

**THE CORRELATION BETWEEN GRAMMAR MASTERY AND
READING COMPREHENSION OF THE SECOND GRADE
STUDENTS OF SMPN 12 PEKANBARU**

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Abstract: *This correlational study is aimed to find out the correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension of the second grade students of SMPN 12 Pekanbaru. The sample was chosen by using cluster random sampling as many as 37 students. The instrument used in this study was the tests; grammar test and reading comprehension test. Grammar test is used to know the students' grammar mastery while reading comprehension test is used to find out the students' ability in understanding a text. The obtained data were assessed by using Product Moments formula and analyzed by using SPSS 21.0 for windows. Based on the data analysis, it shows that there is moderate, significant and positive correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension of the second grade students of SMPN 12 Pekanbaru. Therefore, it answered the research question that there is a correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension.*

Key Words: *Correlation, grammar mastery, reading comprehension*

HUBUNGAN ANTARA KEMAMPUAN GRAMMAR DAN PEMAHAMAN READING SISWA KELAS DUA DI SMPN 12 PEKANBARU

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan hubungan antara kemampuan grammar dan pemahaman reading siswa kelas dua di SMPN 12 Pekanbaru. Sample dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik cluster random sampling sebanyak 37 siswa. Instrumen dalam penelitian ini adalah tes; tes kemampuan grammar dan tes pemahaman reading. Data yang diperoleh dinilai dengan menggunakan rumus Product Moment dan dianalisa menggunakan SPSS 21.0. Berdasarkan tes Product Moment menunjukkan bahwa ada hubungan yang signifikan dan positif antara kemampuan grammar dan pemahaman reading siswa kelas dua di SMPN 12 Pekanbaru yang menunjukkan adanya korelasi medium. Oleh karena itu , rumusan masalah penelitian ini terjawab bahwa terdapat hubungan antara kemampuan grammar dan pemahaman reading siswa kelas dua di SMPN 12 Pekanbaru.

Kata Kunci: Korelasi, kemampuan grammar, pemahaman reading

INTRODUCTION

English plays an important role in our educational system. English is the most common language used in the Internet. Mastering English will allow students to access to an incredible amount of information. In learning language, learners need to know four basic language skills in English. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing skill.

Reading is one of the important skills that English learners cannot ignore. Reading is a skill that can expand learners' knowledge. The importance of reading is comprehending what the text tells about. Comprehension is the reason for reading. If readers can read the words but do not understand what they are reading, they are not really reading. Someone's comprehension can be seen if he knows what he does understand and what he does not. (Armbruster, 2000).

According to Cunningham in Clarke (1996), reading is related to word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition is the process to know written symbols while comprehension is the process of creating an understanding of the words, the sentences in the text that are interconnected.

According to School - Based Curriculum (KTSP) 2006, reading is one of English skills that has to be learned. Students are expected to comprehend the sentences or paragraphs in a text and find some information in the text. Based on the basic competence of reading of VIII grade, students are able to comprehend the meaning of functional written text and short simple essay in the form of descriptive, recount and narrative text.

Based on the observation, the writer found out that some of second grade students are still confused in comprehending texts. Some of them get difficulties in finding main idea of the texts, finding specific information in the text and comprehending the meaning of some words so that they lose their interest in reading texts.

In comprehending a reading text, students often face several problems. It happens because they are lack in certain aspects in reading comprehension. Shanahan (2013) states that there are two aspects that can influence students' comprehension in reading comprehension; they are vocabulary background and grammar complexity. It means that besides vocabulary, knowledge of grammar is also important for students to comprehend texts.

Besides the language skills, students also learn about language components. Language components are elements of language consisting of phonology, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Meanwhile, language skills are cognitive skills combining knowledge and understanding with practice in language use. Language skills and language components cannot be separated. Both of them are interrelated each other because we can find language components in language skills. In this research, grammar knowledge is as language component while reading comprehension is as language skill.

Grammar is not taught directly but students acquire practical grammatical knowledge from using the language. Learning reading text covers grammar knowledge in language features. It means while learning the texts, students are also taught about grammar in language features that are related to the texts so that students are expected to be able to comprehend the texts. For example, in learning recount text, students are taught about simple past tense and past continuous tense in advance so that they know that the situation happened in the past. Therefore, in this study, grammar mastery is

explained in terms of language features in each text while for reading comprehension, the writer is focus on three types of text that have been learned by students which are descriptive, recount and narrative text.

