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# **THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' MASTERY IN PAST TENSE AND THEIR ABILITY TO EXPRESS PAST ACTIVITIES IN WRITING AT THE ELEVENTH YEAR STUDENTS OF MAN 2 KOTA CIREBON**

## **THESIS**

Submitted to the English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for Undergraduate in English Education (S.Pd.I)



By  
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CIREBON  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis dedicated to:

My highest thanks to Allah who always give me a light in finishing this thesis

My family, especially my mother... who always support me, I am a proud of you. Never be loser that all of you are the best parent in the world, I always pray to your happiness...I love you so much mom.....!!!

Dears someone special who always give me support and love, thanks 4 your love (Neng Occa). Never give up loving you.....!!!

My beloved brothers and sisters who always provide support and motivation in finishing this thesis. I will never forget you.

**“Think now and speak later”**

**“Use your thought because it's the proof of the life”**

Finally, I will give very thankfulness to all of my friends who always accompany my activities inside or outside the campus. I miss you so much.



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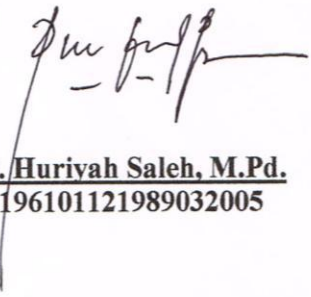
*Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.*

After guiding, analyzing, briefing, and correcting the writing of karsono's thesis with the students' register number is **06430553** entitled in **"The Correlation between Students' Mastery in Past Tense and Their Ability to Express Past Activities In Writing at the Eleventh Year Students of MAN 2 Kota Cirebon"**. We have the opinion that this thesis can be presented to the Education Faculty of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon.


*Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.*

Cirebon, July 2012

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## PREFACE

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, all praises and thanks are given to Allah. With His mercy and permission, the writer has been able to finish writing this thesis which is entitled **THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' MASTERY IN PAST TENSE AND THEIR ABILITY TO EXPRESS PAST ACTIVITIES IN WRITING AT THE ELEVENTH YEAR STUDENTS OF MAN 2 KOTA CIREBON**. This research is written to fulfill one of the requirements to gain the scholar of Islamic education Degree from *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon*. In writing this research, the writer uses the quantitative research by the formula of product moment correlation by Pearson.

The writer respectively received so many valuable contributions from the outsiders their time, thinking and energy to always support the writer in this thesis. Hence, the writer would like to express her special acknowledgment to the following names:

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2. Dr. Hj. Huriyah Saleh, M.Pd, the Chairwoman of English Education Department of *Tarbiyah Faculty of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon*, and also as the first supervisor, who has helped and guided in finishing this thesis.
3. Sumadi, SS, M. Hum, as the second supervisor, who has helped and guided in writing this thesis.





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Obviously saying, this is still far from being perfect. It is very possible that are some weakness either the contents or the organization of the writing. For the reason, the writer absolutely welcomes to the constructive comments dealing with this thesis.

Finally, the writer hopes that this thesis will be useful for scientific education purpose, all of the readers, especially for the writer herself and for the English Education Department of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* as a reference in general.

Cirebon, July 2012

**The writer**



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. The Background of the Problem

Every people in this world need language to communicate with other. Language and human beings are supposed to be the two things which can't be separated each other; this means that where human beings there are will be language. In short word, where is language there will be human beings. Language is the only instrument for human beings to communicate with each other. Without the existence of a language human beings will not be anything at all. Also with the language they can achieve the better life through knowledge and science, modern technology, culture, religion, and so many others which not mentions there.

Put at its simplest, a language is a set of signals by which we communicate. Human beings are not the only species to have an elaborate communication system. Bees communicate about honey and about the sitting of a new hive; chimpanzees can use vocalizations to warn of danger, to signal the finding of food or to indicate attitudes to mating; and dolphins can communicate information on food and danger by means of whistles and clicks. (Todd, 2002:6).

Language is for-what meaning has to do with people's ideas and intensions, and with social communication. Included are chapters on the innateness controversy, the private language argument, the possibility of animal





and machine language, language as rule governed or conventional behavior, and the speech act theory. (Martin, <http://mitpress.mit.edu/catalog/item/default.asp>).

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

The writer has opinion that language is the meaningful sounds produced by the organs of speech to express someone's ideas, thought, and feelings to someone else. The sounds can be in the form of a written language or an oral language. So in communication the people will use words, phrases, and sentences. Using a language as an instrument of communication means knowing and applying words, phrases, and sentences, in accordance with something that will be expressed. There are two important points about language. Firstly, the function of language is to communicate and interact among people in social community. Secondly, the expression of thought, the act and the signals are the way of language produced or implicated.



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

In order to be fluent English learners, the students have to master the four of English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in the language learning processes. All these language skills are related to each other. In this relation, Alexander (1967: vii-viii) says that in order to be a skilled performer, the students must become proficient in using the units of a language. It means, they have to study about vocabulary, sound system and grammar.

