

The Correlation Between Students' Grammar Mastery and Students' Speaking Skills of the Tenth Grade Students at Man 2 Palu

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Abstract

Grammar mastery is considered an important foundation in constructing proper and communicative sentences. Based on that, this study aimed to find out whether there is a correlation between students' mastery of grammar and their speaking ability. This research used a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The sample consisted of 31 grade X students who were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The results showed that there was a high correlation between students' grammar mastery and their speaking ability. The significance value of 0.000 is below the significance level of 0.05, and the correlation coefficient (r) value of 0.776 is greater than the r table value, which is 0.3550. This means the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. It is shown that the higher the students' mastery of grammar, the better their speaking ability. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' speaking skills of the tenth-grade students at MAN 2 Palu in the academic year 2024/2025.

Keywords: Correlation, Grammar Mastery, Speaking skill, Quantitative research.

Abstrak

Penguasaan tata bahasa dianggap sebagai fondasi penting dalam menyusun kalimat yang baik dan komunikatif. Berdasarkan hal tersebut, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah terdapat hubungan antara penguasaan tata bahasa dengan kemampuan berbicara siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain korelasional. Sampel terdiri dari 31 siswa kelas X yang dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat korelasi antara penguasaan tata bahasa siswa dan kemampuan berbicara mereka. Nilai signifikansi sebesar 0.000 berada di bawah tingkat signifikansi 0.05, dan nilai koefisien korelasi (r) sebesar 0.776 lebih besar dari nilai r tabel yaitu 0.3550. Hal ini berarti hipotesis alternatif diterima dan hipotesis nol ditolak. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa semakin tinggi penguasaan tata bahasa siswa, maka semakin baik pula kemampuan berbicara mereka. Oleh karena itu, dapat disimpulkan bahwa ada hubungan antara penguasaan tata bahasa siswa dengan kemampuan berbicara siswa kelas sepuluh di MAN 2 Palu pada tahun ajaran 2024/2025.

Kata kunci: Korelasi, Penguasaan Tata Bahasa, Keterampilan Berbicara, Penelitian Kuantitatif.

INTRODUCTION

In the current era of global communication, the ability to speak English is one of the main competencies that learners need to master. Speaking is the verbal use of language to communicate with others (Fulcher, 2003). A person can express ideas and opinions orally in a clear language, so that they can be understood by others, to create good communication. It is the ability to produce sounds or combine ideas into sentences to communicate concepts, viewpoints, or information to another person orally in daily life. This is also supported by Thornbury's statement in Madina dkk, speaking is a real-life activity in which speakers express their ideas and connect with other people (Madina, 2024). Speaking is considered one of the most important skills because speaking is a skill to deal with real communication situations in daily life. Speaking is considered an important skill because people who master a language are referred to as "speakers" of that language (Ur, 1996). When

people can speak fluently in English, it shows that they not only understand the language but are also able to use it to express ideas, feelings, and information appropriately.

Grammar is important in speaking English, as it helps to convey messages clearly, appropriately and easily understood by the listener. Grammar is one of the components that underlie and support a person's speaking skills. Grammar refers to a set of rules used to combine words in a language to form phrases, clauses and sentences (Greenbaum and Nelson, 2002). Grammar is a description of the rules that organise how sentences in a language are formed (Normawati, 2023). From the definition, it is concluded that grammar is a series of rules or structures that construct or create a sentence in a language. It will contribute to the development of effective speaking skills, and it is part of the study of the forms (structures) possible in a language.

Based on the research that had been conducted, the statements of experts regarding grammar and speaking, the two are closely related and cannot be separated because grammar is part of accuracy, and accuracy is an aspect of speaking (Kusumawardani, 2018). Accuracy is one of the important aspects as it ensures that the listener can clearly and precisely understand the message conveyed. Therefore, mastering grammar not only supports accuracy but also contributes to the development of comprehensive and effective speaking skills.

Based on an interview in preliminary observation at MAN 2 Palu, two opinions were obtained from the students' answers. Some students consider that, as long as the listener understands the message, correct grammar does not require much attention because the message can still be understood. Moreover, some students believe that correct grammar is necessary when speaking; they would be embarrassed if they used incorrect grammar and would prefer not to speak.

