structure which were of their level and they had learned. Besides, the writer also adjusted it with the materials in the textbook they used.

Meanwhile, since the test demanded the students to complete the sentences and the passage using the appropriate past tense form, giving the appropriate context is very essential. It is so with the aim of avoiding causing confusion and misinterpretation because there should be one correct answer for each item. Thus, the writer developed the test in such a way that it fits all the requirements. Table 3.1 presents the outline of the past tense test.

Table 3.1 *The Outline of the Past Tense Test*

Part	Test Items	Number of Item	Item Numbers	Form of the Test
Part A	Simple past tense	10	1,4,8,12,13,17,20,22,24,29	Completion
	Past continuous tense	9	3,5,6,11,14,15,19,27,30	
	Past perfect tense	9	2,7,9,10,16,18,23,26,28	
	Past tense passive	2	21,25	
Part B	Cumulative past tense review	20	31-50	Cloze test
Total Number	50			

3.4.2 Writing Test

As stated in the previous section, the writing test was in the form of essay test which requires subjective scoring. Therefore, to lessen the subjectivity of the

scoring, the writer constructed a picture-based writing test with a series of pictures included and by stating the form that the writing should take (a recount) and also by providing some key words to use. It was constructed that way because the writer wanted the scoring to be fair with the consideration that it elicits more or less the same type of response from the students. The difference is shown by the creativity of the students in writing the text. For the complete example of both instruments, see the appendix 1.

3.4.3 Scoring Technique

As the instrument used as the tool of research in this study were in the form of objective test and essay type test, the scoring procedures of both tests were, of course, different. The past tense test consisted of 50 items and they are in the form of completion test. Thus, the writer scored 1 for each correct and 0 for the wrong answer. To get the real score of the past tense test for each student, the following formula was used:

$$S = \frac{R}{N} SM$$

In which:

S = the real score

R = the raw score

N = the maximum raw score

SM = the maximum score

(Lado, 1961:368)

Meanwhile in assessing the students' ability in writing, the writer scored the students' works based on the analytic method of marking composition suggested by Heaton (1979:109-111) in five areas, i.e., fluency, grammar, vocabulary, content, and spelling. The scoring was rated from 1 to 5 for each component.

Therefore, the maximum raw score for the writing test were 25 (5 times five components). To get the meaningful numerical data, however, the raw score was multiplied by 4 so that the maximum score will be 100. The complete grid and categories of the scoring criteria (Heaton: 111) is presented in appendix 2.

The writer needs to assert here that in figuring out the validity, reliability, and the item analysis of the writing test, the five components of scoring, i.e., fluency, grammar, vocabulary, content, and spelling were considered the test items. So, there were five items of essay test.

3.4.4 Try Out

Having finished constructing the instrument, the writer then consulted it to the advisor. The next step to take was, then, trying out the instruments. Try out was intended to measure the validity, reliability, and the effectiveness of the test items.

The try out of both tests was held on September, 20th 2006. It was administered to different students of the same level as the population. 40 students were taken as the subject of the try out.

The analysis of the validity, reliability, and the item analysis were the next step conducted after the try out had been administered. The next three successive sections of this final project elaborate the result of those analyses.

3.5 Validity of the Test

Validity is actually the quality of a measuring instrument in which the result obtained from the test really shows the actual achievement of the test takers. In other words, a measuring tool is said to be valid if it provides the true data that indicates the intended ability we wish to assess.

Validity is usually differentiated into three kinds, namely face validity, content validity, and empirical or statistical validity. A test is said to have face validity if the test items look right to other testers, teachers, and students so that it looks like it is measuring what it claims to measure. Face validity, however, is not an adequate indication of validity by itself. Hence, another judgment of test validity should also be presented.

In addition to having face validity, test validity can be indicated by its content. A test is said to be valid if the test content constitutes the sample of the total subject- matter content and if the test is constructed on the basis of the course objective. Regarding the face and content validity of the tests employed in this study, the writer established both tests by referring to the content of the textbooks used by the subjects. Furthermore, she also used the teacher's lesson plans as a guide besides consulting the test to her advisor and the teacher.

