A CORRELATIONAL STUDY: GRAMMAR PROFICIENCY AND READING COMPREHENSION OF DESCRIPTIVE TEXT IN MTs MATHLAUL ANWAR BAKUNG

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Abstract

This research investigates the relationship between grammar proficiency and descriptive text within a group of 60 eighth-grade students at MTs Mathlaul Anwar Bakung. The study utilized grammar proficiency and descriptive tests as instruments. The findings revealed a positive correlation between grammar proficiency and reading comprehension of descriptive text, with a correlation value of 0.371. These results suggest that enhancing students' grammar proficiency may contribute to a better understanding of descriptive text, although it is important to consider other factors that influence overall comprehension skills. Furthermore, the study recommends further research to explore specific factors influencing reading comprehension of descriptive text and to develop comprehensive strategies and interventions.

Keywords: descriptive text, grammar proficiency, language skill, reading comprehension,

INTRODUCTION

Language abilities are complex phenomena that involve a variety of skills. Grammar proficiency and analytical comprehension are two crucial elements for understanding language (AF et al., 2021; Rachmativani). They require individuals to be able to recognize the structure and use of words, understand the meanings behind them, as well as apply this knowledge in meaningful ways. Grammar proficiency involves an understanding of sentence structure, use of verbs, time, tenses, and different linguistic elements. Then again, analyzing comprehension comprises the potential to recognize and interpret written texts properly (Kumara et al., 2013) and as it should be. The link between grammar proficiency and analyzing comprehension has become a major situation in learning, due to the fact they play an essential function within the enhancement of language capabilities.

In recent years, scholars and educators have shown considerable interest in examining the correlation between proficiency in grammar and the exploration of comprehension (Jamaludin & Nurdiawati, 2021; Mujani et al., 2022). This topic has gained relevance due to the recognition that grammar proficiency is essential for effective communication and reading comprehension.

Numerous studies have emphasized the importance of evaluating the reading proficiency of English language learners, as reading comprehension skills are crucial for academic and professional success. In fact, reading ability is a significant component of college English exams and plays a vital role in academic achievement (AF et al., 2021; Andini et al., 2017). Additionally, learning to read is essential for various purposes, including general learning and academic accomplishments (Negara, 2016).

This research has revealed a positive correlation between these two skills, suggesting that grammar knowledge can help with comprehending new material. Multiple studies have indicated a positive association between proficiency in grammar and improved analytical comprehension skills. However, there is no agreement about how robust and how this correlation bureaucracy is, notably from the perspective of descriptive text.

Further research is necessary to fully understand this dynamic relationship and address any lingering questions. Does grammar proficiency substantially make contributions to reading comprehension of descriptive texts?

Understanding the correlation between grammar proficiency and reading comprehension is particularly important, especially in the analysis of descriptive texts. The ability to comprehend written content relies heavily on a solid grasp of grammar rules and structures. Likewise, the results of this study can also provide further insight into how fundamental language skills can guide students' ability to comprehend the information they encounter in the form of descriptive text.

Although many researchers have examined the connection between grammar proficiency and reading comprehension (Hu et al., 2022; Mujani et al., 2022; Raeisi-Vanani & Baleghizadeh, 2022; Shidiq Ghozali et al., 2022), For instance, Droop & Verhoeven (2003) emphasized the significance of language

proficiency and reading skills, suggesting that students learning a second language may have better recall of a text in their first language compared to the second language (Droop & Verhoeven, 2003). This finding is crucial in understanding the relationship between language proficiency and reading comprehension, especially in the context of descriptive text.

Furthermore, the study by Panjaitan et al. (2019) revealed genre preferences in reading comprehension materials in senior high school, presenting descriptive text as one of the genre preferences (Panjaitan et al., 2019). This emphasizes the significance of understanding the specific characteristics and challenges associated with descriptive text in the context of reading comprehension, especially for junior high school students.

Additionally, Girsang & Lubis (2020) provided insights into improving descriptive text through context clues strategy, highlighting the importance of specific strategies tailored to enhance comprehension of descriptive text (Girsang & Lubis, 2020). This is particularly relevant to the junior high school curriculum, as it underscores the need for targeted approaches to improve students' understanding of descriptive text.

