THE CORRELATION BETWEEN GRAMMATICAL MASTERY AND DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MASTERY OF THE TENTH-GRADE STUDENTS OF SMA NEGERI 1 INDRALAYA

A Thesis by

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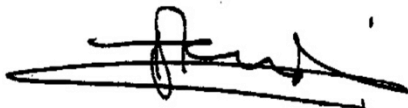
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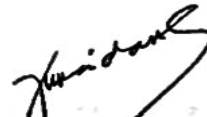
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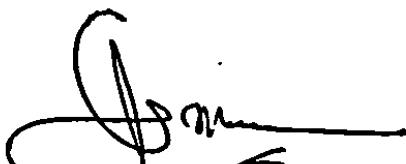
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The Correlation between Grammatical Mastery and Descriptive Writing Mastery of The Tenth-Grade Students of SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya

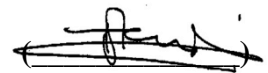**Aresti Randika**

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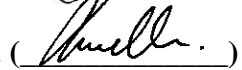**Date**   **: May 14, 2018**

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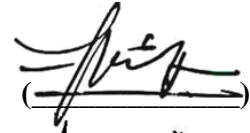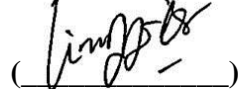
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Indralaya,   May 2018
The Writer,

Aresti Randika

v

DEDICATIONS

This thesis is dedicated to:

- The Almighty God, Allah SWT; whom the writer believes that he is the best planner of her life journey.
- Her dearly beloved parents, Bapak Harsono and Ibu Elpina Ekawati.
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  - Who never stop praying, supporting, motivating, and inspiring her
  - Who are tireless to care and accompany her
  - Whom the writer loves and love her
  - Whose names are not written here, but always on the writer's heart and mind.

Motto:
YOU ARE ALWAYS RESPONSIBLE FOR HOW YOU ACT,
NO MATTER HOW YOU FEEL.

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN GRAMMATICAL MASTERY AND DESCRIPTIVE WRITING MASTERY OF THE TENTH-GRADE STUDENTS OF SMA NEGERI 1 INDRALAYA

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to find out whether or not there was a correlation between grammatical mastery and descriptive writing mastery. The population of this study was the tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya which consisted of 316 students in academic year 2017/2018. The sample of this research was taken by using purposive sampling, the writer took three classes according some considerations and the total sample is 30% of the total number of the population, which were 94 students. The data were obtained by using two kinds of tests, namely grammar test and writing test. Then, those were analyzed by using correlation analysis by SPSS version 23.0 computer program. The results showed that there was a fair significant positive correlation between the students' grammatical mastery and their descriptive writing mastery ($r = 0.598$ and p-value $= 0.000$). In conclusion, there was a significant correlation between grammatical mastery and descriptive writing mastery of the-tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya.

Keywords: *Grammatical Mastery, Descriptive Writing Mastery*

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER FOUR – FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

List of Tables

List of Appendices

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents: (1) background of the study, (2) problem of the study, (3) objective of the study, and (4) significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing is prominent as a difficult language skill among other English skills, which are listening, speaking and reading. Because of its difficulty, learning how to write well must be taught continuously. This notion is supported by a statement from Harris (1974, p. 68) which says that writing is considered as a challenging skill including the simultaneous practice of very different abilities which some of them are never completely accomplished by many students, even in their own language. Davies (2000, p. 96) states that writing also involves basic skills such as hand writing or typing, spelling, constructing grammatical sentences and punctuating. According to Haegeman and Gueron (2001), grammar is a system of rules and principles which is the basis of all sentences of a language. Harmer (1991 p. 44) emphasizes that the importance of mastering grammar is undeniable because by using the correct grammar someone can express and communicate what is on his/her mind well in oral or written without making any miss-understanding to others.

