

Correlation between Reading Comprehension and Writing Coherence in Junior High EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the correlation between reading comprehension and writing coherence among English language learners in junior high school. This study used a quantitative approach with a correlational design to determine the correlation between reading and writing. 17 eighth grade students from MTs Raudatul Jannah were selected through purposive sampling. Data were obtained using a standardized reading comprehension test and an analytic rubric that assessed coherence in students' written texts. Pearson correlation analysis showed a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.63$, $p < 0.05$) between students' reading comprehension scores and the coherence of their writing. This finding suggests that higher reading comprehension is associated with greater coherence in writing. This study highlights the pedagogical implication that integrated reading and writing instruction can improve students' overall language performance in an EFL environment.

Keywords: *Reading Comprehension, Writing Coherence, EFL Learners, Correlational Analysis, Language Competence*

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), learners face challenges in developing their reading and writing skills (Ilham et al., 2023)(Ilham, 2022). Reading comprehension is important as it helps learners access information and critically analyze texts. Meanwhile, coherent writing requires logical organization of ideas and precise message delivery. These two skills, although interrelated, are often studied separately in language teaching. Good reading comprehension can enrich writing skills by providing effective text models. Conversely, coherent writing skills can strengthen learners' understanding of language structure. Therefore, simultaneously developing these two skills is crucial in supporting successful foreign language learning (Ilham, 2023).

Reading comprehension in the EFL context is the ability to understand, analyze, and interpret English texts (Ilham, 2017). This skill is an important foundation in language acquisition because, through reading, learners can expand their vocabulary, understand language structures, and acquire new information (Lertchalermtipakoon et al., 2021). Reading comprehension also enhances critical and analytical thinking skills, which are relevant in academic and professional communication. In addition, this skill contributes to other aspects of language, such as writing. Learners with good reading comprehension tend to be able to write more coherently and structurally (Bogaerds-Hazenberg et al., 2021). Therefore, reading comprehension plays a crucial role in developing English language skills.

Coherence in writing refers to the logical arrangement and clarity of ideas that enable a reader to follow the writer's message effectively. It is a crucial component in academic writing, especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, as it directly affects the readability and overall quality of a text (Kadhim, 2024)(Zhang, 2023). Coherence is supported by

cohesion – grammatical and lexical connections such as conjunctions – which help link ideas smoothly (Lestari et al., 2023). Nonetheless, EFL learners often struggle to produce coherent texts due to limited awareness of organizational structures and overreliance on basic cohesive devices (Cheung, 2023).

Reading comprehension, on the other hand, is the ability to understand, interpret, and reflect on written texts. It plays a foundational role in developing writing skills because both skills rely on similar cognitive and linguistic processes (Smith et al., 2021)(Smith et al., 2021; Ceylan, 2023). Empirical studies suggest that students with higher reading comprehension tend to produce more coherent writing, indicating a positive correlation between the two (Diep & Le, 2024). Despite this, few studies have explored this relationship within the context of junior high school EFL learners, particularly in Indonesian educational settings.

The interactive model theory supports the relationship between reading comprehension and writing coherence, which shows the mutual influence between the two skills (Ediwarman et al., 2022). Good readers produce more cohesive and coherent texts than less skilled readers (Ceylan, 2023). Cohesion relates to grammatical and lexical linkages, while coherence involves the logical flow of ideas. A comparative descriptive model revealed significant differences in coherence based on reading skills (Kim et al., 2021). Linear regression showed the importance of logical coherence in writing (Wang, C., Zhang, Y., Ding, H., 2023). Despite the positive correlation, some researchers argue that writing also affects reading comprehension.

Research on specific elements of reading comprehension, such as reading strategies and comprehension of text meaning, is still limited and an important gap. Although the relationship between reading comprehension and writing coherence has been widely discussed, research generally only focuses on the effect of general reading skills on writing coherence (Ilham, 2017). In addition, integrating holistic reading and writing learning in EFL contexts has not been explored much. Therefore, further research is needed to bridge this gap and improve writing coherence through deeper reading comprehension.

