CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LEXICAL ERROR AND WRITING COMPETENCE IN NARRATIVETEXT

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the correlations between writing competence and lexical error in narrative texts among twelve college students from Musi Charitas Catholic University, majoring in English Language Education Study Program. Since writing is a crucial skill in learning foreign languages, as it helps students to increase their understanding of lexical items and cover the ideas in narrative text. Proper use of vocabulary is essential for clear communication, and lexical error can lead to misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Researcher uses quantitative design for this study with collecting data that are collected from the narrative texts of the students' writings that are rated by two raters from two different universities. The result of this research shows that there is a strong correlation between writing competence and lexical error. The factors that give influence to this are vocabulary knowledge, prior writing experiences, and the teaching environment. Lastly, it should be implied in teaching situations where students are given more chances to increase their knowledge of learning vocabulary by increasing writing activity in a good learning environment so that students feel more motivated in writing activity.

Keywords: Writing Competence, Lexical Error, Correlation

INTRODUCTION

Writing activity is one of the main senses of learning foreign languages. It can help the learners to drill more their knowledge about the languages itself, including the lexical items. Lexical items have a strong figure to make a writing influences the writer to comprehend their ideas as well for the reader to understand it. If the writer uses proper lexical items in their writing, they are able to deliver the ideas and arguments they want others to see. In order for writers to present their writings in more appropriate way, they need to concern about lexical items that they use.

Writing skills have important influences because it can be the bridge how writer connects their ideas into proper output that can be understood by another person. If someone uses not-so suitable vocabularies to link their ideas, those may not be delivered well to other people. It may cause miscommunication or misinterpretation. In the more serious problem, the writing sometimes cannot be considered by other people (Johnson, 2012).

Nevertheless, writing skills are significant to academic purposes. Writing is the primary method of sharing knowledge, with variety of genres used in academic context such as descriptive text, narrative text, or recount text. In academic context, writing is one of the important skills that should be mastered by students and teachers (Flowerdow, 2016). When a writer could write well information or ideas, the writer may share a diverse amount of information, which is expected to give a wider perspective to the world

especially the young generation. That is why every student from all grades should learn about writing skill. Writing is categorized as a productive skill.

By seeing this condition, we can assume writing is not an easy skill. As spoken by Wiguna and the team, "Writing is an important role in transferring information in written form" (Wiguna et al, 2021). Writing activity may be confusing because there are rules that should be followed, unlike speaking where the speaker has more freedom and way to express their ideas. Especially when writing for academic purpose. When we write something, we need to consider the content and how it can be approached and delivered to other people. It is not totally an easy skill to be mastered over one night.

Writing activity has problems. The problems that may occur in writing activity can rise from the moments when students feel stressed because they need to follow the punctuation rules, structure of writing, and the process where they should choose suitable vocabularies when writing. Writing activity needs to be done in a structural way, and unless someone is not fluent, or at least knows how to construct their ideas in proper way, writing activity may bring problems for themselves. The problems that are not identified soon may be obstacles in writing activity.

There are many writing problems faced by ESL learners. They may get confused about choosing suitable vocabularies, what tenses to use, incorrect grammar, and confusion about how to link their thoughts into writing. This may occur because the students of EFL country have limited knowledge of vocabularies as well followed by the confusion of using proper usage of the foreign language in writing (Anggreni & Bochari, 2021). The problems that happen during the process of writing can affect students' writing productivity and their output quality.

One of the problems in writing activity is lexical error. Error is when EFL learners make a deviation due to a lack of language competence, while mistake is when language learners fail to correctly use a known system. Error occurs when language learners make a noticeable deviation due to a lack of language knowledge or competence (Ewie & Williams, 2017). Lexical error are essential to be investigated to explore the students' obstacles in target language (Anggreni & Bochari, 2021). Lexical mistakes happen EFL when learners lack sufficient knowledge of vocabulary, stemming from factors like infrequent reading and limited efforts to learn new words. Incorrect word choices in writing can lead to misunderstandings or difficulty in comprehending the text for readers (Andre & Jurianto, 2015).

