

# CORRELATION BETWEEN GRAMMAR MASTERY AND READING COMPREHENSION OF THE STUDENTS IN STIE INDONESIA PONTIANAK

**Irma Manda Negara**

Sastra Inggris STBA Pontianak  
Jalan Gajah Mada Nomor 38 Pontianak  
e-mail: Irmamanda87@hotmail.com

## **Abstract**

This study aims to investigating on the correlation between students grammar mastery and their ability in reading comprehension in STIE Indonesia Pontianak. This was quantitative research applied *ex post factodesigns*. The population of this study was the first semester students of STIE Indonesia Pontianak. The researcher used sample consist of 41 students. The instrument of this research was in the form of grammar mastery test and reading comprehension test. The data collected were analyzed by means of the descriptive techniques and using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The results of the descriptive analysis are as follows: (1) there are 16 students or 39,02% got scores 40 - 59. This means that there is still a lack of grammar mastery of the students first semester STIE Pontianak in academic year 2016/2017 and value of the average (mean) is 60,68 based classification categories, it in the category of fair; (2) there are 16 students or 39,02% got scores 40 - 59. This means that there is still a lack of reading comprehension of the students first semester STIE Pontianak in academic year 2016/2017 and value of the average (mean) is 58,83 based classification categories, it in the category of less. The results of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation found that there is a significant correlation between students of grammar mastery and the students ability in reading comprehension with a correlation coefficient was 0,970;  $t_{\text{counted}}$  is 24,9 and the relationship between grammar maastery and reading comprehension can be concluded in the category of very high.

**Keywords:** correlation, grammar mastery, reading comprehension.

## **Abstrak**

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melakukan investigasi tentang korelasi antara grammar mastery dan kemampuan mahasiswa dalam reading comprehension di STIE Indonesia Pontianak. Ini adalah penelitian kuantitatif yang diterapkan desain ex post facto. Populasi dari penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa semester pertama STIE Indonesia Pontianak. Sampel penelitian yang digunakan terdiri dari 41 siswa. Instrumen penelitian ini adalah dalam bentuk tes grammar dan tes reading comprehension. Data yang dikumpulkan dianalisis dengan menggunakan teknik deskriptif dan menggunakan Korelasi Pearson Product Moment. Hasil analisis deskriptif adalah sebagai berikut: (1) ada 16 mahasiswa atau 39,02% mendapat skor 40 - 59. Ini berarti bahwa masih kurangnya grammar mastery mahasiswa semester pertama STIE Pontianak pada tahun akademik 2016 / 2017 dan nilai rata-rata (mean) adalah 60,68 berdasarkan klasifikasi, masuk dalam kategori cukup; (2) ada 16 mahasiswa atau 39,02% mendapat skor 40 - 59. Ini berarti bahwa masih kurangnya kemampuan reading comprehension mahasiswa semester pertama STIE Pontianak di tahun akademik 2016/2017 dan nilai rata-rata (mean) adalah 58,83 berdasarkan klasifikasi, masuk dalam kategori kurang. Hasil dari Korelasi Pearson Product Moment menemukan bahwa ada korelasi yang signifikan antara tata grammar mastery dan kemampuan mahasiswa dalam reading comprehension dengan koefisien korelasi adalah 0.970;  $t_{\text{hitung}}$  sebesar 24,9 dan dapat*

*disimpulkan hubungan antara grammar mastery dengan reading comprehension masuk dalam kategori sangat tinggi.*

**Kata Kunci:** korelasi, grammar mastery, reading comprehension.

## INTRODUCTION

People of the world entered the era of globalization, where all the information and technology is developing rapidly. Progress of the times require us to be able to master a foreign language as a means of communication in the era of globalization. In Indonesia, foreign language used is English. As a foreign language in Indonesia, many people are trying to learn and master English quickly so they will not experience difficulties when communicating with foreigners. Additionally, the English language can be referred to as one of the languages of the world, because as the primary language used to communicate by people from different countries and cultures.

