

# The Correlation between Students' Grammar Mastery and Students' Reading Comprehension

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## ABSTRACT

New vocabulary or unknown word becomes problem for students. When students read a text, they got difficult because the unknown word. And students had difficulty in grammar mastery too. To get the meaning of the text, it needs grammar. In grammar has a adverbial of time which is it can use as clue when reading a text. Additionally, this research is aimed to know whether there is a significant correlation between the students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension at Ninthe grade of MTsS PP MIS Cubadak. The quantitative research method and the technique was correlation research. The population was 117 students and sample of this research was 39 students from 9<sup>2</sup> class which use purposive sampling technique. The data was collected by grammar mastery and reading comprehension test. For reading comprehension test which was adapted from national exam prediction for junior high school printed by graha pustaka. The finding of this research shows that there is significant correlation between the Students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension. It is proved by the r-measured 0.856 which is higher than r-table 0.316 (0.856 > 0.316). There was positive correlation and has high correlation between 0.81 - 0.99 which mean it has very high correlation. This means that frequent grammar mastery can improve reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** Correlational Study, Grammar Mastery, Reading Comprehension

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## INTRODUCTION

Learning English is an important thing for people to improve their communication skills. Because, it can be used to communicate with people who are from different country and it can get new information about all around the world. In Indonesia, English is a foreign language that is taught formally in some elementary schools until university level. Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture number 68 of 2013 concerning the basic framework and structure of junior secondary school curriculum regarding the implementation of the 2013 curriculum, English is one of the subjects that must be learned by the students (Septiani, 2018). So, learning English is important for students to increase their language. Then, they can use easily to communicate with people in the world.

In learning language, students must concern about language components and language skills. Both of them have corelated each other in learning language especially learning English. Language components includes, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Grammar is the structure or pattern that is used to create a good sentence that includes *subject*, *verb*, and *object*. According to Nunan in Nafisah Endahati, Grammar is a set of rules used to determine the correct order of words at a sentences level (Endahati, 2015). In line with

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Rodney Huddleston and Geoffrey K. Pullum stated, Grammar is closely related to the form sentences and the smallest unit parts such as, word, clause, and phrases (Huddleston and Geoffrey, 2003). To make a good sentence, it needs grammar. Because it can make easy to understand what the meaning of the sentence is and by mastering grammar, and also easier to make a good sentence and use every unit of phrase, clause and sentence. Jeremy Harmer stated, Grammar is the way to change the words and group the words together into a sentence (Harmer, 1987). It will be easy to identify whether the sentences are negative, positive or interrogative by grammar.

Grammar is one aspect which has to be owned by every language. Grammar can be helpful for reading a text, it will be impossible to know the meaning of the text without grammar knowledge. Grammar is defined as a system that organizes words or sentences which when spoken have meaning (Murtini et.al, 2013). According to Freeman in (Mulyaningsih, 2013), "Grammar is one of three dimension of language that are interconnected. Being able to use grammar structures does not only mean using the form accurately; it means using them meaningfully (semantic) and appropriately (Pragmatic)". In line with Thornbury, "Grammar is conventionally seen as the study of syntax (the arrangement of sentence) and morphology (how to arrange word) of sentences" (Thornbury, 2002). Grammar is a branch of study of language in a particular somewhere between sound and meaning...." (Mahendra O & Thresia F, 2016). It means, learning grammar does not only teach how to form correct sentences. But, grammar also teaches about the sound and meaning of word or sentence. Therefore, the scope of grammar includes the vocabulary, word formation, sentences formation, spelling which is used meaningfully and appropriately.

Beside learning language componets, students also learn language skills. There are four language skills that are taught at school namely listening, speaking, writing and reading. Reading is an important skill in learning English. Because by reading, the learners acquire new ideas and get the information that is needed. If the learners master in reading, it will be helpful for them to understand what the text is about. But, if the learners not master in reading, it will be difficult for them to understand the meaning of the text. Reading and Grammar are related to each other. According to Nassaji in Ranjabar, "Any understanding of reading texts and knowing the utterances require close attention of number of factors, one fundamental factor of which is the knowledge of grammar" (Ranjabar, 2012). It means, when reading a text, grammar can describes the situation or the time. Therefore, to understand the meaning and the content of the text, grammar is very necessary in reading activity.