Students' main problem in writing is lexical error. The twelfth years of learning English have been experienced by all Indonesian students as the EFL learners. But, does it guarantee that the students in Indonesia have enough competence in English language? Do they able to make a good writing that states their ideas clearly with proper words, grammar, and structure? The use of English in writing as a

communication tool has been very common in Indonesia but the lexical error in writing is still common.

From the most familiar aspect that we have been taught since elementary school, we can look at the students' writing skill. Do they able to make a good writing that states their ideas clearly with proper words, grammar, and structure? Students must gradually develop their language skill as well increasing knowledge of lexical items. In Indonesia, the EFL learners are not those who only learn English in school, but also university students, especially those who take English Language Education Study Program as their major. Students in Indonesia have been familiar with English study, but it does not mean they are fluent in it, neither in writing nor reading.

By seeing this assumption, the researcher has high interest in identifying the students' competences in writing aspect, especially from university students. Therefore, the researcher conducts this research to see correlations between lexical error and students' writing competence in narrative text through the formula of research question: "Do lexical error and writing competence have connections that influence each other or not?" in order to show valid data for reader to see are there any correlations or influences between lexical error and writing competences from a thorough process of researching.

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METHODS

In order to make this research more valuable in the name of truth, the methodology that is going to be used in this research is a test. The purpose of this research is to see correlations between lexical error and writing competence. The test was held in a classroom of the English Language Education Study Program's building in Musi Charitas Catholic University, more precisely the participants are students from second semester who take the Intermediate Writing course. Researcher conducted a meeting to greet them and explained the assignments. Students were expected to write their own narrative texts about their personal scary experiences. They were only given one chance to write their own writings:

Table 1. Research Schedule

Schedule of the Research in Musi Charitas Catholic University		
No.	**Date**	**Activity**
1.	10 May 2024	Researcher conducted a meeting and explained their assignments about writing a narrative text. Researcher gave explanations about the mechanism of submitting their assignments in the given Google Drive link. The deadline of the submission is one day.

To grade students' ability in writing competence, researcher needs a rubric grade to measure their competences in writing in educational context. This grading rubric is used to measure students writing of narrative texts with analyzing the lexical items as well. (Nurpitriyani, 2023).

Table 2. Grading Rubric

No.	Aspect	Level	Criteria
1.	Content	30-27	**EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:** knowledgeable, substantive, thorough development of thesis, relevant to assigned topic.
		26-22	**GOOD TO AVERAGE:** some knowledge of the subject, adequate range, limited development of thesis lacks of detail, mostly relevant the topic.
		21-18	
		16-13	**FAIR TO POOR:** limited knowledge, little substances, in adequate development of thesis.

			VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject non-substantive, not pertinent

3.	Vocabulary	20-18	**EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:** sophisticated range, effective word/ idiom choice and usage, word form mastery, appropriate register.
		17-14	**GOOD TO AVERAGE:** adequate range, occasional errors of word/ idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured. **FAIR TO POOR:** limited
		13-10	range, frequent errors of word/ idiom form, choice, usage, meaning confused or obscured.
		9-7	**VERY POOR:** essentially translation, little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form, OR not enough to evaluate.
2.	Organization	20-18	**EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:** fluent expression, ideas clearly stated/ supported, succinct, well organized, logical sequencing, cohesive.
		17-14	**GOOD TO AVERAGE:** somewhat choppy, loosely organized but main ideas stand out, limited support, logical but
		13-10	incomplete sequencing. **FAIR TO POOR:** non-fluent, ideas confused or disconnected lacks of
		9-7	logical sequencing and development. **VERY POOR:** does not communicate, no organization, or not enough to evaluate