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



The writer has opinion that most of students in Indonesia have problems in mastering grammar which can be considered complicated. Grammar is essentials as the rules of wording to make meaningful utterances. Grammar is the study of rules governing the use of a given natural language, and, such as, is field of linguistics. Traditionally, grammar included morphology and syntax; in modern linguistics there subfields are complemented by phonetics, phonology, orthography, semantics, and pragmatics. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/grammar>).

The other statements are disagreeing with the statement above. This is one of the contrast statements of the statement above: Grammar is the system of a language. People sometimes describe grammar as the “rules” of a language; but in fact no language has rules. If we use the word “rules”, we suggest that somebody created the rules first and then spoke the language, like a new game. But, language didn’t star like that. Language started by people making sounds which evolved into words, phrases and sentences. No commonly-spoken language is fixed. All languages change over time. What we call “grammar” is simply of reflection of language at a particular time. (<http://www.englishclub.com/grammar-what.htm>). However, grammar has turned into formal language and has function to get ahead the students’ ability in language, especially English, in every formal even informal school.

In the skill of writing for instance, at least students have to master not only vocabulary but also grammar well. In this case, verb tenses have essentials role, because they tell readers when actions are taking place. Careful and accurate



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use of tenses is important to clear writing. For instance, if the verbs in a passage refer to actions occurring at past actions, then the past tense is definitely needed to be used. Most of students still get difficulty in using past tense even they have been learning it since elementary school. They can't use it properly when they make a writing text, especially in expressing their past experience. The past tense they use is still poor. Writing is one of the English skills which is difficult to be mastered. Students need to have an extra exercise to have a good writing. By constructing a text expresses their own past experience; hopefully it becomes very helpful for students to have a good skill in writing.

In line with the background of this study, the writer is interested in knowing how well students master grammar especially in past tense and how well they use it to express their past activities in the form of writing. In this case, the writer wants to know how well are the eleventh year students of *MAN 2 Kota Cirebon* mastering grammar in the form of past tense and their ability to express past activities in writing. The writer limits the study by focusing on grammar at the level of past tense and writing past activities only. Along with this, the writer also wants to know whether or not there is positive and significant correlation between the students' mastery of past tense and their ability to express past activities in writing. It becomes the reason to give the title of thesis namely: **The Correlation between Students' Mastery in Past Tense and Their Ability to Express Past Activities in Writing at The Eleventh Year Students of *Man 2 Kota Cirebon*.**



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## B. The Identifications of the Problem

To identify the problem of the research clearly, the writer sets up the presentation of the problem in the sections bellow:

### 1. The Field of the Research

The field of research in this thesis is grammar. In this context the writer would like to know is there any correlation between students' mastery in past tense and their ability to express past activities in writing?

### 2. The Research Approach

This thesis, which is entitled: "The Correlation between Students' Mastery in Past Tense and Their Ability to Express Past Activities in Writing at the Eleventh Year Students of *MAN 2 Kota Cirebon*", uses quantitative approach. It means that presented by numbers, so that it can be measured and interpreted by using statistical analysis.

### 3. The Kind of the Problems

There are many problems in English, especially about grammar. The writer would like to mention the kind of the problems in this thesis:

- a. The students haven't known the formula of the grammar case.
- b. The students aren't given enough exercise in grammar.
- c. The students can't apply the grammar roles into real purpose.

Those are some kinds of grammar problems, then, as an English teacher, we have to find out the way to solve the problems.





The first point is to know what the students want. Enjoyment is the keyword to express past activities in writing is easier, and then the students will know the formula of the grammar faster than before. After knowing the formula, students can practice it by the exercise that's teacher given. Finally, the students can apply it into real purpose.

#### 4. The Main of the Problems

The main of the problems in this research is the students' weakness or lack of ability in grammar, especially in expressing past activities in writing.

### C. The Limitation of the Problem

One of the problems in English is grammar. If the students go without grammar rules when they learn English, they cannot express their feeling to write in English correctly and formally.

This thesis, the writer has decided to limit the topic only taking about "The Correlation between Students' Mastery in Past Tense and Their Ability to Express Past Activities in Writing".

### D. The Questions of the Research

Based on the reason above, the writer has tried to give close attention to know:

1. How is the students' mastery in past tense?
2. How is the students' ability to express past activities in writing?
3. Is there any positive and significant correlation between students' mastery in past tense and their ability to express past activities in writing?

## E. The Aims of the Research

Then based on the question of the research above, the writer has tried to arrange the aim of the research as follows:

1. To find out the students' mastery in past tense,
2. To find out the students' ability to express past activities in writing, and
3. To find out whether or not there is a positive and significant correlation between the students' mastery in past tense and their ability to express past activities in writing.

## F. The Uses of the Research

These are the use of the research:

1. Through the application of tenses on teaching grammar focus, such as past tense, the students are expected can be motivated in learning English, so that can increase the students' ability especially in past tense and writing their past activities. The writer expects students will recognize and realize that mastering grammar, especially verb tense, is useful to have a good skill in writing.
2. To find out the English teacher in use the methodology of teaching in learning English at school.
3. The research can be a reference for the next research.





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