Reading is the one of skill that has been mastered in learning English by learners. Because, learners will know what is the meaning of the text that full of symbol of language that is also called "decoding". In reading a text, the learner does not have to know about the symbol of the language, but also tries to get information from the text they read. In relation to this, Harvey in Afdaleni states that reading is to inform the reader about something that is interested in (Afdaleni,2013). it means if the lerner need some information from the text, they need to read the written text first to get the information. The aim of reading is comprehension. According to Caroline and Nunan, "Reading is a set of skill that involves making sense and deriving meaning from the printed word." (Caroline, 2005). It means that, when the learners read the text, they not just read what the printed word but also comprehend the text. Reading is not passive but rather than active process because reading cannot separated from thinking. This is supported by Smith, "Reading is thought full activity." (Smith, 2004). In line with Jennifer in Karyadi, "Reading is also a complex process in that proficient reader give to the text as much as they take. They make meaning from the text by using their prior knowledge and experience." (Karyadi 2016). it means that, when the learners reading a text, they need to think to get their prior knowledge and their experience about the text telling is.

Other explanation about reading comprehension comes from Lems, Miller and Sorrow stated, "Reading Comprehension is not static competency; it varies according to the

purpose for reading and the text that is involved" (Lems, et al, 2010). According to Duke in Sabouri, "comprehension is a process in which readers make meaning by interacting with text through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience, information in the text, and the views of readers related to the text" (Gilakjani, et al, 2016). RAND (Reading Study Group) stated, "Reading Comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language" (Caldwell, 2008). Pourhosein Gilakjani and Sabouri stressed, "Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from the text" (Ahmadi, 2017). In line with Akbari, "reading comprehension can be defined as the ability to understand information in a text and interpret it appropriately" (Akbari, 2017).

Therefore, reading comprehension is an activity that is full of complex process that has aimed to understand the meaning of the text and to get the information. It is efficiently as possible, and then, learners use their own word to represent the meaning rather than to acquire meaning from individual word or sentence.

Narrative text is a type of text to tell a story that has a series of chronological events that are interconnected. According to Kane in Latifa, "Narrative text is a meaningful series and events written in words" (Latifa & Manan, 2018). Moreover, the story of legend, folktale and fables can be found in narrative text. Joys and Feez in Mulyaningsih, "Narratives show how people react to experiences, explore social and culture values and entertain the audience" (Mulyaningsih, 2013). Thus, the social function of the narrative text is to entertain or amuse the reader about a story and a narrative has moral value.

### **The Generic Structure of Narrative Text**

There are three generic structure in narrative text that are: Orientation : the introduction sets the scene, where and when the story happened and introduce the characters of the story, who and what is involved in the story. Then, complication : tells the beginning of the problems which leads to the crisis (climax) of the main character. Next, resolution : the problem is resolved, either in a happy ending or sad ending. The last, Re - orientation (optional) : it contains the lesson from the story. The significant grammatical feature in narrative text includes the use of past tense, using to be, noun phrase, verb, and adjective. It has time signal, such as first, then, after that, before, when, finally, once upon a time, long ago, one day and etc.

Based on the preliminary research that researcher did at MTsS PP MIS Cubadak. The researcher found some problems in students' reading comprehension. First, the problem was some students often found some difficulty on vocabulary or unknown word. It can be seen from interviews with some students. Vocabulary is key in reading comprehension. Knowing vocabulary or words is very important. Because by knowing the word, it will be helpful for the students to get the meaning of the text. But, some of the students have difficulty about it, then, the students cannot understand what they has been read.

The second problem was students have difficulty with the text, either long or short, that have to read and be understood by them in limited time in reading activities. It can be seen by interview with some students. Sometimes, they need to rush in reading a text, because limited of the time that given by teacher to read it. In the same time, they have to read and understand the text. In short, the aim of reading is not only read the text but also understand and get meaning with the written materials which are known as reading comprehension.

