

The Effects of Sentence Structure Mastery and Critical Thinking Ability towards Students' Writing Skill in Exposition Text

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to know the Effects of Sentence Structure Mastery and Critical Thinking Ability towards Students' Writing Skill in Exposition Text. The total sample of this research was followed by 60 students. The technique of collecting data of Sentence Structure Mastery used multiple choices of 35 items, the technique of collecting data of Critical Thinking Ability used questionnaire or Likert scales, and the writing test was employed to write at least 200 words of exposition text. The research methodology used in this research is survey method and the model used in this research is regression analysis model. The research findings are: 1) There are significant effects of sentence structure mastery and critical thinking jointly towards students' writing skill in exposition text at the State Senior High School in Tangerang Regency. It is proved by the value of Sig. $0.000 < 0.05$ and $F_o=299.04$; 2) There is a significant effect of sentence structure mastery towards the students' writing skill in exposition text at the State Senior High School in Tangerang Regency. It is proved by the value of Sig. $0.000 < 0.05$ and $t_o = 6.995$; 3) There is a significant effect of critical thinking ability towards students' writing skill in exposition text at the State Senior High School in Tangerang Regency. It is proved by the value of Sig. $0.000 < 0.05$ and $t_o = 8.853$.

Keywords: *Critical Thinking Ability; Sentence Structure Mastery; Students' Writing Skill in Exposition Text.*

INTRODUCTION

English is important to be learned as it is an international language that has a purpose to communicate with all people all around the world. People need to be able to speak English in order that they can share their information from one person to another person in the same time or different time. Mostly, people will take more concern on how that they can speak English fluently. Therefore, most of English learners try to practice speaking more often. People tend to think the success of it is on how to use the language in spoken activity.

In contrast, English has changed its concept in term of the language use; the spoken language, which is very dominant, will be followed by the more dominant of the written language. Thus, the objective of the English teaching and learning must be emphasized at helping the students to be able to communicate both in spoken and written forms. The ability of writing can be seen when the students composing a task such as journal, diary, or even writing a common text.

Writing is also one of the most important skills that every student should have especially in academic world since everything needs to be written, like writing a report, writing research paper, writing story and so on. However, most people still find it difficult. As one of language skills, writing is not as natural as speaking, even though it is the speakers' native language. Brown (2004:334) stated that humans being universally learn to walk and to talk, but that swimming and writing are culturally specific learned behavior. He said that the problem in creating writing product is in its composing process to be a product, which requires hard thinking, drafting and revising procedures. In addition, writing requires idea, selection of words, and good structure. Therefore, writing requires a lot of time to compose it as it is not natural skills and requires a long time learning process.

It is clear that writing skills is important but in fact the teaching of writing is not successful yet. It can be seen from the learners' performances in writing and their responses towards writing. Most of the English learners might agree that writing is the most difficult skill to master. Students' low interest and lack ability in writing their ideas with the use of correct grammar, vocabulary and punctuation are some indicators showing the unsuccessful of teaching writing. The first indicator is the students' low interest in writing compared to their interest in speaking. They prefer to express their ideas orally rather than to express them in the written forms. As the result, students can speak English fluently but they cannot write in English well. Another indicator is that most students find it difficult in using correct grammar, vocabulary and punctuation to compose English sentences into readable and acceptable texts.

Supporting the points above, the specific problems happen in EFL (English as Foreign Language) country. As English is not the first language, teaching writing can be said to be a difficult one. Brown (2004:334) also said in English as Second Language countries, teaching writing to second language has number of controversial issue. As well as in ESL countries, teaching writing is found to be difficult to be taught in English as Foreign Language country such as Indonesia. Since English is taught as foreign language, English is rarely used outside the classroom. Even in the classroom, only few students take a chance to practice it. Based on the situation, it has affected the students' English. According to Mistar (in Braine, 2005) the students' achievement in English is still far from

satisfactory. Many students still have problem in written and spoken English (Handayani in Hapsari, 2015).

In addition, the problem becomes bigger since most general concern of school nowadays requires students' thinking. Today, both critical thinking and creative thinking skills are being taught in most Asian schools and those skills are required so that the student can think critically in order to be able to analyze the argument. The argument making is considered to be tricky since it is required the students' logic and the ability to comprehend the issue. Students are required to read books or articles a lot while nowadays most of students focus more on gadgets to play games.

Concerning the topic of this case, in Indonesia there are still many students that feel reluctant in creating argument. In this case, the reason behind it is because the practice of critical thinking is not practically practiced in our current curriculum. Teaching English at school does not focus to create product (in kind of critical spoken or even writing). Our curriculum tends to focus more on reading and grammar skills. Even though, critical writing is considered as important skills that the high school students should have, most students find it is hard to do it. Most of them are stuck in composing the ideas and arranging the sentence in the correct order. These problems need further solution from all education stack-holders.