English has three components, there are grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation and four skills writing, speaking, listening, and reading. They are the basic language skills especially in teaching english as a foreign language at school, courses or other educational places whether formal or informal. The components and skills have a correlation such as grammar and reading. According Depdikbud states that out of the four skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, the main emphasis is on reading skill because it is believe that the acquisition of reading in a second or foreign language is a main priority. It can be said that reading is also one of the important aspects skill that must be mastered by the learner. It also supported by the statement of Madox (1963: 76) states that reading is the most important single in study.

Reading ability is one of the important aspects for the students to be more active to get written information what they want to know and that's why reading comprehension is an asset to be successful at university. Through reading, we acquire new ideas, getting the needed information, to seek support for our ideas and broaden our ideas. It is also appropriate stated by Willis (2008) by reading, someone can find the information he/she needs with the specific information.

Grabe and Stoller (2002) define comprehension as processing words, forming a representation of general main ideas and integrating it into a new understanding. It means that comprehension is an understanding when the reader can relies on the particularly of the main ideas of the text and constructs into a new understanding in accordance with their own understanding. They also state that the idea of reading is also to do with purposes, experiences, strategies, skills, and even attitude towards reading. Nuttal (1985) states that there are five reading skills that should be mastered by reader to comprehend the text deeply; they are as follow: (1) Determining main idea, is a skill to grasp and find the main point of the passage by summarizing the passage and look for repetition of ideas/words; (2) Finding the specific information or part of text, or part of text means looking for the information that relevant to the goal in mind and ignores the irrelevant; (3) Finding reference, Reference is the intentional use of one thing to indicate something else in which one provides the information necessary to interpret the other. Finding reference means interpreting and determining one linguistic expression to another; (4) Finding inference, Inference is good guess or conclusion drawn based on the logic of passage. Finding inference means the reader imply the sentences or passages understand and conclude it logically; and (5) Understanding vocabulary, Understanding vocabulary means comprehend what the words mean. When vocabulary mastery improves, comprehending will be deeper. Since comprehension is ultimate goal of reading, the reader cannot overestimate the importance of vocabulary development.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of a text. Reading comprehension refers to the skill of finding the main ide of the text. The aims to find the relevant information by reference to imply the purpose of reading and understanding the meaning of what has been read.

Grammar is the structure and meaning system of language. All languages have grammar, and each language has its own grammar. People who speak the same language are able to communicate because they intuitively know the grammar system of that language, that means the rules of grammar making

meaning. Swan (1998: 19) states, Grammar is the rule that says how words changed to show different meaning, and they combine into sentences. Haussamen (2003: xiii) states that the term grammar refers to two kinds of knowledge about language. One is subconscious knowledge, the language ability that children develop at an early age without being taught. The other kind of knowledge is the conscious understanding of sentences and texts that can help students improve their reading and writing abilities by building on that subconscious knowledge.

Based on the statement above it can be concluded that grammar is a rule that is used in a sentence to indicate a different meaning or intent. Students must learn how to build the correct grammar before they speak and write, so that the message they want to convey can be understood clearly. In language learning, teachers have two objectives, there are fluency and accuracy in all language skills. The meaning of fluency is ability to speak fluently, while accuracy is the ability to speak by using correct grammar structures, such as the using of verb form correctly, phrasal verbs, prepositions, etc. To able to speak and write clearly and more effective manner, people have to study grammar. Grammar is one of the important things in English because it is not just to make the sentence good but also it will refers to its meaning.

The comprehension is also an achievement resulting from the knowledge of grammar and relationships between words in a sentence. Grammar mastery is also an important aspects because it is an aspects supporting the comprehension of the text. Knowledge of grammar is important in comprehension because complexity of grammar can cause difficulty. Baldwin (1985) states that reading a text is an interactive process of the grammar competence owned by the reader. It is also to say that grammar gives high contribution to students reading comprehension as well.

According to survey results that has been done on first semester students of STIE Indonesia Pontianak, the most problem appear in learning english is about comprehending the grammar rules and the difficulties to comprehending reading. This is because in grammatical rules, it is regarded not as something interesting in its own right, but also as a necessary function of language , and it is therefore

taught by way of rules and structures. Besides, the difficulties arise from the nature of the system itself and from the differences between English and students' native language. In the other side, in reading comprehension, students often find it hard even to understand the reading, students often can not understand the intent idea main idea of the text itself. It happens because they lack of grammar mastery.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested to investigating on the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their ability in reading comprehension. After knowing the correlation, the researcher expect to give an overview to the teachers or lecturers to be able to choose the right strategy to their students to enhance their understanding and ability in grammar and reading comprehension. Based on the background above, the researcher is intended to research about "Correlation Between Grammar Mastery and Reading Comprehension of the Students in STIE Indonesia Pontianak".

