

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Learning a language is not only a matter of acquiring a set of rules and building up a large vocabulary, but also having the ability to use them to understand the language as well as to produce it in an oral or written way. Thus, a student who has learnt a lot of grammar and vocabulary but who cannot use that language either orally or written cannot be said to master the language.

1.1. Reason for choosing the topic

Language consists of four skills namely, listening, speaking, Reading and Writing. However, the Writing skill is considered to be the most difficult one for many people. Very often students do not know how to go through a thinking process systematically, especially in writing a class report.

To be able to write a good report, a student needs to master enough lexical items and structural words, and have a lot of practice, so that he can express his ideas with the exact words and expressions. Joseph P. Dagher said in his book "Writing : a practical guide"¹⁾ that writing is thinking on paper. Thinking is the mind at work, finding facts, seeing

1) Dagher, Joseph P., "WRITING : A PRACTICAL GUIDE", Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1976, page 3.

relationship, testing the truth of them, reaching conclusions, forming opinions. He also said that in this way, our mind produce a huge variety of ideas, and the facts that support them are the material which goes into any piece of writing.

However, how can a student express his ideas and expressions if he never reads any written paper, for example books, newspapers, or magazines ?

How can he comprehend new problems or situations ? In the introduction of his book "Practice and Progress", L.G. Alexander said that writing skill can be best developed through carefully controlled and graded comprehension/precis exercises. He also said that precis writing can be used effectively to develop a student's writing ability.²⁾

Being interested in this problem, the writer would like to prove whether one's ability in witing really correlates to one's mastery of reading in learning English as a second language. To prove this, she tries to study the achievements in Reading and Writing of the sixth semester students in the school year of 1984 - 1985 and 1985 - 1986 at the English Department of Widya Mandala University. And therefore, she chooses this topic, "The correlation

2) Alexander L.G., PRACTICE AND PROGRESS, Longman, page IX.

between the Reading and Writing Achievements of the sixth semester students in the school years of 1984 - 1985 and 1985 - 1986 at the English Department of Widya Mandala University".

1.2. The aim of the study

As the topic says, she studies the correlation between the Reading Achievement and the Writing Achievement of the sixth semester students in the school years of 1984 - 1985 and 1985 - 1986 of the English Department. Therefore, in relation to the topic, this paper is designed to see whether there is a correlation between these skills or not.

If this can be proved, she can conclude that the students who get high scores in the Reading test will get high scores in the Writing test as well, and vice versa.

Hopefully, the results of this study will be of some help for the teachers of the English Department of Widya Mandala University in their effort to design their English Language skill courses. This will enable the teachers of Reading and Writing to work together in order to get maximum achievement.

1.3. Definition of key terms

As the title says, there are three key terms namely correlation, Reading Achievement, and Writing Achievement to be defined.

Correlation³⁾ is basically a measure of relationship between two variables. In this study, the two variables are the results of the Reading and Writing, that is two sets of scores obtained from the Reading and Writing tests.

The Reading Achievements is the average of the students' Reading scores obtained in the sixth semester in 1984 - 1985 and 1985 - 1986, that is the combination of the results of the mid-semester and the end-semester tests.

The Writing Achievement is the average of the students' Writing scores obtained in the sixth semester in 1984 - 1985 and 1985 - 1986, that is the combination of the results of the mid-semester and the end-semester tests.

1.4. Hypotheses and assumptions

The main problem in this study is to find out whether or not one's Reading achievement influences his Writing achievement. More specifically, this study attempts to answer the following questions :

1. Is there any correlation between the results of the Reading and Writing achievements ?
2. Are there any significant differences between the results of the Reading and Writing achievements ?

3) Downie N.M. and Heath R.W., BASIC STATISTICAL METHODS, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1974, page 82.

In an attempt to answer those questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated :

1. There is no correlation between the results of Reading and Writing achievements.
2. There are no significant differences between the results of Reading and Writing achievements.

This study will be based on the following assumptions:

1. The scores of the students in the areas of Reading and Writing are reliable measurements of their performance in those areas.
2. The teachers of Reading and Writing classes during those school years are all qualified in doing their jobs.

(See Table VI).