The last kind of validity used in this study is empirical validity or statistical validity. This validity is obtained as the result of comparing the result of the test and that of some other valid criterion. This procedure is, however, cannot be easily followed since such kind of criterion is not easy to find. However, statisticians have developed formulas to compute test validity which can ease

researchers' tasks. One of the formulas, known as Pearson Product Moment Formula, was that being employed this study. The formula is as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2\} \{N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

in which:

r_{xy} : the correlation of the score of each item

N : the number of the subjects

$\sum X$: the sum of the total score in each item

$\sum Y$: the sum of the total score from each subject

$\sum X^2$: the sum of the square of the total score in each item

$\sum Y^2$: the sum of the square of the total score from each subject

$\sum XY$: the sum of the multiple of the score from each subject with the total score

After obtaining the r_{xy} value for each item, it then should be consulted to the value of r_{table} . In this case, for $\alpha=0.05$ with the number of subjects 40, the value of r_{table} is 0.312. And an item is said to be valid if $r_{xy} > r_{table}$.

Finishing measuring the validity of each item, the writer found out that 40 out of 50 items were valid. The ten invalid items were items numbers 3, 8, 9, 15, 21, 24, 25, 26, 37, and 46. For the detailed computation of the test validity, please refer to appendix 3.

It should be noted that the writing test was an essay type test and as pointed out in the previous section on scoring technique, the writing scoring was done by scoring five components i.e., fluency, grammar, vocabulary, content, and

spelling. Consequently, it determines the computation of validity, reliability, difficulty level, and the discriminating power of each item. Here, for the benefit of the computation, the five components were considered the five items of the writing test. So, there were five items altogether. The formula used to estimate the validity of the writing test was the same as that used for the past tense test, i.e. Pearson Product Moment formula.

Finishing testing the validity of each item, the writer found that all the five items or the five criteria of writing scoring were valid.

3.6 Reliability of the Test

A test is reliable to the extent that it is consistent with itself, that is, it ranks the individuals in essentially the same position on its successive application. In other words, if a measuring device is tested on the same subjects on two different occasions, for example, the result will more or less be similar. Thus, reliability is a characteristic that a measuring device must possess in the sense that its reliability will influence the reliability of the research result.

Since there are two tests used in this study, i.e., objective type test for the past tense test and essay type for the writing test, two different formulas will be applied. To calculate the reliability of the Past Tense test, the following Spearman-Brown Formula was used:

$$r_{11} = \frac{2(r_{1/21/2})}{(1 + r_{1/21/2})};$$

$$\text{with } r_{1/21/2} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2\} \{N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

in which:

r_{11} : reliability of the instrument

$r_{1/2|1/2}$: Pearson correlation of odd and even value.

Based on the formula, the writer found out the value of $r_{1/2|1/2}=0.718$ and the value of $r_{11}=0.836$. After finding the result of r_{11} , the writer then consulted it to the r_{table} . And for $\alpha=0.05$ with the number of subject 40, the value of r_{table} is 0.312. The instrument is said to be reliable if $r_{11}>r_{table}$. Thus, with the result of $r_{11}=0.836$, the test is considered reliable.

Meanwhile, to test the reliability of the writing test, the following formula was used:

$$r_{11} = \left(\frac{k}{k-1} \right) \left(1 - \frac{\sum \sigma_b^2}{\sigma_t^2} \right)$$

Where:

r_{11} = Reliability index

k = Number of item

σ_t^2 = Total variance

σ_b^2 = Item variance

To figure out the total variance, the following formula was used:

$$\sigma_t^2 = \frac{\sum Y^2 - \frac{(\sum Y)^2}{N}}{N}$$

The item variance was obtained by applying the following formula:

$$\sigma_b^2 = \frac{\sum X^2 - \frac{(\sum X)^2}{N}}{N}$$

The instrument is considered reliable if $r_{11} > r_{table}$. The writer obtained that $r_{11} = 0.866$, which means higher than r_{table} , thus, the writing instrument is reliable.

