The Correlation between Reading Comprehension and Writing Ability in Descriptive Text

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Abstract

This study focuses on correlation between reading comprehension and writing ability in descriptive text. The researchers collect the data through two instruments, i.e. test of reading comprehension and descriptive text writing. This research is researched quantitatively and SPSS was used to analyze the data. Then, the result of the study shows that mean score of reading comprehension is 72.47. It means that the students reading comprehension was good. Meanwhile, the mean score of writing ability in descriptive text is 61.14. In addition, the researchers found that r-counted is 0.098, and the r-table with n = 108 (df-2 = 106) with significance level = 95% (α = 0.05) is 0.189. It indicates low correlation between the two variables.

Introduction

Reading affects writing and vice-versa even though they have differences in some aspects. Reading focuses on making meaning with texts, and writing considers

audience and purpose, but writing are also being transformed textually, relationally, spatially, and temporally (NCTE, 2008). Zainal & Husin (2011) state pointed out that reading involves many complex skills that have to come together in order for the reader to be successful. Setianingsih (2017) claims many factors affecting the English Reading Literacy. Others argue that an apropriate teaching strategy can be the key in the successful teaching of reading (Deshpande, 2016; Saeheng, 2017; Delfi & Yamat, 2017; Maybodi & Maibodi, 2017; and Nemati, 2016). Zainal & Husin (2011) and Ariyanti (2016) also stressed that writing is the learned process of shaping experiences into text, allowing the writer to discover, develop, clarify and communicate thoughts and feelings. The process must be implemented by teachers using the interesting approaches to the students (Noor, 2016; Omar and Ghazali, 2016; *Nurhayati*, 2016, *Dodgson Bt Tariq, et al, 2016,* Martinez Lirola & Irwin, 2016, Qomariyah & Permana, 2016, a*nd Setyowati,* 2016).

Writing and reading have long been seen as having a social dimension, but the emergence of new media writing is transforming the relationships among readers and writers and between writing and reading themselves. Tsai (2006) states that teachers of English as a second or foreign language have tended to teach reading and writing separately from each other. However, reading and writing do share similar properties and students are more likely to benefit from the instruction that makes reading and writing activities go hand-in-hand and supplement each other. More importantly, students need to be instructed to realize that both reading and writing are acts with communicative purposes and are inseparable.

The researcher is interested in investigating correlation between reading comprehension and writing ability due to some reasons. First, the student often complained that they do not like to read the text because the students think that reading is not interesting. They do not know what the meaning of the text so they feel lazy to read it and they have lack of vocabulary. The difficulty of the reading material could encourage or discourage the students from learning the text. Second, when students are told to write, they feel tired, etc. Moreover, she also observes that students who do not like reading also have poor performance in writing and vice versa. Jacobs (2002) confirmed her observation, he said that students engaged in reading-to-learn will also be prepared to write well. In turn, students who are engaged in writing-to-learn will become more effective readers. Through both approaches, students will gain a better understanding of material and a greater ability to demonstrate that understanding.

Teachers can engage in various practices when trying to make specific connections from reading to writing. According Farrell (2012), one of the most popular is to model the reading-writing process by showing students how they can incorporate specific text structures in their writing.

Descriptive writing provides an illustration of people, places, events, situations, thoughts, and feelings. Description presents sensory information that makes writing come alive. It expresses an experience that the reader can actively participate in by using imagination (BCCC, 2016). Description adds an important dimension because it moves emotions and expands experience. Description expands experience by taking to places might not otherwise know much about, which explains the popularity of descriptive travel essay in magazine and newspaper. Description can also give a fresh appreciation for the familiar. Description to persuade others to think or act in particular way: advertisers describe products to persuade to buy them; travel agents describe locales to entice and real estate agents describe properties to simulate a desire to see them.

The researcher choose SMP Katolik because she wants to study the correlation of the students reading comprehension and writing ability in descriptive by the seventh grade students of SMP Katolik. Based on researcher preliminary observation, the students have problems and the difficulties in comprehending their English text and writing. They do not know how to figure out particularly the components of the reading, such as topic sentence, conclusion and also they do not know to figure out particularly the components of the writing such as identification and description. The problem usually happen when as the difficulties in comprehending the reading texts and writing text are still far from what actually curriculum expected. For instance, the score (KKM) is not achieved by almost all students, Education Unit Level Curriculum, (2006).