The research questions of this study: Is there a significant correlation between reading comprehension and writing coherence in EFL learners? This study examines the relationship between reading comprehension and writing coherence in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning because of the close relationship between all language skills, including reading and writing.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational design aimed at examining the relationship between reading comprehension and writing coherence among junior high school EFL learners. The correlational approach was chosen to determine whether and to what extent one variable (reading comprehension) predicts the other (writing coherence), without manipulating the variables.

Respondents

The participants consisted of 17 students of class VIII-A at MTs Raudatul Jannah, Mataram, Indonesia. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on the following inclusion criteria: (1) the students had been studying English for at least one academic year, and (2) they were considered to have sufficient basic knowledge in reading and writing to complete the test instrument meaningfully. These students were considered to represent the beginner level Novice level EFL learners in a formal junior high school context.

Instruments

The instruments in this study consisted of two types. First, a reading comprehension test in the form of one narrative text of ±300 words accompanied by 5 multiple-choice questions to measure four main aspects: main idea (1 question), important details (2 questions), inference (1 question), and conclusion (1 question). This test was taken from the book English For Nusantara SMP/MTs CLASS VIII by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Riset, And Technology 2022. Second, the assessment of writing coherence was carried out through an

essay writing task of 100-150 words on the topic “Independence Day at SMP Merdeka”. The essays were assessed using a rubric that covered three dimensions: organization of ideas, *interparagraph* linkages, and effective use of transition devices. Each aspect was scored on a four-point scale (1 = poor to 4 = excellent).

Procedures

The study was conducted in four sessions over two weeks with structured stages. In the planning stage, the researcher prepared the reading and writing test instruments and conducted content validation by experts. The implementation stage began with the first session which contained an explanation of the purpose of the study and the collection of participation consent from students. The second session was used for the reading comprehension test, where students were given 40 minutes to complete the questions. The third session involved a 45-minute essay writing activity without external assistance. In the fourth session, all test results were collected and verified, with no opportunity for revision or repetition. The entire process was conducted in the classroom with standardized instructions and timing to minimize bias and maintain consistency of data collection.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis via SPSS (Version 2025). Reading comprehension scores served as the independent variable, while writing coherence scores (aggregated from the rubric) were the dependent variable. In addition, students' grammar accuracy scores (rated separately) were included as a control variable. The analysis aimed to determine: (1) the strength of the correlation between reading comprehension and writing coherence, and (2) the extent to which reading comprehension and grammar predict coherence in writing. The assumptions of linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity were tested prior to conducting regression.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study used multiple regression analysis to answer the question: Is there a significant correlation between reading comprehension and writing coherence among EFL learners? How does reading comprehension ability affect their writing coherence? To what extent is the relationship statistically significant in the context of EFL learning? The results of the analysis show that there is a significant positive correlation between reading comprehension and writing coherence with a correlation coefficient value of $r = 0.887$ and a significance level of $p < 0.01$. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.786$) shows that about 46.8% of the variation in writing coherence can be explained by students' reading comprehension ability. This indicates that the higher the students' reading comprehension level, the better the coherence in their writing. This result is consistent with previous findings that good reading skills provide a linguistic and cognitive foundation for the development of more structured and logical writing. Therefore, the integration of reading and writing learning in the EFL curriculum is essential to improve overall language competence.

Table 1. Model Summary In Multiple Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.887 ^a	.786	.770	4,921

a. Predictors: (Constant), READING

The summary model analysis results show that the R-value or correlation coefficient obtained is 0.887, indicating a strong relationship between reading comprehension and writing coherence. In addition, the R Square value of 0.786 indicates that 78.6% of the variability in writing coherence can be explained by reading comprehension. In contrast, the Adjusted R Square of 0.770 indicates that after controlling for the number of samples used, the model still shows good strength in explaining the relationship between the two variables.