Furthermore, Adas and Bakir (2013) state that students face four major problems in learning writing skill. The problems are the lack stock of adequate vocabulary, problems in spelling, the ill-structured sentences in composition, and the unity of every sentence in constructing the writing. Focusing on one of the four problems mentioned before, the ill-structured sentences' problem is surely caused by the lack of grammatical mastery because composing the well-structured sentences requires the students' knowledge in understanding the grammar of a language. For instance, grammatical mastery is considered as one of the important factors that affect students' writing mastery, or in other words, grammar is one of language components that the students should master.

1

According to Pellini, in *The Jakarta Post*, Indonesia universities will not be able to increase and sharpen their research program and improve their international standing without skilled students. Indonesia needs more number of literate students to improve its rank. (*Indonesia's PISA, 2016*). Based on the 4th edition of Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, the definition of literate is able to read and write. Someone is considered as literate, if they can read and write in certain situations and for certain purposes. In addition, In *Kompas* Online Newspaper, Khak, the Head of Language Institute Bandung, states that the lack of reading interest especially in young generation caused the writing habit in Indonesia lower than reading habit. (*Tradisi Menulis, 2011*).

Furthermore, based on the Education First − English Proficiency Index (EF EPI, 2017) Indonesia with its score, 52.15, takes place in the 39th rank out of 80 countries around the world which is categorized in a low level, decreasing from the previous position. For more specific, the result of International English Language Testing System (IELTS, 2017) test that was taken by Indonesian test takers in 2015 showed that the proficiency of writing English skill was in the lowest score compared with other skills. In relation to this, improving the students' writing ability is really necessary since according to the Act of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20, Year 2003 on National Education System, on chapter 3, article 4, and number 5 "Education is conducted by developing culture for reading and writing and, arithmetic, for all members of the community." In addition, *Kurikulum* 2013, the latest curriculum used for schools in Indonesia, emphasizes the mastery of communicative competence both in spoken and written mode in junior and senior high school. The students are directed to be competence in four language skills, speaking, listening, reading and writing. Besides, the language aspect such as vocabulary and grammar should be taught integratedly in teaching the four language skills.

The result of national examination of English subject of SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya or the schools where the writer conducted the research was still below the average or below 75.00, in which SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya got 70.85 in 2015, 52.59 in 2016, and 46.16 in 2017 (*Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, n.d.).

From the recent three years, it could be concluded that the students' ability in English was decreasing. This statement was also supported by one of the teachers who teach English subject in some classes at SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya. She said that since the criteria of minimum score or Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM) especially for the tenth-grade students is 70.00, the students' writing ability is still low. It was added that the grammatical mastery can be the factor that affects this. It is also supported by the result of Yuliani and Fitriana's research in 2017 which stated that the problems of the students' low writing ability are caused by grammar, limited vocabulary, and the fear of making a mistake during the writing process.

In line with these problems, since the results of previous researches showed that there was a positive correlation between the students' grammatical mastery and their writing mastery, the writer was interested to conduct the similar research in SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya. The purpose was to find out whether there was or not any correlation between grammatical mastery and descriptive writing mastery of the tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya.

1.2 Problem of the Study

The problem of this study was formulated in the following question: "Is there any significant correlation between grammatical mastery and descriptive writing mastery of the tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya?"

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the problem that has been mentioned above, the objective of this study was: "To find out whether or not there is a significant correlation between grammatical mastery and descriptive writing mastery of the tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Indralaya."

1.4 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the result of this research will be useful for English teachers to realize the correlation between grammatical mastery and descriptive

writing mastery so that the teachers can improve the students' grammar mastery in order to improve their descriptive writing mastery. It is also hoped that this research will give beneficial information to the school or any educational institution to increase the quality of the students and also the educational outcomes. Finally, it is expected that this research will give some useful knowledge to the writer by knowing the correlation between grammatical mastery and descriptive writing mastery, and also some experiences in conducting an educational research. For addition, this study can be one of the sources of information for further studies.

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