Grammar is the structure and meaning system of language (Oxford Dictionary). It is an important aspect for forming words and sentences. Veit (1986) defines grammar as a language knowledge. Grammar is what enables someone to understand the words and sentences. Knowledge of grammar has an important role in comprehending text because complexity of grammar can cause difficulty. The lack of grammar knowledge will result the grammatically incorrect sentences which can lead to misunderstanding of what the text is about.

According to Subasini and Kokilavani (2013), Grammar is the sound, structure, and meaning system of language. All languages have grammar, and each language has its own grammar. Grammar is important to make a sentence meaningful and comprehensible to the reader. Grammar rules the word form and sequence of words in a sentence. In other word, words are arranged by following the grammar rule in order to give meaning. Knowing grammar can help students to comprehend what the text means correctly. Therefore, it can be assumed that the higher student's grammar mastery is, the higher reading comprehension student will be.

METHODOLOGY

This research belongs to correlational research which determines the relationship between students' grammar mastery is as variable X and their reading comprehension is as variable Y. This research was conducted at SMPN 12 Pekanbaru. The population of this research was all of the second grade students of SMN 12 Pekanbaru with the total number of students was 312 students. The sample of this research was class IX² which consisted of 37 students. The sample was chosen by using cluster random sampling. The writer selected the classes randomly as the sample and try out class by using lottery technique. The writer asked all the chairmen of the third grade to take a piece of paper and class IX¹ was chosen as the try out class and class IX² as sample class. To conduct this research the writer used tests, grammar mastery test and reading comprehension test. Before conducting the research, the writer tested the instrument by validity and reliability test. After collecting the data, the writer used correlation Product Moment formula to find out the correlation between variable X (students' grammar mastery) and variable Y (students' reading comprehension) and the symbol of the correlation product moment is 'r'. The data were analyzed by using SPSS 17.0. After analyzing the data, it can be interpreted based on the table of r_{xy} Product Moment's interpretation.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this section, the writer presents the findings focusing on the correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension.

The Students' Grammar Mastery

The distribution of students' grammar mastery score is presented below.

Table 1. The Result of Students' Grammar Mastery

No	Score	Frequency	Percentage	Category
1	81-100	6	16.22%	Excellent
2	61-80	18	48.65%	Good
3	41-60	12	32.43%	Mediocre
4	21-40	1	2.70%	Poor
5	0-20	0	0%	Very Poor
TOTAL		37	100.00%	

Table 1 above shows the level of students' grammar mastery. The number of respondents is 37 students. There are 6 students (16.22%) in excellent level, 18 students (48.65%) in good level, 12 students (32.43%) in mediocre level, one student (2.70%) in poor level and no student is in very poor level.

From all of the data presented in table 4.1, it can be concluded that the third grade students at SMP Negeri 12 Pekanbaru have excellent to poor level in grammar test. However, it is dominant to good level because it has the highest percentage, which is 48.65%.

The percentage of the students' scores can be classified into some categories that are presented in figure 1.

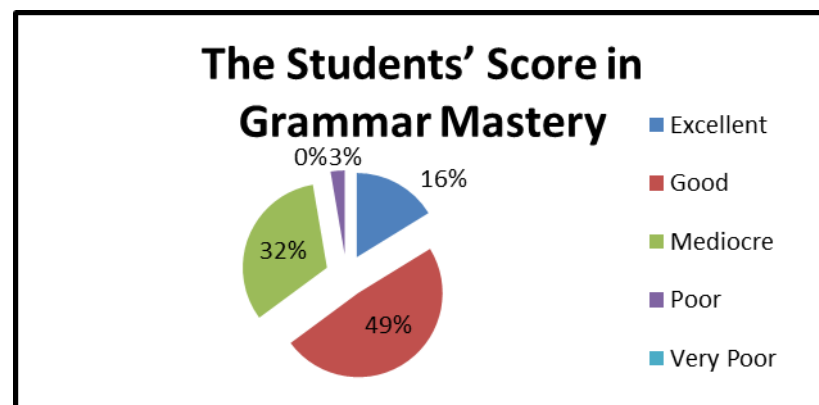


Figure 1. The Students' Score in Grammar Mastery

The Students' Reading Comprehension

The distribution of the reading comprehension test score is presented below.