The third problem was about grammar mastery. It can be proven by interviews with teacher and from the grammar scores of some student who are under the KKM. The minimum score of grammar is 70. Beside knowing vocabulary, grammar mastery is also important in reading comprehension. Because it will be helpful for students to comprehend the text. A text is composed of several parts of words, phrases, clauses, sentences that are combined to be meaningful. In understanding a text that containing of combined words, the students should have master about sentence structure for helping them to completely understand about the text. For example, in past tense, it has adverbial of time like yesterday,

last, ago and soon. It could be as a clue to comprehend the text. In grammar, students taught how to use the irregular and regular verb and how the words put and become a phrase, sentence and a text. Due to the problems above, this research is important about the correlation between grammar mastery and reading comprehension in MTsS PP MIS Cubadak Pasaman"

## METHOD

This research used quantitative approach with correlation type that collect data in the form of number. According to (Sugiyono, 2009), a research that use numerical and statistical analysis to process the data is called quantitative research. There are many studies that use quantitative; some of these are survey research, correlation research causeal-comparative research and experimental research. The population of this research was the third grade students in MTsS PP MIS Cubadak 2021/2022 period. In MTsS PP MIS Cubadak ninth grade divided into Three classes. IX<sup>1</sup>, IX<sup>2</sup>, IX<sup>3</sup>. From the data, it can be seen that the data of the population was more than hundred students. As (Arikunto, 2006) stated that if the subject less than hundred, it is better to take all the sample. But, if the sample more than hundred, it might be taken between 10% - 15% - 20% - 25% or even more. In this research, the researcher used purposive sampling. Because each sample in population has the opportunity to be studied and because considerations about class that given by the school which was researcher only got one class to do research. Arikunto stated that purposive sampling is the technique of taking samples is not based on random, regional or stratum, but based on the research or focus on specific objectives. In this research, the researcher was given class XI as the sample which was consisting of 39 students.

. Test is used to gaining the data of X and Y variables. The test consists of 48 items with multiple choices. The items divided into 24 items for grammar and 24 items for reading. Test is an assessment intended to measure knowledge, skill, aptitude or classification in many topic. The test is created by considering the validity and reliability test.

### Techniques of Data Collection

In this research, the researcher used test technique as instrument which contribute to the students as the sample of the research of the correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension at ninth grade in MTsS PP MIS Cubadak in academic years 2021/2022. This research applied several steps to collect the data, as follows: 1) The researcher distributed the test to the testee. 2) The researcher gave time for the testee to answer the test. And 3) The researcher collect the test.

### Techniques of data analysis

The data of students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension was taken: 1) Gathering the students answer sheet. 2) Checking the answer, After collecting the answer sheet from the students, the researcher check the answer of the students. 3) Tabulating the score. Then, the students' score from the test was tabulated in Microsoft Exel Application. 4) Finding the total score and statistic deskriptive. Statistic descriptive includes mean score, standar deviation, variant, maximum and minimum score will be measured. The research will find out the correlation between students grammar mastery and students reading comprehension, the researcher used the Pearson Product-Moment.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There were 39 students in this research. The participants from class IX<sup>2</sup> that was choose as the sample in this research. The sample of this research was given one instruments which were test to find out their grammar mastery (variable x) and reading comprehension (variable y). The instruments were distributed to the students in the classroom.



**Table 1. Statistic Students' Responses From The Test**

|                                  |   | <b>Mi<br/>nimum</b> | <b>Ma<br/>ximum</b> | <b>N<br/>ean</b> | <b>Std.<br/>Deviation</b> |
|----------------------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Grammarmaster<br/>y</b>       | 9 | 21,<br>00           | 87,<br>50           | 7<br>1,3974      | 15,7355<br>5              |
| <b>Readingcompre<br/>hension</b> | 9 | 21,<br>00           | 92,<br>00           | 7<br>1,9744      | 17,0614<br>0              |
| <b>Valid N<br/>(listwise)</b>    | 9 |                     |                     |                  |                           |

On the table showed that the data from students' grammar mastery was between 21 and 87.50. The mean score of the students' grammar mastery is 71.39 and the standart deviation is 15.73. Meanwhile, the students' reading comprehension was range from 21 to 92, the mean score of the reading comprehension is 71.97 and the standart deviation of the students' reading comprehension is 17.06.