4.	Language Use	25-22	**EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:** effective complex construction, few errors agreement tense, number, word order/ function, articles pronouns, preposition.
		21-18	**GOOD TO AVERAGE:** effective but simple construction, minor problems in complex construction, several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/ function, articles pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured.
		17-11	**FAIR TO POOR:** major problems in simple/complex construction, frequen errors of negation, agreement, tense number, word
		10-5	order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions, meaning confused or obscured. **VERY POOR:** virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules, dominated by errors, does no communicate, OR not enough to evaluate
5.	Mechanics	5	**EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD:** demonstrates mastery of conventions, few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization paragraphing.
		4	**GOOD TO AVERAGE:** occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, paragraphing but meaning not obscured.
		3	**FAIR TO POOR:** frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, poor handwriting, meaning confused or obscured.
		2	**VERY POOR:** mastery of conventions, dominated by errors of spelling, mastery of conventions; dominated by the errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization paragraphing, handwriting illegible; or not enough to evaluate.

The raters who are responsible to rate the narrative writings are lectures that have experienced teaching English. The first rater is a lecture from Musi Catholic Charitas University from English Language Education Study Program. Some of the courses that they teach in even semester of 2024 are Intermediate Writing and Academic Essay Writing. The second rater is a lecture from Bunda Mulia University from the English Language and Culture Study Program.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Table 3. Results of the Writing Competences Graded by Two Raters

Respondent	Rater 1	Rater 2	Average
Respondent 1	87	90	88.5
Respondent 2	83	72	77.5

Respondent 3	71	97	84
Respondent 4	81	87	84
Respondent 5	84	87	85.5
Respondent 6	88	96	92
Respondent 7	87	92	89.5
Respondent 8	88	98	93
Respondent 9	79	80	79.5
Respondent 10	75	65	70
Respondent 11	78	77	77.5
Respondent 12	78	77	77.5
TOTAL			83

Table 4. Results of Lexical Error Averages Graded by Two Raters

Respondent	Rater 1	Rater 2	Average
Respondent 1	20	19	19.5
Respondent 2	20	15	17.5
Respondent 3	15	20	17.5
Respondent 4	20	18	19
Respondent 5	20	19	19.5
Respondent 6	20	19	19.5
Respondent 7	18	18	18

Respondent 8	18	20	19
Respondent 9	17	18	17.5
Respondent 10	17	15	16
Respondent 11	16	18	17
Respondent 12	16	16	16
TOTAL			18

From the Table 4, we can calculate the percentage of the respondents that get the highest to lowest score. The level of lexical error grade is ranged from 16-20. The highest score is 19.5 and there are 25% of respondents who got this score. There are 17% of respondents that got score of 19. There are 8% of respondents who got score of 18. There are 25% of respondents that got score of 17.5%. There are 8% of respondents that got score of 17. And there are 17% who got lowest score which is 16.

Table 5. Tests of Normality

From the normality analysis and correlation analysis that have been done, we can see that the WRITINGCOMPETENCES variable, both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests yield statistics of 0.120 and 0.961 respectively. The p-values associated with these statistics are 0.200 (for both tests). This suggests that for both tests, the data do not significantly deviate from normality at the 0.05 significance level (p > 0.05).

For the LEXICALERRORS variable, the Shapiro-Wilk test yields a statistic of 0.904 with a

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.
WRITINGCOMPETENCES	.961	13	.767
LEXICALERROR	.904	13	.153

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

p-value of 0.153. Again, in both tests, the data do not significantly depart from normality at the 0.05 significance level (p > 0.05).

For the variable WRITINGCOMPETENCES, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov yielded statistics of 0.120 and 0.961 respectively, with associated p-values of 0.200. These results suggest that the WRITINGCOMPETENCES data do not significantly deviate from a normal distribution at the 0.05 significance level.