## **METHOD**

In this research, the researcher aimed to find the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their ability reading comprehension. The researcher used a co-relational design of ex-post facto designs (Sugiyono, 2010). In here, the researcher gave the test about grammar mastery and reading comprehension. After that, the data gained from the test was analyzed to see whether mastering grammar related to the ability of reading comprehension or not. Then, the researcher used quantitative method to analyze the result or research. The used of this method to find the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their ability in reading comprehension.

In this research there were two variables that were dependent and independent variables. The dependent variable was colleges reading comprehension (Y) and the independent variable was grammar mastery (X). The score showed a data about students achievement in grammar mastery and their ability in reading comprehension which can be used to identify the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their ability in reading comprehension. On this research the researcher took the population was all the students strata-1 of the

first semester of STIE Pontianak Academic Year 2016/2017. And the researcher chose 41 students as the sample from total population by random sampling system.

This research used some instrument for conducting the research. The instrument were test of grammar mastery and reading comprehension. The instrumen contains question of 50 items of grammar mastery and reading comprehension. The test conducted 90 minutes for reading comprehension and 60 minutes for grammar mastery.

The data analyzed technique used to determine the correlation between students grammar mastery and their ability in reading comprehension. Then describe the data from each of the variables, both independent variables and the dependent variable. Displaying data through charts, graphs, calculation mode, median, mean, standard deviation, the maximum and the minimum value obtained by using SPSS 17.0 for Windows. Then from the value of the average value, classified into several categories. The conversion value is classified into five categories can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1. Category Level The Tendency of Variable**

No	Range of Scores	Category
1	85 - 100	Excellent
2	70 – 84	Good
3	60 – 69	fair
4	40 – 59	Poor
5	< 40	Very Poor

This research, hypothesis testing to measured the correlation between grammar mastery and ability in reading comprehension. To find out that two variables had a correlation, the researcher used Pearson's Product Moments coefficient of correlation in Sugiyono (2010: 228).

To interpret the result of the coefficient value of the correlation of two paired variables, the researcher used the crude criterion for evaluating the

magnitude of a correlation coefficient by Sugiyono (2010: 231), can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2. Interpretation of Correlation Coefficient**

Coefficient (r)	Relationship
0.00 – 0.199	Very Low
0.20 – 0.399	Low
0.40 – 0.599	Moderate
0.60 – 0.799	Substantial
0.80 – 1.000	High to very high

In testing the significance, the researcher used significance of coefficient correlation formula which was determined by Sugiyono. The criterion of hypothesis is in the following, if the t-counted is higher than t-table it means that the hypothesis of the research is accepted. It means that there is a positive correlation between the two variables. But if the t-counted is lower than t-table, it means that hypothesis of the reserch is rejected. Definitely, there is a negative correlation.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Description of the data presented using descriptive techniques with the aim to get an overview of the data that has been obtained. Description of the data include: the price of the average (mean) (M), median (Me), mode (Mo), standard deviation (SD), maximum score and minimum score. Based on the data that has been obtained, it can be seen as follows:

**Table 3. Data Distribution Frequency Value Grammar Test**

No	Score	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	85 - 100	0	0.00
2	70 - 84	9	21.95
3	60 - 69	15	36.59
4	40 - 59	16	39.02
5	<40	1	2.44
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>100%</b>

The above results indicate that there are 16 students or 39.02% of the scores 40 - 59. This means that there is still a lack of grammar mastery of the students first semester STIE Pontianak in academic year 2016/2017.