#### Normality test of the data

Normality test is used to know whether the data is normality distribution or not. The normality of the data was tested by using statistic software IBM SPSS 25. The data is normal if significant value higher than alpha (0.05). The output of the normality of the data can be viewed on the table below:

**Table 2. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

|                                     |                   | Unstandardized Residual |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| N                                   |                   | 39                      |
| Normal<br>Parameters <sup>a,b</sup> | Mean              | 0,0000000               |
|                                     | Std.<br>Deviation | 8,49931682              |
| Most<br>Extreme<br>Differences      | Absolut<br>e      | 0,100                   |
|                                     | Positive          | 0,100                   |
|                                     | Negativ<br>e      | -0,098                  |
| Test Statistic                      |                   | 0,100                   |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)              |                   | ,200 <sup>c,d</sup>     |

From the table above, it can be seen that, the significant value (0.200) higher than alpha (0.05). This means that the data was distributed normally.

#### Homogeneity test of the Data

The homogeneity of the data was tested by using statistic software IBM SPSS 25. The data is homogeny if significant value bigger than the alpha. The output of homogeneity of the data can be viewed on the table below:

**Table 3. Homogeneity of the Data**

| V<br>ariables |                                         |  | Levene<br>Statistic | f1 | f2    | ig.  |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------|--|---------------------|----|-------|------|
|               | Based on Mean                           |  | 0,787               |    | 6     | ,378 |
|               | Based on Median                         |  | 0,933               |    | 6     | ,337 |
|               | Based on Median and with<br>adjusted df |  | 0,933               |    | 5,631 | ,337 |
|               | Based on trimmed mean                   |  | 0,879               |    | 6     | ,351 |

The significant value is 0.378. This means it is bigger than 0.05. So, the data is homogenous.

### Correlation between Grammar Mastery and Reading Comprehension

After all of the prerequisites of the data analysis have been done, the correlation between two variables could be done. The correlation analysis was done by using pearson correlation. In order to avoid the human mistake, researcher also used the statistic software IBM SPSS 25. The output correlation can be viewed on the table below

**Table 4. Correlation between Grammar Mastery and Reading Comprehension**

|                                                              |                        | Grammar<br>mastery | Readingcompreh<br>ension |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| ry                                                           | Grammarmaste           | 1                  | ,867**                   |
|                                                              | Pearson<br>Correlation |                    |                          |
|                                                              | Sig. (2-<br>tailed)    |                    | 0,000                    |
|                                                              | N                      | 39                 | 39                       |
| hension                                                      | Readingcompre          | ,867**             | 1                        |
|                                                              | Pearson<br>Correlation |                    |                          |
|                                                              | Sig. (2-<br>tailed)    | 0,000              |                          |
|                                                              | N                      | 39                 | 39                       |
| **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). |                        |                    |                          |

There was two ways of determining whether there is significant correlation or not. First is by comparing Sig. (2 tailed) with the alpha. If the Sig. (2 tailed) is smaller than alpha, that means there is significant correlation. Based on the table above, .000 < 0.05 this means that there is significant between two variables. Second is by comparing the r-measured with the r-table. The r-table for N=39 with alpha 0.05 is 0.316. Meanwhile the r-measured is 0.867. If the r-measured bigger than r-table,  $0.867 > 0.316$  it means there is a significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension.

### The correlation magnitude between students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension.

The r-measured was 0.867 between 0.81 - 0.99 which mean it has very strong correlation. Furthermore, the magnitude of the correlation between students' grammar

mastery and students' reading comprehension could be calculated by using regression linear as the table below:

**Table 5. Correlation Magnitude**

| Model | M | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|---|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     |   | .867 <sup>a</sup> | .752     | .745              | 8,61341                    |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gramarmastery

b. Dependent Variable: Readingcomprehension

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F      | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | 8316,416       | 1  | 8316,416    | 12,095 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 2745,059       | 37 | 74,191      |        |                   |
|       | Total      | 11061,474      | 38 |             |        |                   |