3.7 Item Analysis

Since the validity and reliability of the overall test is indirectly dependent upon the quality of each item, after a test has been administered and scored, it is desirable to evaluate the effectiveness of each item. This is done by analyzing the students' responses to each item. This activity is commonly called item analysis. This analysis gives us information regarding how well each item in the test functioned so that we can discover which items need to be improved, revised, or discarded. Item analysis covers the calculation of the level of difficulty and the discriminating power of each item.

3.7.1 Difficulty Level

A good test item should not be either too easy or too difficult. An easy test will not stimulate students to figure it out. An excessively difficult one, on the other hand, will students desperate and will be reluctant to try to solve it.

The difficulty level of a test is, therefore, indicated by the percentage of the students who get the items right. Thus, the more difficult an item is, the fewer will be the students who answer correctly.

To find out the difficulty level of each item in the past tense test, the writer used the following formula:

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

in which:

P : index of difficulty

B : the number of students who answer the item correctly

JS : the total number of students.

(Arikunto, 2002:212)

By using the formula, the P value of each item can be found. Also, in order to figure out the difficulty level of each item, the writer referred to the criteria of P value suggested by Arikunto (2002:214). The criteria are presented in table 3.2.

Table 3.2 *The Criteria of Difficulty Level.*

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

Taken from Arikunto (2002:218).

After computing the difficulty level of all items and consulting them to the criteria of the difficulty level, the following data was obtained:

Table 3.3 *Results of the Difficulty Level of Past Tense Test Items*

criteria	Numbers of item
Medium	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 43, 46, 49, 50.
easy	6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 18, 23, 29, 31, 34, 37, 40, 42, 44, 45, 47, 48.

3.7.2 Discriminating Power

Finding out the discriminating power of an item is necessary for revealing how well the item discriminates between high and low scorers on the test. If good students tend to do well on an item and poor students do badly on the same item, it means that the item is good because it distinguishes the good from the bad students. The higher the discriminating power of an item is, the better the item discriminates the good students from the poor one.

In terms of discriminating power of a test item, Heaton (1975:173) states:

“The discrimination index of an item indicates the extent to which the item discriminates between testees separating the more able testees from the less able. The index of discrimination tells us whether those students who performed well on the whole test tended to do well or badly on each item in the test.”

To figure out the discriminating power of each item of the past tense test, the following formula was used:

$$D = \frac{B_A}{J_A} - \frac{B_B}{J_B}$$

D = The discrimination index

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

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

J_A/J_B = The number of students in upper group or in lower group

By using the above formula, the discrimination index of each item can be revealed. After knowing the discrimination index of each item, a table of criteria is then used to classify their category. Arikunto (2002:223) suggests the criteria of discrimination index in table 3.4.

Table 3.4 *The Criteria of Discrimination Index*

Interval	Criteria
0.00 < D ≤ 0.20	Poor
0.20 < D ≤ 0.40	Medium
0.40 < D ≤ 0.70	Good
0.70 < D ≤ 1.00	Satisfactory

Taken from Arikunto (2002:201).

Table 3.5 presents the result of the discriminating power analysis of all items.

Table 3.5 *Result of the Discriminating Power Analysis*

Criteria	Item Numbers
Poor	3, 8, 9, 15, 21, 24, 25, 26, 37, 46, 47 Total: 11
Medium	0
Good	28
Satisfactory	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 48, 49, 50. Total: 38

3.8 Data Collecting

Once the research instrument was prepared, the data collecting was the successive step to conduct. Since the study sought to reveal the students' achievement in past tense as well as their ability in writing recount and to prove whether there was a significant correlation between those two variables, past tense test and writing test were administered to gain the intended data.

Therefore, having finished the instruments and analyzed their validity, reliability and the effectiveness of each item, the writer administered the two tests

to the subjects of the study. The tests were held on Saturday, September 30th 2006 at 10 o' clock. The students were required to do each test in 50 minutes.

Once the tests were done, they were then scored. The scores of the test were the data required by this study. After the data were gathered, they were then analyzed and interpreted.