For the variable LEXICALERRORS the Shapiro-Wilk test yielded a statistic of 0.904 with a

p-value of 0.153. Again, the test indicates that the LEXICALERROR data do not significantly depart from a normal distribution at the 0.05 significance level.

Table 6. Correlations

		WRITINGCOMPETENCES	LEXICALERROR
WRITINGCOMPETENCES	**Pearson Correlation**	1	.835**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	13	13
LEXICALERROR	**Pearson Correlation**	.835**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	13	13

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data presented in the table shows the results of a Pearson correlation analysis between two variables: Writing Competences and Lexical error. The Pearson correlation coefficient between Writing Competences and Lexical error is 0.835, which indicates a strong positive linear relationship. This means that as writing competences increase, the number of lexical error also tends to increase. The coefficient is very close to 1, suggesting a strong relationship between these two variables.

The significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) associated with this correlation is 0.000. This p-value is well below the common threshold of 0.05, indicating that the correlation is statistically significant. In other words, there is a very low probability that the observed correlation occurred by chance. Therefore, we can be confident that the relationship between Writing Competences and Lexical error is not a random occurrence but reflects a true underlying pattern in the data.

The sample size (N) for both variables is 13. Although this is a relatively small sample size, the strength and significance of the correlation are notable. However, with a larger sample size, the results could be more generalizable. In this context, the strong correlation suggests that higher writing competences are associated with a greater number of lexical error. This might initially seem counterintuitive, as one might expect more competent writers to make fewer errors. However, it is possible that more competent writers engage in more complex writing tasks, which might increase the likelihood of lexical error as they explore more sophisticated vocabulary and structures.

The analysis reveals a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between writing competences and lexical error among the 12 participants. This suggests that as individuals' writing competences improve, they may also produce more lexical error, potentially due to the increased complexity and ambition in their writing. This finding highlights the nuanced relationship between writing skill and error-making, suggesting that errors can be a part of the development process in becoming a more competent writer.

Discussions

In this research, it has shown that there is a strong positive correlation with 0.835 between writing competence and lexical error. By seeing this research result, it indicates that writing competence and lexical error are linked to each other. Writing involves organizing ideas and combining them with a deep understanding of the structure, vocabulary, organization, content, and language use of the target language (Latifah & Rahmawati, 2019). The writing competence is influenced by vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation. In the process of writing, errors cannot be avoided. Errors, also known as unsuccessful language attempts, play a crucial role in identifying the challenges a language learner may face with grammar patterns or pronunciation (Botley, 2015). The correlations between writing competence and lexical error are shown to have strong correlations that influence the outcome of the narrative texts by the students.

There are some aspects that can influence writing competence and lexical error in students' narrative writings, especially from college students since writing as EFL students may find some difficulties through the process Developing writing skills is an intricate procedure and could be challenging to write in English as a foreign language. It concerns the process of crafting written content using proper linguistic features (Fitriati. et al (2018)). It could be influenced by the vocabulary knowledge, the quality of teaching from lectures, or even because they have experienced writing narrative text so they have known how to write narrative writing properly.

Vocabulary knowledge contributes to the process of narrative text writing. Some students may find difficulty in finding suitable vocabularies. The students had few vocabularies due to their lack of interest and laziness in learning new words. Additionally, the students experienced confusion and found it challenging to make progress. They brainstorm their thoughts before writing. For instance, they may have the concept of writing in Indonesian, but find it challenging and confusing to translate and express them in English (Latifah & Rahmawati, 2019). In terms of morphology, Indonesian and English share some similarities and differences. These differences are what make it hard for Indonesian learners to write in English. For example, Indonesian verbs do not show person, tense, or number distinctions. It shows no differentiation between simple past and present. Furthermore, 'spelling' is frequently identified as an issue. Spelling is challenging for English learners because of the inconsistency between the sound of a word and its spelling. Therefore, Indonesian students may spell words phonetically due to the similarities with their native language; that is the way words are spelled. Indonesian learners face challenges in separating pairs of English words in terms of meaning that can be represented by one word (Hidayati, 2018).