Table 2. The Result of Students' Reading Comprehension

No	Score	Frequency	Percentage	Category
1	81-100	0	0%	Excellent
2	61-80	15	40.54%	Good
3	41-60	15	40.54%	Mediocre
4	21-40	7	18.92%	Poor
5	0-20	0	0%	Very Poor
TOTAL		37	100.00%	

Table 2 shows the ability level of students in reading comprehension. The number of respondents is 37 students. There are no student (0%) in excellent level, 15 students (40.54%) in good level, 15 students (40.54%) in mediocre level, 7 students (18.92%) in poor level and no student (0%) in very poor level.

From all of the data presented in table 4.7, it can be concluded that the second grade students at SMP Negeri 12 Pekanbaru have good to poor level in reading comprehension test. The Students' score can be presented in the following figure:

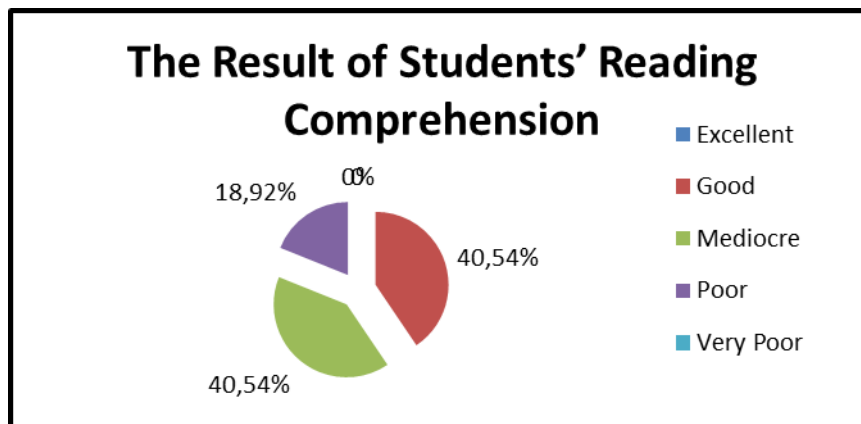


Figure 2. The Result of Students' Reading Comprehension

To find out the mean score of the students' scores in reading comprehension, the writer calculated by using the formula below:

$$M = \frac{\sum FX}{N} = \frac{2125}{37} = 57.43$$

The mean score of the students' scores in reading comprehension is 57.43. Therefore, it can be stated that the students' scores is in mediocre category. It means that students' ability is moderate in reading comprehension. It is neither good nor bad.

The test of hypothesis

In this research, there is a hypothesis need to be answered. To test the hypothesis, the writer used Pearson Product Moment assisted by SPSS 17.0 program. Before the data of two variables were tabulated in SPSS 17.0 program, the normality and linearity test were carried out by the writer. The normality test of the data is a qualification for many statistical tests because normal data is an underlying assumption in parametric testing. Furthermore, the linearity test is to predict the value of a variable (dependent variable) based on the value of another variable (independent variable). The result of normality and linearity are presented as follows.

Table 3. Normality Test

		Unstandardize d Residual
N		37
Normal Parameters ^{a,,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	11.42544880
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.083
	Positive	.054
	Negative	-.083
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.508
Asymptotic Significance (2-tailed)		.959

a. Test Distribution is Normal

b. Calculated from data

Table 3 shows that Z value of the data is 0.508. The data is categorized as normal if Z value > 0.05 . Therefore, the test distribution is normal because $0.508 > 0.05$. It means it can be continued to linearity test and correlation.

The result of linearity test assisted by SPSS 17.0 is presented below.

Table 4. Linearity Test (ANOVA Table)

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significan ce
Grammar Mastery Reading Comprehension	Between * Groups	(Combined)	2342.889	12	195.241	1.342	.260
		Linearity	1134.776	1	1134.776	7.801	.010
		Deviation from Linearity	1208.113	11	109.828	.755	.678
	Within Groups		3491.358	24	145.473		
	Total		5834.247	36			

Table 4 shows that the sig. of deviation from linearity is 0.678. The data is categorized as linear if the value of sig. deviation from linearity is > 0.05 . Therefore, the data is linear because $0.678 > 0.05$. It means there is linear correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension.