3.9 Data Analysis

In order to answer the research problems, the data that had been gathered was then analyzed and interpreted with regard to the research design. Since the data was in numerical form, statistical analysis was applied.

To find out whether or not there is a relationship between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount, the correlation coefficient showing the degree as well as the direction of the relationship between the two variables being investigated was computed. As the data were in the form of interval scale and because there was always a possibility that the result of the study will show no relationship between the variables, the following Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used (see Brown, 1988:130):

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2\} \{N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

In which:

- r_{xy} = correlation coefficient
- X = students' past tense scores
- Y = students' scores in writing recount

N = number of subjects

To interpret the relative amount of the variation in students' achievement in writing recount that was due to the relationship with the students' mastery of past tense, determination coefficient was computed. It equals the square of correlation coefficient and is therefore labeled r^2 .

The next step to follow was computing the regression equation. Through the regression equation, we can find out how the two variables correlate each other. From the regression equation obtained, then, prediction of Y score from X score can be made. The equation takes the form:

$$Y = a + b X$$

In which:

Y = estimated Y score

a = intercept

b = slope

However, before doing any statistical computation and inferences, there were some pre-requisites that should be taken into consideration. Those are the homogeneity of the data variance, the distribution of the data, and the linear model of the regression equation. These will be discussed in chapter four.

CHAPTER IV
FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with the data analysis as well as interpretation. It encompasses the discussion of the correlation analysis aimed at figuring out the correlation coefficient, computation of the index of the determination, the obtained regression equation, and their interpretations.

4.1 Correlation Analysis

After getting the scores of the students mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount as presented in appendix 5, the data were statistically computed to find the correlation between the two variables. As stated in the previous chapter, the r-value was computed using Pearson Product moment formula. The following table presents the result of the computation of correlation coefficient.

Correlations

		X	Y
X	Pearson Correlation	1	.724**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	50	50
Y	Pearson Correlation	.724**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	50	50

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

From the data presented in the table, it is found out that the obtained correlation coefficient is 0.724. For $\alpha = 5\%$ and $df = 50 - 2 = 48$, the critical value of r product moment is 0.284. Because r-value is higher than the critical value of r product

moment, the correlation coefficient is significant. This means that the null hypothesis is rejected and it can be stated that there is a positive correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount. This positive correlation is applied especially for the eleventh graders of SMA I Weleri in the Academic Year of 2006/2007.

4.2 Determination Coefficient

Interpreting the strength of the relationship between the two variables through the correlation coefficient is not sufficient. It is, therefore, necessary to compute the determination index r^2 (R^2 in the table below). It is labeled determination index because $100R^2\%$ of the variation within the dependent variable Y can be accounted for by the relationship with the independent variable X if linear regression Y on X exists. In this case, determination index shows us the percentage of variation among the achievement in writing recount that can be attributed to the relationship between the two variables.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.724 ^a	.525	.515	6.01433

a. Predictors: (Constant), X

From the computation above, the obtained determination coefficient (R square) is 0.525. This means that more or less 52.5 % of the variation in writing scores is accounted for by the relationship with the past tense scores, while the rest ($100\% - 52.48\% = 47.52\%$) was probably due to other factors such as the students' motivation, their interest in learning writing, their health or frame of mind on the

day they took the test, the frequency of practice, their writing habit, etc. This indicates that of the relationship existing between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount, as much as 52.5% can be explained by the correlation between the two variables, while the remaining 47.5% can be attributed to other factors mentioned above.

4.3 Regression Equation

The relationship between two variables can be expressed or estimated in the form of mathematical equations. Regarding the variables being investigated, the model of equation used in this study takes the form of:

$$\hat{Y} = a + bX$$

To test whether the linear model of $\hat{Y} = a + bX$ is suitable or not, the following table of ANOVA presents the result of the variance analysis.

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1917.415	1	1917.415	53.008	.000 ^a
	Residual	1736.265	48	36.172		
	Total	3653.680	49			

a. Predictors: (Constant), X

b. Dependent Variable: Y

The linear model is considered suitable if the obtained F value is higher than F table. From the above data, it is found out that with $\alpha = 5\%$, df for numerator = 1 and df for denominator = $50 - 2 = 48$, F table = 4.04. Since $F > F_{table}$, the linear model of $\hat{Y} = a + bX$ is suitable.