Based on the results of the descriptive analysis processed with SPSS 17.00 for windows, presented in the following table:

**Table 4. The Results of Analysis Statistical of Students' Grammar Mastery**

<b>Analysis</b>	<b>Colleges Grammar Mastery</b>
Mean	60.68
Median	62.00
Mode	68
Std. Deviation	10.321
Variance	106.522
Minimum	34
Maximum	80

The results of above analysis, shows that the value of the average (mean) is 60.68. Based classification categories, it can be concluded grammar mastery of the students first semester STIE Pontianak in academic year 2016/2017 in the category of fair. Description of the data presented using descriptive techniques with the aim to get an overview of the data that has been obtained. Description of the data include: the price of the average (mean), median, mode, standard deviation, maximum score, and minimum score. Based on the data that has been obtained, it can be seen as follows:

**Table 5. Data Distribution Frequency Value Reading Comprehension Test**

<b>No</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
1	85 - 100	0	0.00
2	70 - 84	9	21.95
3	60 - 69	14	34.15
4	40 - 59	16	39.02
5	<40	2	4.88
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>100%</b>



The above results indicate that there are 16 students or 39.02% of the scores 40 - 59. This means that there is still a lack of reading comprehension of the students first semester STIE Pontianak in academic year 2016/2017.

Based on the results of the descriptive analysis processed with SPSS 17.00 for windows, presented in the following table:

**Table 6. The Results of Analysis Statistical of Colleges' Reading Comprehension**

Analysis	Colleges Reading Comprehension
Mean	58.83
Median	60.00
Mode	60
Std. Deviation	12.264
Variance	150.395
Minimum	28
Maximum	84

The results of above analysis, shows that the value of the average (mean) is 58.83. Based classification categories, it can be concluded reading comprehension of the students first semester STIE Pontianak in academic year 2016/2017 in the category of less.

In order to know the coefficient correlation between colleges grammar mastery and their reading comprehension, the researcher also calculated the data by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation in SPSS 17 for windows. Based on the calculation, the researcher found that the coefficient correlation between students grammar mastery as (X) and their ability in reading comprehension as (Y) is 0.970 with value sig. 0.000. Based classification categories of correlation coefficient categories, correlation between students grammar mastery and their ability in reading comprehension it can be concluded in the category of very high.

After obtaining 39 the degree of freedom (df) value, the researcher would find out the significance of coefficient correlation with  $t\text{-counted} = 24.9$ .

The value of the t-table at significant level of 5% (0.05) and the degree of freedom (df) = 39 is 2.708 while the value of the  $t_{\text{counted}}$  is 24.9. It means that the  $t_{\text{counted}}$  is higher than the  $t_{\text{table}}$ . The researcher concludes that there is a significant correlation between students mastery of grammar and their ability in reading comprehension.

Based on the result of statistic calculation, it indicates that  $r_{xy}$  is 0.970 with the degree of freedom (df=N-nr) is 39. In the table of significance of 5% and 1% and the value are 0.308 and 0.398. By comparing the values of  $r_{xy} = 0.970$  and  $r_{\text{table}} = 0.308$  and 0.398. the researcher makes assumption of the hypothesis, that  $r_{xy}$  is bigger than  $r_{\text{table}}$ . The statistic hypothesis states :

If  $r_o > r_t$  significance: there is correlation and  $H_a$  is accepted

If  $r_o < r_t$  non signification: there is no correlation and  $H_a$  is rejected,  $H_o$  is accepted.

The result of hypothesis is  $r_{xy}$  bigger than  $r_{\text{table}}$ , so the results of this research showed that students grammar mastery significant correlates with their ability reading comprehension. It means that grammar mastery and reading comprehension cannot separate each other.

Based on the results of the test, the researcher used the percentage of students ability in both variables. In the grammar test, the researcher found that there were 0% of the students who got excellent, 21.95% the students who got good, 36.59% the students who got fair, 39.02 the students who got less, and 2.44% the students who got very less. While the results of descriptive analysis, found the value of the average (mean) is 60.68. Based classification categories, it can be concluded grammar mastery of the students first semester STIE Pontianak in academic year 2016/2017 in the category of fair.

