

A CORRELATIONAL STUDY BETWEEN GRAMMAR MASTERY AND WRITING ABILITY OF SECOND SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM

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Abstract. Writing requires writers to articulate their thoughts and ideas in a coherent and organized manner. Understanding grammar can help students organize their thoughts in sentences that readers can easily understand. This study aims to investigate the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their writing ability and to know the extent of the two variables correlate. The research method used is a quantitative method that applies a correlational study. The research instrument is documentary data, with the sample of this study being 19 students using a purposive sampling technique. The results show that there is a correlation between the two variables. The correlation between the two variables is proven by $r_{xy}=0.747$. The correlation coefficient is in the range of 0.60 to 0.80 showing a strong correlation, which indicates the extent of the correlation between the two variables. In simple terms, null hypothesis (H0) was rejected. Meanwhile, the alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted, which means that students with grammar mastery are more likely to write well.

Keywords: *Correlational Study; Grammar Mastery; Writing Ability*

INTRODUCTION

Mastering English language entails acquiring proficiency in four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To achieve these skills, learners should also acquire proficiency in language components such as phonology, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These components are essential for effective communication and comprehension in English. Language skills and language components are interrelated because language components can be found in language skills (Andini et al., 2018). Therefore, a comprehensive approach to learning English should emphasize not only the acquisition of language skills but also a thorough understanding of its underlying components.

Zemach and Islam (2006:4) stated that writing is one of the most difficult language skills for English learners to master. Writing requires the writer to be more structured in accordance with grammatical rules in conveying the message. Writing expresses a learner's thoughts and knowledge in written form (Purnamasari et al., 2021). Unlike speaking, where ideas can be conveyed spontaneously, writing demands a more structured approach. It requires learners to articulate their thoughts and ideas coherently. This process involves formulating ideas and arranging them into well-structured sentences and paragraphs. Meanwhile, to arrange words into sentences, one must better understand grammar (Etfita, 2019). Understanding grammar helps students to deliver ideas and to write comprehensive writing.

Grammar provides rules that regulate how sentences in a language can be formed. Denham and Lobeck (2010, p. 8) claim that grammar is a complex system of

rules that govern words joining into sentences. Students have a high level of understanding and proficiency in using the rules and structures of a language correctly when mastering the grammar of its language. . Mastering grammar means that the student understands how to use correct English rules, such as changing words and joining them into sentences (Wersi et al: 2013). It involves not only knowing the rules but also being able to apply them naturally in speaking and writing. Many English students struggle in using proper grammar to express their thoughts (Akbari, 2016). Ningsih (2016) claims that writing is one activity that transfers the knowledge in the human brain into written form. Additionally, they may find written English confusing, particularly in sentence structure, as they may not understand or be familiar with the forms used in English (Phoocharoensil, 2012). Therefore, to produce good writing, students need a strong grasp of grammar to support their writing.

Previous studies investigating the relationship between grammar and writing discovered a correlation between grammar and students' writing skills. Widya and Wahyuni (2018) investigated the correlation between grammar mastery and thesis proposal writing at STKIP YDB Lubuk Alung. Their results of research state that there is a significant relationship between mastery of students' grammar and their thesis writing. Other research conducted by Eftita (2019) also shows a relationship between students' grammar mastery and writing ability. This implies that grammar and writing ability are related.

English students at Artha Wacana Christian University Kupang study grammar from basic to advanced level and writing from first level to academic writing level. Intermediate grammar and second-level writing, such as writing for personal communication, will be learned by students in the second semester. In intermediate grammar classes, students are taught to study sentence patterns and practice the production and use of various clauses and tenses, both orally and in sentences. Meanwhile, in writing classes for personal communication, students are trained on how to express themselves, expressing ideas in written form. Students learn grammar and writing separately, even though they study both subjects simultaneously. In grammar class, they focus solely on studying tenses by creating sentences using tenses they are learning, with little emphasis on writing. Similarly, in writing classes, students practice writing skills, concentrating not only on grammar, but also on content, vocabulary, organization, and mechanics. As an English student at Artha Wacana Christian University in Kupang, the researcher sometimes struggles to express her thoughts effectively due to a limited understanding of grammar rules. This difficulty often results in challenges when forming correct and precise sentences, which can hinder the researcher's ability to generate ideas on various topics. Thus, this research seeks to do the research by analyzing the relationship between students' writing abilities and students' grammar mastery to find out the extent to which these two variables are interconnected. Thus the research questions drive this study are to find out the correlation between *Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability of Second-semester Students of English Education Study Program*.

METHODOLOGY

The Research design applied correlational study. There are two kinds of variables including independent variable (students' grammar mastery) and dependent variable (students' writing ability). Purposive sampling applied to sample selection of the participants from total of 37 students to 19 students.

This study adopted document analysis to obtain the required information. This type of document refers to the document score of the student's grammar mastery and writing ability. The first document was the student's score on the final test in the intermediate grammar class, which is used as the student's grammar mastery score. Meanwhile, the second document was the final test score of students from the same class in the writing for personal communication course, which is used as student's writing ability score. Meanwhile, to analyse the data to find out the correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing ability, the researcher used IBM SPSS version 29.0 application.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Data analysis of Students' Grammar Mastery and Writing Ability Scores

Tabel 1. Descriptive Statistics of Grammar Mastery

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| | N | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic |
| Grammar Mastery | 19 | 10 | 75 | 85 | 79.42 | 2.545 | 6.480 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 19 | | | | | | |

Tabel 2. Descriptive Statistics of Writing Ability

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| | N | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
| | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic |
| Writing Ability | 19 | 49 | 45 | 94 | 68.53 | 13.176 | 173.596 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 19 | | | | | | |