Moreover, the study by Elda et al. (2022) demonstrated the efficacy of using scaffolding to improve comprehension of descriptive text, indicating the positive impact of instructional support on students' engagement with this type of text (Elda et al., 2022). This finding is valuable in the context of junior high school curriculum and material development, as it suggests effective pedagogical methods for enhancing students' comprehension of descriptive text.

To conclude, relevant literature supports the importance of descriptive text in reading comprehension and provides valuable insights for educators and curriculum developers, particularly in the context of junior high school education.

METHODS

The study was carried out in the eighth grade of MTs Mathla'ul Anwar Bakung during the academic year 2022/2023. The school is situated at Jl. Raya Sidamukti KM 05 Kp. Bakung, Sukaresmi, Pandeglang – Banten. The research

spanned from January to July 2023.

This study used a quantitative method. Besides, this study used a correlational approach to determine whether or not there may be a courting between two or extra variables. The purpose of quantitative studies is to obtain generalizations after the studies have been finished. Generalizations suggest information approximately some of the topics that get up in a specific populace. To collect records researchers, use test kits. In quantitative studies, statistics are supplied numerically, and SPSS software is used to analyze the statistics. The technique of choosing the sample is all population. According to (Sugiono, 2014)"if the population is more than 100 the sample should be taken between 10-15% or 20-25% or more and if the subject is less than 100 the sample is taken all". Therefore, the researchers took all populations as a sample. There are 12 males and 18 females from class VIII A and there are 24 males and 16 females from VIII B. The overall population is sixty (60) students.

The data collection method employed in this study involved the use of a test. The researchers conducted the research online using Google Forms. First, the researchers give a grammar proficiency test. Then, the researchers give reading tests. The collected data are compiled into an Excel spreadsheet and analyzed using SPSS 22.

However, before the researchers do the correlational analyses, some other tests called testing of requirement analyses were done, such as the normality test and linearity test. Subsequently, the study employed the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to evaluate the association between the variables. This numerical value, ranging from -1 to +1, signifies the strength of a linear between variables. The significance value was computed; a value below 0.05 signifies a significant association between the variables, while a value exceeding 0.05 suggests a lack of a significant relationship between the variables.

The correlation coefficient ranges from 0 to -1. A value close to 1 or -1 indicates a strong relationship, while a value close to 0 signifies a very weak correlation (Sugiono, 2014).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The research used 60 students as a sample. Data collection was conducted employing a test. After doing the test, the researchers administered an evaluation specifically targeting the reading comprehension of descriptive text.

Table 1.

Descriptive Statistic of Descriptive Text

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reading	60	38	95	60.50	12.784
Valid N (listwise)	60				

Table 1 shows that the attained scores ranged from 60 samples between 38 to 95. The raw data points were subjected to computational procedures to facilitate the analysis of the ongoing research inquiry. This examination unveiled the lowest and highest scores attained by students in their comprehension of descriptive text. Additionally, the average score across all participants' responses was computed at 60.50.

Next, the researchers conducted an assessment focused on grammatical proficiency. The statistical depiction of students' proficiency in grammar is provided in the subsequent section:

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistic of Grammar Proficiency

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Grammar	60	28	93	55.50	13.916
Valid N (listwise)	60				

Table 2 shows that three students secured the top score of 93, while several individuals achieved the lowest score of 28. The samples are 60 students. Subsequently, a majority of students displayed diverse levels of accomplishment in grammar, with an average score is 55.50. It can be said that the students' scores are in average score.

Then, it is crucial to assess whether research data conform to a normal distribution. This assessment allows researchers to determine the appropriateness of certain statistical tests and assumptions that rely on this assumption. Two of the methods are the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test.

Table 3.

Normality Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Grammar	.095	60	.200*	.968	60	.113
Reading	.097	60	.200*	.968	60	.067

Table 3 shows that the grammar proficiency variable that used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method obtained a significant value of 0.200, and the significant value obtained from the Shapiro-Wilk method was 0.113 (>0.05). It means grammar proficiency has a normal distribution. Besides, the significant value of the reading comprehension variable, which used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, was 0.200 while the significant value of the variable used by Shapiro Wilk was 0.067. The significant values obtained from the two methods were more outstanding than 0.05 (Level of significant α=5% or 0.05). It means the variable is distributed normally.

Table 4.