Therefore, this study was conducted to find out whether there is a correlation between grammar mastery and speaking skills. Through this research, it is hoped that valid data can be obtained about the relationship between grammar skills and students' speaking skills and add to the literature in the English language teaching field.

2. METHOD

In this paper, the researcher used a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The purpose of this research is to find a correlation between the two variables of this research, which are grammar ability and speaking skill. The population in this study was tenth-grade students of MAN 2 Palu; there were four classes with 520 students. The researcher used a purposive sampling technique; the criteria required were classes that had just completed grammar and speaking lessons and were always active in participating in English language learning. The sample in this study amounted to 31 students of the tenth grade of MAN 2 Palu.

In this study, the researcher used a test instrument. The grammar test was given in the form of writing, which aims to measure students' mastery of grammar, and an oral test was conducted for speaking skill assessment.

This study uses correlational statistical techniques with Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation. This technique is used to determine the level of correlation between two quantitative variables it is grammar mastery and speaking skills. Before using the test, a normality test was carried out to ensure that the data was normally distributed, and a linearity test to support the next test, which is the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the research results obtained from the data collection and analysis that have been done. The main purpose of this study is to find out the correlation between students' mastery of grammar and speaking ability in tenth-grade students at MAN 2 Palu. Data were collected through a written test for grammar and an oral test for speaking. There is average score of students' grammar mastery is 78, and the average score of speaking is 74. The highest score obtained by students on the grammar mastery test is 86, and the lowest score is 70. For speaking skills, the highest score of students is 80, and the lowest score is 68.

Furthermore, shown at the beginning are the results of the grammar data collection, which is a classification of students' grammar scores by Suharsimi Arikunto (2006):

Table 1: Classification of Students' Grammar Score

Level	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Very	80-100	18	58.06%
Good	66-79	13	41.93%
Fair	55-65	0	0%
Poor	40-50	0	0%
Fail	<39	0	0%
Total		31	100%

Based on the table above, from the 31 samples, there are 18 samples at a very good level, 13 samples got good classification in the 66-79 category score, and 0 samples Got fair classification in the 55-65 category score, 0 samples got poor classification in the 41-55 category score and 0 samples in the fail <39 category score. It means the students' grammar achievement in grammar was good because 18 samples got an 80-100 score.

The researcher classified the score of students' speaking skill test results according to Arikunto's classification:

Table 2: Speaking score classification

Level	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Very	80-100	4	12,9%
Good	66-79	27	87,0%
Fair	55-65	0	0%
Poor	40-50	0	0%
Fail	<39	0	0%
Total		31	100%

The researcher analysed the data using SPSS 25. The first test conducted was the data normality test to determine whether the data were normally distributed or not. The normality test was conducted using two methods, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk. Taking into account that Shapiro-Wilk is more recommended for small sample sizes (<50). The results of which can be seen in the Table below:

Table 3. Test of Normality

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	sig.
Grammar	.935	31	.062
Speaking	.954	31	.202

The significant value obtained from the normality test for grammar mastery is 0.062, and the significant value obtained for speaking is 0.202. The results of the normality test can be considered normal because the significance value of grammar is 0.062, greater than 0.05 ($0.062 > 0.05$), for the significance value of speaking skill is 0.202, greater than 0.05 ($0.062 > 0.05$). The final conclusion that can be drawn is that both variables, grammar mastery and speaking skills, are normally distributed. Therefore, the data of this study meet the assumption of normality and can be analysed using parametric statistical techniques.

The researcher also used the linearity test using SPSS 25. It is a statistical test used to determine whether the relationship between two variables, speaking skills, is linear or not. Researchers use the ANOVA Table. The result of the linearity test showed the significance value (Sig.) in the linearity section is 0.000. This value is smaller than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$), which indicates that there is a significant linear relationship between students' grammar mastery and their speaking ability.

In addition, the significance value in the deviation from linearity section is 0.852. This value is greater

than 0.05 ($.852 > 0.05$), which means that there is no significant deviation from the linearity pattern. In other words, the relationship between the two variables follows the linear model.