The following table of coefficient shows us the value of the intercept (a) and the slope or the regression coefficient (b) of the regression equation.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	18.585	6.851		2.713	.009			
	X	.774	.106	.724	7.281	.000	.724	.724	.724

a. Dependent Variable: Y

From the column of Unstandardized Coefficient it is obtained that the value of a (constant) is 18.585 and $b = 0.774$. Plugging these figures into the equation, we get:

$$\hat{Y} = 18.585 + 0.774 X$$

This equation shows that if a student got one score in past tense (X), his or her writing score can be estimated through the regression equation as much as $18.585 + 0.774 X$. Meanwhile, the b value of 0.774 means there was 0.774 point rise in writing score for every one point rise in past tense score. Again, it is necessary to assert here that this finding is applied especially for the subjects of this study.

Further explanation of the data computation of the correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount, the regression equation, variance analysis and index of determination can be seen in Appendix 6.

4.4 Interpretation of the Research Finding

After finding out the correlation coefficient and stating the rejection of the null hypothesis, the correlation of the two variables was known to be significant. In other words, there is a significant positive relationship between students' mastery

of past tense and their achievement in writing recount. Therefore, the higher the students score on past tense, the better scores the students get on writing recount. This correlation, however, is not based on cause and effect. It means that if students only have minimum level of past tense mastery, it does not mean that the students also get poor achievement in writing recount. There were some students who got low scores in past tense but they got high scores in writing recount.

On the basis of the obtained regression equation, it can be inferred that students' mastery of past tense influences their achievement in writing recount. In other words, there is an influence of students' mastery of past tense towards their achievement in writing recount. However, the result of the index of determination also indicates that the students' mastery of past tense is not the only factor that influences their achievement in writing recount. There are other relevant factors such as the students' motivation, their interest in learning writing, their health or frame of mind on the day they took the test, the frequency of practice, their writing habit, etc that affect their achievement in writing recount. Those factors, however, are not involved in the regression model of this study.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

This study is proposed to answer whether or not there is a correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount. The obtained value of correlation coefficient is 0.724 while the critical value of product moment correlation with $\alpha = 5\%$ and $df = N-2 = 50-2 = 48$ is 0.284. Since the r-value is higher than the critical value of r product moment, the correlation between the two variables is significant. This indicates that the null hypothesis of no correlation is rejected, and thus the investigation confirms that there is a significant positive correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount. This means that the better the students' master past tense, the better they achieve in writing recount. The obtained regression equation is $\hat{Y} = 18.585 + 0.774 X$ and the determination coefficient (r^2) showing the percentage of the variation in writing achievement which can be explained by the relationship with the students' mastery of past tense is 0.5248 or 52.48%. This tells us that the increase and the decrease of students' writing scores can be accounted for by the students' past tense scores as much as 52.48% through a linear relationship with the regression equation $\hat{Y} = 18.585 + 0.774 X$. In other words, there is an influence of the students' mastery of past tense towards their achievement in writing recount and the proportion of the influence is 0.525 or

52.5%. This shows that the remaining 47.5% is probably due to other conditions or factors.

5.2 Suggestion

With regard to the result of the study there are some suggestions that the writer intend to offer. The study reveals that students' mastery of past tense affects or at least correlates with their achievement in writing recount. Hence, there should be new ways, methods, and techniques for making the teaching of grammar and writing support each other. Regarding past tense and recount, the writer is of the opinion that diary writing practice will be a good way of providing a "means" for students to be able to write recount well. The students can express themselves while at the same time they learn to write and practice their grammar.

Furthermore, the result of the study shows that students' mastery of past tense is not the only factor that influences the students' achievement in writing recount. There are still other factors which affects students' achievement such as the students' motivation, their interest in learning writing, their health or frame of mind on the day they took the test, the frequency of practice, their writing habit, etc. Therefore, further research which takes those factors into consideration should be conducted.

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