Another aspect for the concern is about the students' ability to composing sentence into the right orders. The students should have good knowledge of sentence structure mastery so that the message that they want to convey can be delivered well. In other ideas, the writing should be easily understood. In contrasts, most of students sometimes still have problem in putting the word orders or deciding the phrases. It should be a concern for all teachers since when they graduate from High Schools, some reports that they make should be made in written English.

Moreover, each language has a special structure of the language concerned. Learning structure is not only important, but also is needed by certain requirements applied. First, point proposed is the structure comes out from English, not the Latin one. Second, it also must be rational and has a good basic foundation. Structure is logically should be accounted for. Achmad (2002: 113) said that in a view of grammatical which assumes the language structure as hierarchy subsystem. The sentence is only one unit remains bound to the larger unit, or can stand alone. There is a possibility of a relative in a larger unit that sentence stand alone, has the final intonation pattern, the actual and potential consisting of the clause. In conjunction with syntactic units (words, phrases, and clauses), the sentence can be viewed as a construct composed of the basic constituents, which is usually a clause, with final intonation, and if

necessary fitted with conjunctions. Thus, there are two important issues related to the sentence, the basic constituents (words, phrases, and clauses) and the final intonation.

In conclusion, this research aims to investigate whether or not there are any effects of sentence structure mastery and critical thinking on students' writing skill in exposition text. The writer will try to find out if students' critical thinking and sentence structure mastery altogether can have significant effect on students' writing skill in exposition text. At the same time, the writer is also trying to find out if each of the independent variable can give significant effect to the students' writing skill in exposition text. Therefore, based on the explanation above, the writer wants to conduct a research with the title: "The Effects of Students' Sentence Structure Mastery and Critical Thinking Ability towards the Students' writing skill in exposition text. (A Survey at State Senior High Schools in Tangerang Regency)."

Based on the background and identification of the problem above, the writer is going to find out the formulated problems as follow:

1. Are there any effects of sentence structure mastery and critical thinking ability jointly towards students' writing skill in exposition text at State Senior High Schools in Tangerang Regency?
2. Is there any effect of sentence structure mastery towards students' writing skill in exposition text at State Senior High Schools in Tangerang Regency?
3. Is there any effect of critical thinking ability towards students' writing skill in exposition text at State Senior High Schools in Tangerang Regency?

METHOD

The approach of this research is quantitative research that is in line with the theory and opinion of Creswell (1994) in Sukamolson (2014:4). He stated that quantitative research is a type of research that is explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics).

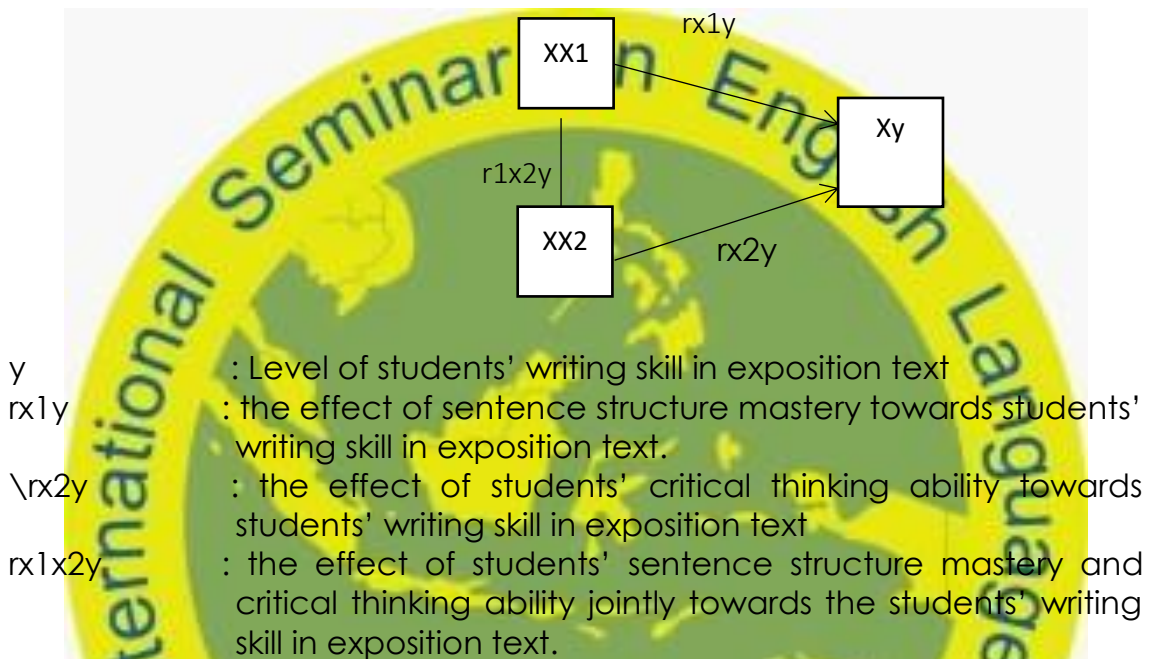
The type of research in this study is survey by applying a quantitative approach. A survey research is a study to find out if the independent variables have effects on dependent variable. Cohen et al. (2007:208) stated that typically, surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing existing conditions, or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationships that exist between specific events.