The quality of teaching from the lecture also gives impacts of teaching in the classroom to how students can absorb the materials well and produce a creation based on the material. Students need to be explicitly taught vocabulary. Having insight into how students view various writing assignments helps language instructors give appropriate guidance and provide necessary support in English as a Foreign Language settings (Nalliveettil & Mahasneh, 2022). A range of resources and methods must be utilized to assist students in effectively acquiring, storing, and recalling the vocabulary being taught. It is necessary for students to receive instruction using appropriate methods. Strategies to enhance learning and prevent the shortcomings in knowledge. Students must receive guidance in writing to enhance their writing abilities (Chaaba, 2017).

Another factor that can influence the correlations between writing competence and lexical error in narrative writing, is because of their previous experience. When EFL undergraduate students receive assignments, their previous and present experiences with writing in English influence their motivation towards the task (Nalliveettil & Mahasneh, 2022). The subjects of this research are those students who take Intermediate Writing course in even semester of 2024. The requirement for those that may take this course is they have to pass the Basic Writing course in the first semester because it has been regulated by Musi Catholic Charitas University for English Language Education Study Program. This relationship matches the principles of learning as students expand on their current understanding. Having correct syntax; conforming to the rules of grammar. Competence plays a crucial role in the procedure enhancing writing abilities and inspiring students to reach greater academic success (Nurpitriyani, 2023). So, because of learning from experiences, it can influence students to create similar thing in the future without much difficulty. From the Table III.2 Lexical error Grade, there are 25% of students that almost got perfect score of 19.5 from 20. It has higher percentage than those who got the lowest score, 16 from 20, which is 17%.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, after identifying and analyzing the data, the researcher found that there are correlations between writing competence and lexical error. From the data processing through SPSS, it is shown there is strong correlation between writing competence and lexical error. The given result provides that from Pearson correlation coefficient between Writing Competences and Lexical Error is 0.835, which indicates a strong positive linear relationship. It indicates that the more skilled a writer becomes, the more often lexical error occurs. Proficiency in writing involves a thorough comprehension of vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, structure, organization, content, and language use, which makes writing a complicated skill. Errors are bound to happen during this process, offering important understanding of students' difficulties with language structures. Vocabulary knowledge, quality of instruction, and previous writing experience all play a role in writing proficiency and lexical errors. Quality teaching methods and effective vocabulary instruction are crucial in enhancing students' writing abilities. Moreover, previous background, such as finishing required courses, improves students' skill in writing proficiently. The performance data reveals differences in students' abilities, with many achieving high scores in writing and vocabulary, while some show opportunity for improvement. In general, the research emphasizes how writing competence and lexical error in vocabulary are closely related, underscoring the significance of specific guidance. In order to improve writing competence and minimize errors in vocabulary, lectures should concentrate on teaching vocabulary explicitly, apply effective instructional strategies in teaching, provide exercises for students to practice, and apply their writing skills in various genres of writing. Additionally, researcher suggests the next research to focus on similar topics and broaden their research areas of lexical errors in order to help the lectures to identify students' needs more detailed in writing competence.

This research is made to find correlations between lexical error and writing competence in narrative text. This research would be difficult to be conducted without unstoppable support from the researcher's environment. Firstly, I would like to thank all the lecturers who have helped, tutored, and checked this research along the process through some discussions until it is done. I would also like to thank the two raters, Sir Heri and Sir Restu who helped me in rating and giving scores of the narrative texts from the students. It is impossible for me as the researcher to do this all alone. Second, I also would like to thank my friends who gave me motivation and were willing to help each other during the process of doing this research. However, this research may not be excused from some limits that give opportunities to be improved more in the future research. Lastly, for the unlimited support and chances of learning, I express my deepest gratitude here for those who contributed with me along the way of this research.

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