Based on the calculations performed using the data above, the results of students' grammar mastery based on table 1 are the range score (the difference between the maximum and minimum values) was 10. The minimum score in the dataset was 75, while the maximum score was 85. Furthermore, the mean score was 79,42, the standard deviation was 2,545, and the variance was 6,480. Meanwhile, the results of students' writing ability based on table 2 are the range score was 49, the minimum score was 45, the maximum score was 94, the mean score was 68,53, the standard deviation was 13,176 and the variance score was 173,596.

b. Analysis of Correlation

Table 3. Correlation Results

| Correlation | | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | Grammar Mastery | Writing Ability |
| Grammar Mastery | Pearson Correlation | 1 | ,747** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | ,001 |
| | N | 19 | 19 |
| Writing Ability | Pearson Correlation | ,747** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 001 | |
| | N | 19 | 19 |
| Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). | | | |

Correlation calculations between the two variables based on the data above showed that the correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) value is 0.747 and the p-value is 0,01. Conversely, if the p-value is above 0.05, then the two variables tested do not have a linear relationship (Santoso & Slamet, 2013). Thus, the p-value of 0,01 shows a significant value $< 0,05$, indicating a correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability in second-semester students at Artha Wacana Christian University.

The results of the correlation analysis indicate a rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0), which posits that there is no relationship between grammar mastery and writing ability. Instead, the analysis supports the alternative hypothesis (H_1), suggesting a significant correlation exists between students' grammar mastery and writing abilities.

c. Interpretation Correlation Coefficients

Table 4. Interpretation of Correlation Coefficients

| r_{xy} | Interpretation |
|--------------|--|
| 0,00 to 0,20 | There is very weak relationship between two variables. Because the |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| | relationship is too weak, it is reputed as no relationship exists between those two variables. |
| 0,20 to 0,40 | There is a weak relationship between the two variables. |
| 0,40 to 0,60 | There is some average relationship between the two variables. |
| 0,60 to 0,80 | There is a strong relationship between the two variables. |
| 0,80 to 1,00 | There is very strong relationship between two variables. |

(Sugiyono, 2009)

The correlation coefficient (r_{xy}) between students' grammar mastery and writing ability was 0.747, indicating a relationship between the two variables. According to the interpretation table 4.6, a coefficient in the range of 0.60 to 0.80 suggests that there is a strong correlation between the two variables. In conclusion, the correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing ability of the second-semester students of Artha Wacana Christian University is strong, which suggests that if students' grammar mastery improves, their writing ability tends to improve as well. This strong correlation implies that better grammar skills are closely associated with better writing skills among the students.

This research focuses on finding out whether there is any correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing ability of the Second Semester Students of English Education Study Program at Artha Wacana Christian University Kupang and finding out an extent of the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their writing ability of the Second Semester Students of English Education Study Program at Artha Wacana Christian University Kupang. Based on the findings using Pearson product-moment calculations, the correlation coefficient value was 0.747, which is significant at the 0.01 level. According to Santoso & Slamet (2013), if the p-value is above 0.05. It indicates that the two variables tested do not have a linear relationship. Furthermore, Sugiyono (2009) states that a correlation coefficient value in the range of 0.60 to 0.80 indicates a strong correlation between the two variables. In this study, students' grammar mastery and writing ability are found to be strongly correlated, as evidenced by the significant value being less than 0.05 and a correlation coefficient of 0.747. This demonstrates a strong relationship between the two variables. Consequently, there is a correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability among second-semester students at Artha Wacana Christian University, as reflected by the significant value of less than 0.05. The correlation between grammar mastery and writing ability is categorized as strong, given that the

correlation coefficient falls within the range of 0.60 to 0.80 showing the extent of correlation between the two variables.

The study results indicate a strong correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing abilities. In simpler terms, students with grammar mastery are more likely to write well. Writing ability requires mastery of grammar to produce good writing. It is impossible to distinguish between grammar and writing since the two are necessary (Murtiningsih, et., al 2022). In addition, Miller (2003) cited in Putri, et al., (2016) stated that grammar and writing have a strong correlation.

In conclusion, the strong correlation found in this study highlights the importance of grammar education in developing writing skills. These findings suggest that enhancing students' grammar knowledge could be an effective way to improve their overall writing abilities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous section, it can be concluded that students' grammar mastery correlates with their writing ability. The coefficient correlation value of 0.747 demonstrates a strong correlation between the two variables, as it falls within the range of 0.60 to 0.80. This result confirms the Alternative Hypothesis (H1) and rejects the Null Hypothesis (H0). Grammar mastery among the second-semester students of the English Education Study Program at Artha Wacana Christian University Kupang has significantly contributed to their writing ability.

In simple terms, students who master grammar tend to write better. Good grammar helps students write clearer and more correct sentences, making their writing easier to understand. When students know how to use grammar rules correctly, they can express their ideas more effectively and avoid mistakes that can confuse readers.

Educators, students, and researchers can benefit from the results of this research. Teachers and lecturers should emphasize the connection between grammar mastery and writing ability by integrating grammar lessons into writing activities. This approach helps students develop both grammar skills and writing abilities effectively. Students should focus on understanding grammar rules and improving their grammar knowledge to enhance their writing skills.

Other researchers can use this study as a reference for further research on the correlation between grammar mastery and writing skills. Future researchers should examine different age groups, educational settings, and cultural contexts to determine if these findings apply in various scenarios. By building on this study and addressing its strengths and weaknesses, researchers can contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between grammar and writing skills.

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