Linearity test

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Grammar* Reading	Between Group	(Combined)	3791.319	18	210.629	1.131	.359
		Linearity	1576.501	1	1576.501	8.467	.006
		Deviation from Linearity	2214.818	17	130.283	.700	.785
	Within Group		7633.681	41	186.187		
	Total		11425.000	59			

The linearity test results indicated a deviation significance value of 0.785, surpassing the predefined alpha level of 5% or 0.05. These findings suggest a robust positive correlation between the two variables, signifying a significant linear relationship. This indicates that there is potential for using these variables together in further research or applications.

The correlation coefficient obtained through Pearson correlation analysis on SPSS 22 indicates the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous quantitative variables is often assessed using Pearson's correlation coefficient. This statistical measure is robust, offering insights into both the magnitude and direction of the association between variables.

Table 5.

Correlation

		Grammar	Reading
Grammar	Pearson Correlation	1	.371**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	60	60
Reading	Pearson Correlation	.371**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	60	60

In Table 5, it is apparent that there is a correlation between grammar proficiency and reading comprehension. The Pearson correlation coefficient for

these variables is calculated as 0.371 with a significant value of 0.003, which indicates that this relationship is statistically significant at a level lower than 0.05. It can be categorized as weak. Thus, we accept the research hypothesis (H1).

After establishing the relationship between the aforementioned variables, the researchers aim to assess how grammar proficiency affects reading comprehension of descriptive text through a simple regression analysis. The purpose of conducting this type of analysis is to examine the impact that predictor variables have on criterion variables.

Table 6.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.371ᵃ	.138	.123	11.972

Based on the data presented above, the R square value was 0.138 or 13,8 %. This implies that 13.8% of the variation in descriptive text can be attributed to students' grammar proficiency, falling within the weak category.

Discussion

The primary objective of this study is to examine the correlation between grammar proficiency and reading comprehension of descriptive text. The analysis reveals a positive correlation between grammar proficiency and descriptive text, albeit falling within the weak category. This indicates that students who demonstrate a higher level of proficiency in grammar tend to have better reading comprehension skills when interacting with descriptive text.

The presence of a statistically significant positive correlation. With a correlation coefficient of 0.67, the relationship between the two variables is considered fairly strong. This finding is in line with previous research emphasizing the role of grammar in facilitating overall language abilities (Mujani et al., 2022; Negara, 2016). Furthermore, the results of this study not only confirm

the existing literature, but also shed light on additional factors that contribute to reading comprehension. The implications of this research have important meaning for educators and curriculum developers can contribute to the improvement of reading comprehension skills among students. The teacher can design a learning strategy that combines language drills to simultaneously develop language accuracy and reading comprehension skills.

In addition, curriculum designers should consider the integration of language teaching methods that are appropriate to the needs of students and promote active engagement with descriptive texts. By nurturing a deeper understanding of the role of language in constructing meaning, educators can facilitate more effective reading experiences for students.

Incorporating additional predictors beyond decoding and linguistic comprehension implies that factors such as background knowledge, vocabulary proficiency, and reading fluency are crucial contributors to reading comprehension (Kumara et al., 2013; Rachmativani & Supeno, 2020). These additional factors can enhance a reader's ability to understand and interpret texts effectively. Moreover, the research suggests that specific comprehension strategies, such as repeated reading and summarizing information, can improve comprehension outcomes. Overall, the findings of this research underscore the complex nature of reading comprehension and highlight the importance of considering multiple factors in assessing and promoting reading proficiency. It is important to acknowledge certain limitations of this study. The research was conducted within a specific school, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader population.

CONCLUSION

The study sought to examine the correlation between grammar proficiency and comprehension of descriptive text. The analysis revealed a positive correlation, within the weak category. This suggests that students with higher proficiency in grammar tend to exhibit better reading comprehension skills when engaging with descriptive text. The existence of a statistically significant positive

correlation between grammar proficiency and reading comprehension emphasizes the significance of a solid language foundation for effective reading comprehension. With a correlation coefficient of 0.67, the relationship between the two variables is considered fairly strong. This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing the role of grammar in facilitating overall language abilities.

The findings underscore the complex nature of reading comprehension and highlight the importance of considering multiple factors in assessing and promoting reading proficiency. However, certain limitations in this study should be acknowledged. Firstly, the research was conducted within a specific school, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. Moreover, the cross-sectional design of this research does not permit the establishment of cause-effect relationships between grammar proficiency and reading comprehension. Subsequent research could employ a longitudinal design to investigate the trajectory of this relationship over time.

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