Then in reading comprehension test, the researcher found that were 0% the students who got excellent, 21.95% the students who got good, 34.15% the students who got fair, 39.02 the students who got less, and 4.8% the students who got very less. The results of descriptive analysis, found the value of the average (mean) is 58.83. Based classification categories, it can be concluded reading comprehension of the students first semester STIE Pontianak in academic year

2016/2017 in the category of less. Therefore, the mentioned above concludes that (1) the average grammar mastery of students in the category fair, it means that still need improvement in learning that emphasizes on understanding of grammar and the students have to study hard to improve its ability; (2) the average of students ability in reading comprehension in the category less, it means the need for guidance and exercises is to help students to understand and draw conclusion from reading.

After the researcher gathered of the test, that to find out the significant of coefficient correlation between the variable X and variable Y. By using the formula of significant of coefficient correlation, the researcher found that  $t_{\text{counted}}$  was 24.9. The researcher used 5% (0.05) significant level in critical value of students distribution (t) with 39 degree of freedom to obtain  $t_{\text{table}}$ . Then the value of the  $t_{\text{table}}$  is 2,71 while the value of  $t_{\text{counted}}$  is 24,9. It means that the  $t_{\text{counted}}$  is higher than  $t_{\text{table}}$ . The researcher concludes that there is a significant correlation between students of grammar mastery and the students ability in reading comprehension.

Furthermore, the researcher applied Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) formula, found that the coefficient correlation between students grammar mastery and their ability in reading comprehension was 0.970. The value  $r_{\text{counted}}$  is bigger than  $r_{\text{table}}$  is 0.308 (5%) and 0.398 (1%). It means there is a positive correlation between variable X and variable Y, and the relationship it can be concluded in the category of very high.

It means that grammar mastery an important things for students to comprehend the text of reading. According to brown (2001:362) states that grammar is the system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of words in sentence. Grammatical mistakes can lead to misunderstanding what one is saying or writing. Grammar is important for students to understand the meaning of the text that they read and to make meaning clear to readers without grammar, words when combined with other words may not have meaning. Based on the statement above it reveals that grammar mastery is important in learning language especially in reading. Because the lack of

knowledge about grammar will result in grammatically incorrect sentences which can lead to misunderstanding of what one is saying or writing.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, there is a correlation between grammar mastery and their ability in reading comprehension of the students first semester STIE Pontianak in academic year 2016/2017. The correlation between students mastery of grammar and their ability in reading comprehension of the students first semester STIE Pontianak is positive. It is proved that the result of correlation coefficient between variable (X) and variable (Y) is 0.970 and hypothesis  $H_a$  is accepted because the value of  $r_{\text{counted}}$  is bigger than  $r_{\text{table}}$ , this result is categorized very high. Furthermore, the correlation between students grammar mastery and reading comprehension ability is significant. It is evidenced by  $t_{\text{counted}}$  is higher than  $t_{\text{table}}$  which the result of  $t_{\text{counted}}$  is 24.9 while the value of the  $t_{\text{table}}$  is 2.71.

From the conclusion above, there are some suggestion that can be given: (1) For the students, they must study hard how to use grammar and improve their ability in reading comprehension, because according the results 39.02% the students got less in the categories fair and less; and (2) For the lecturers, should apply various strategies and methodology in teaching grammar and reading. The lecturers also give the motivation and more chances to the students in teaching learning process in order to the colleges get improvement in grammar mastery and reading.

## REFERENCES

- Baldwin, R. 1985. *Content Area Reading*. Iowa: KendalHunt.
- Brown, H. D. 2001. *Teaching by Principle an Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. New York: Longman.
- Depdikbud, Kurikulum 1994, GBPP SMU. Jakarta: Depdikbud.
- Grabe, W., Stoller, F.L. 2002. *Teaching and Researching Reading*. England: Pearson Education Limited.

- Haussamen, B. 2003. *Grammar Alive!: A Guide for Teachers*. New York: The National Council of Teachers of English.
- Langan, J. 1984. *College Writing Skills*. New York: Mc-Graw Hill Book Company.
- Madox, H. 1963. *How to Study*. Greenwich: Fawcet Premier.
- Nuttal, C. 1985. *Teaching Reading Skill in a Foreign Language*. London: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Sugiyono. 2010. *Statistika untuk Penelitian*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Swan, M. 1998. *Practical English Usage*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Willis, J. M. D. 2008. *Teaching the brain to Read, Strategies for Improving Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension*. New York: Longman.