In this study, the writer selected the data randomly from three schools in Kabupaten Tangerang. SMAN 1 Kabupaten Tangerang, SMAN

4 Kabupaten Tangerang, and SMAN 19 Kabupaten Tangerang were chosen in this research. The total numbers of population are 600 students.

A sample is the selected participants that taken from the population for the research study. In this research, random sampling system will be selected to give a fair judgement for all the populations. There were 60 samples in this research. , this research will be seen clearly throughout the research design in following figure:

Figure 1. Research Design



RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The recapitulations of the entire test can be seen in the set of following tables:

Table 1

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.956 ^a	.913	.910	3.157

a. Predictors: (Constant), CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY, SENTENCE STRUCTURE MASTERY

Table 2
ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	5960.886	2	2980.443	299.042	.000 ^b
Residual	568.097	57	9.967		
Total	6528.983	59			

a. Dependent Variable: WRITING SKILL IN EXPOSITION TEXT

b. Predictors: (Constant), CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY, SENTENCE STRUCTURE MASTERY

Table 3

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	32.594	1.841		17.709	.000
SENTENCE STRUCTURE MASTERY	.790	.113	.445	6.995	.000
CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY	.218	.025	.564	8.853	.000

a. Dependent Variable: WRITING SKILL IN EXPOSITION TEXT

Based on the three tables above, the testing of hypothesis is formulated both statistically and verbally in the following:

1. The Effect of Sentence Structure Mastery (X1) and Critical Thinking Ability (X2) towards Students' Writing skill in Exposition text.

Refer to the table above, we can see that the coefficient correlation of the effects of independent variables: sentence structure mastery (X1) and critical thinking ability (X2) altogether towards dependent variables: the students' writing skill in exposition text (Y) is 0.956. It indicates that among variables have fair effects as stated by (theory) that if Robserved is closed to 1, the correlation tight will be getting stronger. In this research the effect is very strong.

Furthermore, according to the recapitulation above, we may get that coefficient correlation value is significant. In other words, there is a significant bound effect among the independent variables: sentence structure mastery (X1) and critical thinking ability (X2) towards students' writing skill in exposition text (Y). Meanwhile, the coefficient of

determination of sentence structure mastery and critical thinking ability variables contribution to the exposition writing skills variable is 0.913.

Furthermore, according to the recapitulation above, we may get that coefficient correlation value is significant. In other words, there is a significant bound effect among the independent variables: Sentence Structure Mastery (X1) and Critical thinking ability (X2) towards students' exposition writing skill (Y).

Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination sentence structure mastery and critical thinking ability variables contribute to exposition writing skill variable is 0.913. It indicates that the contribution of independent variables: grammar mastery and critical thinking ability jointly towards the dependent variable: students' writing skill is about 91.3% and the rest (for about 8.7%) is determined by the other factors.

The regression line equality that represents the effects of independent variable: sentence structure mastery and critical thinking ability towards the dependent variable: student writing skill in the following equation:

$$Y = 32.594 + 0.790X_1 + 0.218X_2$$

Where:

Y : dependent variable
X : independent variables

And 32.594 is a value of constant while both 0.790 and 0.218 are values of regression coefficient.

According to general criteria the significance of regression is obtained if significance (sig) is less than 0.05, which implies H0 is rejected or if Fobserved is more than Ftable, which affects H0 is rejected and coefficient of regression is stated significant or we may say that there is a significant effect of independent variables: sentence structure mastery (X1) and critical thinking ability (X2) altogether towards dependent variable: students' writing skill in exposition text (Y). The value for Ftable is the value of F on the distribution table in 5% real degree, with the numerator degree (k) = 2 and the denominator degree (n - k - 1) = 57, where n is the total number of respondents, while k is the total number of independent variables.