After the distribution of the data is normal and both of the variables are linear, the writer tabulated the data to find out the correlation of the variable X and Y. To find out the correlation, the writer used Pearson Product Moment assisted by SPSS 17.0 program.

The result of the correlation is presented below.

Table 5. Correlations

		Grammar Mastery	Reading Comprehension
Grammar Mastery	Pearson Correlation	1	.441**
	Significance(2-tailed)		.006
	N	37	37
Reading Comprehension	Pearson Correlation	.441**	1
	Significance(2-tailed)	.006	
	N	37	37

**. Correlation at 0.01(2-tailed):...

The calculation of t_{value} is presented below.

$$t_{\text{value}} = \frac{0.441\sqrt{37-2}}{\sqrt{1-0.441^2}} = 2.9$$

Table 5 shows the Pearson correlation value is 0.441 and the correlation significant at the 1% (0.01) level. It means there is a correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension and the value is positive, it shows that the correlation is in the positive area.

From the calculation, the t_{value} is 2.9. It is implied that $t_{\text{value}} > t_{\text{table}}$ ($2.9 > 2.724$). Therefore, if $t_{\text{value}} > t_{\text{table}}$ so the hypothesis; there is a correlation between students' grammar mastery and reading comprehension at the second grade students of SMPN 12 Pekanbaru is accepted. In conclusion, there is a significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and reading comprehension at the second grade students of SMPN 12 Pekanbaru. Moreover, the r_{xy} is 0,441 means that the correlation of grammar mastery and reading comprehension is moderate correlation.

Interpretation of the research findings

Based on the presentation of the data and the findings, the writer found out that the level of students' grammar mastery was in good level because the highest percentage was in good level (48.65%). There were 18 of 37 students categorized as good in answering grammar questions related to language features. In addition, the average score of grammar mastery is 68.55% which means the students are good in grammar mastery.

On the other hand, the result of reading comprehension test has the same percentage in good and mediocre level which is 40.54%. There were 15 of 37 students categorized as good and mediocre in reading comprehension. But, there are still 7 of 37 students that are categorized as poor in reading comprehension. However, the average score of students in reading comprehension is 57.48. It can be implied that the third grade students of SMP Negeri 12 Pekanbaru are considered as mediocre in reading comprehension.

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that there is a correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension. It can be seen from the Pearson Product Moment that the sig. value is (0,006) $< \alpha$ 0, 01 (see appendix 13). It is indicated that there is a significant correlation between two variables which were already calculated. Therefore, it answered the research question in the formulation of problem; "Is there any correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 12 Pekanbaru?". As Shanahan (2013) states that students' comprehension in reading is not only influenced by vocabulary background, but also grammar complexity. Moreover, since the r_{xy} is 0,441, it means that the correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension has moderate correlation. The findings was in line with the findings of Ekadeva (2013) which also shows moderate correlation between grammar and reading comprehension. In addition, the findings of Sekardini (2014) shows high correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension which has the value of coefficient correlation 0.62.

CONCLUSIONS

In brief, this study is proposed to answer whether there is a correlation between students' grammar mastery and reading comprehension. The obtained value of correlation coefficient is 0.441 which means that there is a positive correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension. In addition, because the value of r_{xy} is 0.441, it can be interpreted that the grammar mastery and reading comprehension have moderate correlation.

Moreover, the obtained t-value is higher than t-table which is $2.9 > 2.724$ it means that the correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension is significant. Therefore, it answered the research question that there is a significant correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension.

SUGGESTIONS

The study reveals that the students' grammar mastery affects or at least has correlation with their reading comprehension. Therefore, the writer suggests that teachers give more explanation and practice about grammar or language features which are in texts that students will learn. Moreover, it is recommended that the students learn more about the texts. Students should be able to differ the kinds of the texts, so it will be easier to know the social function of the texts. Furthermore, the students also have to enrich their knowledge and ability in grammar and reading. Since there is correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension, the writer also suggests that other researchers get more insight in conducting the correlational study.

The application of this recommendation is expected could help the researcher, the teachers or school and also the students to draw a holistic picture of correlation between students' grammar mastery and reading comprehension.

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