With the fulfilment of the linearity assumption, the correlation analysis to be used in this study can proceed without violating the assumptions. This result is the basis for the analysis that will be conducted next is valid to find out how much the relationship between students' grammar mastery and students' speaking ability.

Based on several analytical test results that showed that the data is normally distributed and has a significant linear relationship, further data analysis is conducted using the SPSS 25 program to calculate the correlation coefficient. The use of correlation analysis aims to describe and explain the level of relationship between students' mastery of grammar and students' speaking ability. The researcher used Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to determine the correlation coefficient, the result of the analysis is shown in the table below:

Table 4. Result of Pearson Product-Moment Test

		Grammar	Speaking
Grammar	Pearson Correlation	1	.776**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	31	31
Speaking	Pearson Correlation	.776**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	31	31
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Based on table 2 above, from the table, the Pearson Correlation value between grammar and speaking is 0.776 with a** sign indicating that this correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed) level of significance. The significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000, which is smaller than 0.01, reinforces that the relationship between these two variables is statistically significant.

It means that there is a high positive relationship between students' mastery of grammar and speaking ability. In other words, the better the students' mastery of grammar, the better their speaking ability. These results support the research hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between students' mastery of grammar and speaking ability. With a correlation value of 0.776, this relationship can be categorised as a high correlation according to the interpretation of the Pearson correlation coefficient proposed by Jonathan Sarwono in the table below:

Table 5. Pearson Correlation Interpretation

Correlation Value	Level of Correlation
<0,20	There is no Correlation
0,20 – 0,40	Low correlation
>0,40 – 0,70	Sufficient correlation
>0,70 – 0,90	High correlation
>0,90 – 1,00	Very high correlation

(adapted from Sarwono, 2006)

Based on the result of data analysis, there is a positive and significant correlation between the students' grammar competency and the students' speaking skills of the tenth-grade students at MAN 2 Palu. The correlation coefficient obtained from the statistical analysis, the significance of grammar is 0.776, and the significance value of speaking is 0.776. This suggests that grammar knowledge plays an important role in supporting students' oral communication. When students have sufficient control over grammar rules, they are more likely to speak fluently and correctly.

In this research, the problem to be studied is whether there is a correlation between mastery of grammar and students' speaking ability. The results of the correlation analysis between students' grammar ability and their speaking ability, the calculated r value is 0.776. This value is then compared with the r table value for $N = 31$ at the 0.05 significance level, which is 0.3550. Since the calculated r of 0.776 is higher than the r table of 0.3009 ($0.776 > 0.3550$), it shows that there is a significant positive correlation between students' grammar ability and their speaking ability. This finding supports the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between grammar mastery and speaking skills of tenth-grade students of MAN 2 Palu in the academic year 2024/2025.

Grammar skills play an important role in encouraging fluency and accuracy in speaking English. According to Thornbury (2005), the mastery of grammar not only functions as a structural rule but also becomes the basis for forming speech that is understandable and appropriate for the context of communication. He gives examples of grammar needed for speaking that are practical and communicative, such as the use of present and past simple, modal verbs, as well as the use of basic questions and conjunctions to maintain conversational continuity. This shows that grammar plays a direct role in forming sentence structures that can help students to convey ideas coherently, logically, and easily understood.

This study was conducted to find out the correlation between grammar mastery and speaking skills. From some of the explanations above, it was found that there was a significant correlation between students' grammar ability and speaking skills in tenth-grade students of MAN 2 Palu in the 2024/2025 academic year.

CLOSING

Conclusion

This research was conducted to find out the correlation between grammar mastery and speaking skills. From the results of the research and discussion that have been conducted, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation in the high category between the mastery of grammar and students' speaking skills in tenth-grade students of MAN 2 Palu. This finding shows that the better the students' mastery of grammar, the better their speaking skill tends to perform. This result reinforces the importance of grammar mastery in supporting the fluency and accuracy of speaking English.

Suggestion

The writer suggests that English teachers conduct contextual and applicable grammar teaching. Grammar should not only be taught as written rules, but also integrated directly into speaking activities so that students are accustomed to using correct language structures in oral communication. For further research, researchers can explore the types of specific grammar structures that most affect speaking fluency.

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