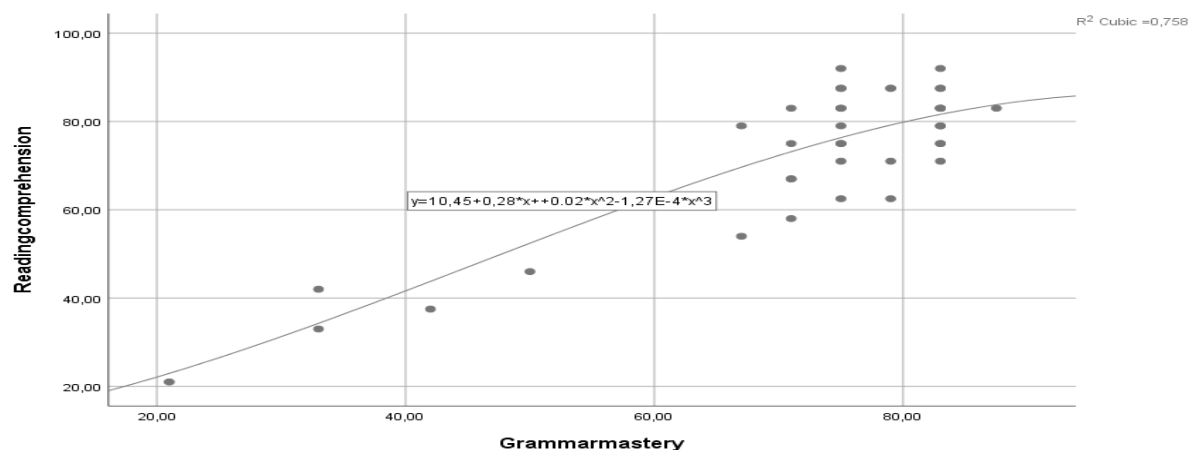
a. Dependent Variable: Readingcomprehension

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gramarmastery

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the value of  $F_{count} = 112.095$  with Sig.  $0.000 < 0.05$ . In other words, there is an influence of grammar mastery variable (X) on the reading comprehension variable (Y). The magnitude of the effect can be seen from the correlation (r) 0.867, the coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.752 which means, there is an influence of independent variable (grammar mastery) on the dependent variable (reading comprehension) is 75.2%.

### The correlation direction between grammar mastery and readingcomprehension

Based on the table 4.5 the r - measured was 0.867 (positive). This means that there was positive correlation between reading grammar mastery and reading comprehension. In other word, if the grammar mastery improves the students' reading comprehension would be improve too. It can be viewed on the figure below:



**Figure 2 Correlation Direction**

After the researcher calculate by using the IBM SPSS. It shows that the correlation value is 0.867 and the  $r$  - table with the significant of 5% is 0,316. Based on the score of Pearson correlation there was significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension since  $r$ -measured / Pearson correlation higher than  $r$ -table ( $0.867 > 0.316$ ). So the null hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) which states there is no significant correlation between the students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension at IX<sup>2</sup> class of PP MIS Cubadak in academic year 2021/2022 is rejected and the alternative hypotheses ( $H_a$ ) which state that there is significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension at IX<sup>2</sup> class of PP MIS Cubadak in academic year 2021/2022 is accepted. According to Nassaji in Ranjabar, grammar knowledge were the most basic factor in reading comprehension (Akbari, 2014). It means, if the students have an understanding of grammar, it really makes easier for students to understand about overall content of the text.

The correlation index ( $r$ - measure= 0.867) is in the interval 0.81 - 0.99 which means that the correlation belong to very strong correlation. In other word, there is high correlation between variable X and Variable Y. Furthermore, it has a positive and very strong correlation between the students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension at IX<sup>2</sup> class of PP MIS Cubadak in Academic year 2021/2022. The finding of this research was in line with the finding of the research conducted by Anis Choirunnisa from UIN Jakarta (Choirunnisa, 2015). That has same result of the research. The result of this study showed that has significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and their reading comprehension. Then, the next finding of the research conducted by (Karyadi, 2016). The result of this research showed that there was significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and reading comprehension too. The last research came from (Usman, 2017). The result of these research has significant correlated between students' grammar mastery and reading comprehension.

## CONCLUSIONS

The question of the researchs' problem were answered. There was a significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension since  $r$ -measured bigger than  $r$ -table. There was positive correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension. It can be seen from the table 4.7 which there was no minus mark in the table. Correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' reading comprehension has very strong correlation. The more students learn about grammar, it can increase their knowledge about reading comprehension.

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