Table 2. Anova In Regression Analysis

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1					
Regression	1158,566	1	1158,566	47,849	,000 ^b
Residual	314,767	13	24,213		
Total	1473,333	14			

a. Dependent Variable: WRITING

b. Predictors: (Constant), READING

The ANOVA table above showed that the F value = 47.849 with a significance of $p = 0.000$. This means that the regression model used in this study is statistically significant in explaining the relationship between reading comprehension and writing coherence. In other words, reading comprehension has a meaningful contribution to explaining the variations in students' writing coherence.

Table 3. Coefficients In Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	30,259	6,781		4,462	,001
	READING	,671	,097	,887	6,917	,000

a. Dependent Variable: WRITING

Based on the regression coefficient analysis results in the table above, the constant value obtained is 30.259, which indicates that even though there is no contribution from reading comprehension, writing coherence still has a specific base value. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient for the reading comprehension variable is 0.671, meaning that every one-unit increase in reading comprehension will increase writing coherence by 0.671. In addition, the value of $t = 6.917$ and the significance of $p = 0.000$ show that the effect of reading comprehension on writing coherence is highly statistically significant, so it can be concluded that improvement in reading comprehension directly contributes to improving the quality of coherence in students' writing.

Is there a significant correlation between reading comprehension and writing coherence in EFL learners?

The research results show a strong and significant correlation between reading comprehension and writing coherence in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL). This is evidenced by an R-value of 0.887, which indicates a strong relationship between the two variables, and a significance value of 0.000, confirming that this relationship is statistically significant. In addition, the R Square value of 0.786 indicates that 78.6% of the variability in writing coherence can be explained by reading comprehension. Thus, the higher a student's reading comprehension ability, the better their ability to compose cohesive and well-structured writing.

Reading ability is essential in improving EFL students' writing coherence. By reading, students understand text structure, logical patterns, and organization of ideas, which are the basis for writing. In addition, reading expands vocabulary and helps students recognize different language styles and relationships between ideas in the text. This study shows that every one-unit increase in reading comprehension will increase writing coherence by 0.671 units. This shows that students with better reading comprehension tend to have a deeper understanding of text structure, organization of ideas, and the use of cohesion in their writing.

The relationship between reading comprehension and writing coherence in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) proved to be highly statistically significant. In

this study, the value of $F = 47.849$ with a significance level of $p = 0.000$ indicates that the regression model used has a very high predictive ability in explaining the variability of students' writing coherence. In other words, reading comprehension strongly influences the quality of students' writing, especially in terms of the coherence and connectedness of ideas in the texts they produce. The minimal statistical significance ($p < 0.05$) indicates that the results of this study did not occur by chance but can be used as a strong basis for understanding the relationship between the two variables. Therefore, in the context of EFL learning, improving reading skills needs special attention because it can directly contribute to improving the quality of students' writing, especially in coherence.

This finding aligns with the theory that reading and writing are interconnected skills in language learning. Reading comprehension helps students recognize text organization patterns, understand connections between ideas, and enrich vocabulary and sentence structure, which are applied in writing. In the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), this relationship becomes even more important because students must face the challenge of understanding texts in the target language while producing coherent writing. The interactive model theory supports the relationship between reading comprehension and writing coherence, which suggests a mutual influence between the two skills (Ediwarman et al., 2022). Comparative descriptive models reveal significant differences in coherence based on reading skills (Kim et al., 2021). Students with high reading comprehension tend to have better writing performance, as writing and reading share a common linguistic foundation (Ceylan, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study, it was found that there is a very strong and statistically significant relationship between reading comprehension ability and writing coherence in junior high school EFL learners. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.887$) and the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.786$) show that about 78.6% of the variability in writing coherence can be explained by reading comprehension ability. This finding indicates that students with better reading skills tend to produce more coherent writing, as reading helps them understand text structure, logical patterns, and organization of ideas. The regression analysis also showed that every one unit increase in reading ability can increase writing coherence by 0.671 units. Nevertheless, this study has limitations, especially in the small sample size (17 students) and the limited scope of one class in one educational institution, so the findings cannot be widely generalized. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve a larger and more diverse sample to validate and extend these findings. Practically, the results of this study support the integration of reading and writing instruction in learning English as a foreign language and encourage teachers to design literacy activities that can develop both skills simultaneously.

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