Sig value is stated by 0.000 < 0.05 and Fo is stated by 299.042. As the consequence H0 is rejected and automatically the H1 is accepted. It means that coefficient of regression is significant. In general, we may say that there are effects of sentence structure mastery (X1) and critical thinking ability (X2) towards the students' writing skill in exposition text (Y).

2. The Effect of Sentence Mastery (X1) towards students' writing skill in exposition text (Y)

According to general assumption, the significance of regression is if observed is higher than t_{table} or Sig value (0.000) is less than 0.05, it brings consequence that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. It means that there is a significant effect of independent variable X1 towards the dependent variable Y. Sig value is the number which is stated in Sig column for the row of sentence structure mastery (Variable X1). Meanwhile observed for 5% real degree and degree of freedom ($df = n - 2$) is 58, where n is the total number of respondents.

The Sig value is stated by $0.000 < 0.05$ and to is stated by 6.995. It brings consequence that H_0 is rejected and automatically H_1 is accepted. It means that there is significant effect of independent variable X1 (sentence structure mastery) towards the dependent variable Y (students' writing skill).

From the tabulation of correlation test, regression test and linear model above, we can conclude that there is a significant effect of independent variable X1 (sentence structure mastery) towards the dependent variable Y (students' writing skill).

3. The effect of critical thinking ability (X2) towards students' writing skill in exposition text(Y)

According to general assumption the significance of regression is if observed is higher than t_{table} or sig value is less than 0.05, it brings consequence that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. It means that there is a significant effect of the independent variable X2 the dependent variable Y. Sig value is the number which is stated in Sig column for the row of critical thinking ability ability (Variable X1). Meanwhile observed for 5% real degree and degree of freedom ($df = n - 2$) is 58, where n is the total number of respondents.

Sig value is stated by $0.000 < 0.05$ and to is stated by 8.853. It brings consequence that H_0 is rejected and automatically H_1 is accepted. It means that there is significant effect of independent variable X2 (critical thinking ability ability) towards the dependent variable Y (students' writing skill in exposition text).

From the tabulation of correlation test, regression test and linear model above, we can conclude that there is a significant effect of independent variable X2 (critical thinking ability ability) towards the dependent variable Y (students' writing skill in exposition text).

DISCUSSION

Writing is an activity to form some sentences into paragraphs using some capitalizations that requires three processes from drafting, creating and revising. Nunan (2003:33) stated, "Writing is an intellectual activity of finding the ideas and thinking about the way to express and thinking about the way to express and arrange them into a statement and paragraph that is clear to be understood by people."

Meanwhile, exposition is a text that elaborates the writer's idea about the phenomenon surrounding, and it has function to persuade the reader that the idea is important matter. There are several ways of writer to present the exposition text. They are compare and contrast, collection, causation, problem and solution. Misquitta (2009:2) stated, "Expository text may use one or more of these structures within the text depending on information conveyed. The types are compared and contrast, collection, causation, problem and solution."

In writing exposition text, students also need to master the sentence structure. Sentence structure mastery means the ability to know and identify the theory of sentence (either its function, units, or form) by following the rules that exists in English. Richard (2003:41) stated that sentence structure mastery is phrases, clauses or sentences that are acceptable in accordance to the language rules (grammar). He said that mastery of sentence structure is phrase, clause, or sentence that is acceptable because it follows the rules of grammar while grammar (grammar) is a description of the structure of language and the way in which the linguistic units, such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in that language as well as considering the meaning of the language functions contained in these sentences as a whole.

To compose a great text we need a great idea which requires critical thinking ability. Critical thinking is a science process of skills that needs to be practiced either in positive side or negative sides, and it will involve the process of critical thinking from asking and giving answer to the issue. Cottrel (2005:11) stated, "Critical thinking is defined as: a cognitive activity, associated with using the mind." Based on this definition can be explained that critical thinking is all of the thinking process using cognitive aspect that happens in mind process. The processes are related but not limited to acquire the language, analyze the language, and making reasoning for some related topics.

CONCLUSION

Some conclusions of this research can be presented as follows:

1. There are significant effects of sentence structure mastery and critical thinking jointly towards students' writing skill in exposition text at the State of Senior High School in Tangerang Regency. It is proved by the value of Sig. $0.000 < 0.05$ and $F_0 = 299.042$.
2. There is a significant effect of sentence structure mastery towards the students' writing skill in exposition text at the State of Senior High School in Tangerang Regency. It is proved by the value of Sig. $0.000 < 0.05$ and $t_0 = 6.995$.
3. There is a significant effect of critical thinking ability towards students' writing skill in exposition text at the State of Senior High School in Tangerang Regency. It is proved by the value of Sig. $0.000 < 0.05$ and $t_0 = 8.853$.

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