To discuss further, there are a few researchers who have conducted similar research. First, a study that was conducted by (P, Syarfi, & Sumbayak, 2012) where the result is significant correlation between reading and writing in moderate level with 0.59 as the result of coefficient, it could be assumed that 59% of the students succeed in increasing their writing ability through their ability in reading comprehension. Lestari, et al (2018) found that reading attitude became the best predictor and influenced the students' writing mastery.

The next study was conducted by Koons (2008) with the title "The Reading-Writing Connection: An Investigation of the Relationship Between Reading Ability and Writing Quality Across Multiple Grades and Three Writing Discourse Modes". This study used data collection from a sample of 521 students in grades 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 from one school district in a small town in the northeast corner of Mississippi. The reading comprehension instrument was adapted from Scholastic Reading Inventory and the writing instrument used three types of discourse mode: narrative, informative and persuasive. The study addressed the overall relationship between reading and writing within grades and across grade using correlational analysis as well as SEM. Unadjusted correlations were used to examine the

relationship between students' scores for reading and writing. The result of this study showed that there was a strong relationship between reading ability and writing quality in all grades, but that it varies by grade. The relationship is stronger in the upper grades that it was in the lower grades (r_{xy} of 4th grade: 0,57; r_{xy} of 6th grade: 0,48; r_{xy} of 8th grade: 0.67; r_{xy} of 10th grade: 0.63; r_{xy} of 12th grade: 0.61).

The next study was conducted by Maula (2015) with the tittle: the correlation between students reading habit and their ability of writing narrative text (A correlational study on the eleventh graders of SMA N 1 Kajen pekalongan in the academic year of 2014/2015). This study used data collection from 34 students as a sample. The result of the study was computed r was higher than r-table (0.629>0.339). It means that between students reading habit and their ability of writing narrative text had a high correlation.

Based on the descriptive writing ability and reading comprehension above, it show that both have close relation because one of factor which influence students ability to comprehend writing text is intrinsic factor that include reading. If students have a good reading the students can get a good achievement especially can make the students understand easily in the writing test. To get empirical data about it, the researcher will organize the test result to prove the relationship between reading comprehension and writing ability in descriptive text. Specifically, differently with above previous researchers where they use Narrative, Recount, Informative, and Persuasive texts, the researchers use descriptive text for writing instrument as the type of writing.

Research Methods

The design of this study is correlation research design with quantitative approach. According to Fraenkel et al. (2011) correlational studies investigate the possibility of relationship between only two variables, although investigation of more than two variable two common. Based on Sukmadinata (2009) the relationship was given with the amount of correlation coefficient and significant statically. The correlation have not refer with the influences or cause-effect relationship from the variable to other one. Positive correlation meant the high score in one variable relates with the high score in another variable. Negative correlation meant the high score in one variable related with the low score in another variable.

There are two variables in this study. First variable is reading comprehension and the second variable is writing ability in descriptive text. The sample of this study was the seventh-grade students of SMPK 1 W.R. Soepratman Samarinda in the academic year 2016/2017. The number of this sample was 80 students. Try-out for reading instrument was taken to get the validity instrument for the test. After conducting try-out, the researcher was given reading comprehension test and writing descriptive test to the sample. Then the researcher computes average score of reading

comprehension scores and writing descriptive scores. The last step, the researcher was related reading comprehension scores and writing descriptive score by using Pearson Product Moment formula to find out the relationship between that two variables.

In every study undertaking, the researcher must decide whether the entire field, or only a part of population, will be covered. The process of deciding sample from a population is called sampling (Sukmadinata, 2009). According Creswell (2009) states that population is a group of individuals who have the same characteristic. Gay (2006) defines that population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which the researcher would like the results of the study to be generalizable. The good sample show condition of population but will be remember that the sample is not duplicate of population. A sample will be as large as the researcher could obtain with a reasonable expenditure of time and energy.

The population of this study will all of the seventh-grade students of SMPK 1 W. R. Soepratman Samarinda be the subjects of this research. She involves at least 108 students (from 120 students) from all classes of seven grade as sample. Meanwhile, in taking the sample, the researcher uses a simple random sampling. Furthermore, Fraenkel et al. (2011) state that a simple random sampling was one in which each and every member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected if the sample was large, this method was the best way yet devised to obtain a sample representative of the population of interest. There are five classes in seven grades in SMPK 1 W. R. Soepratman Samarinda which in every class in average consist of 29 and 30 students. The researcher was used simple random sampling by choosing students numbers randomly in each class, then the researcher took a lottery technique to get 108 sample from all class. Simple random sampling was done by lottery, pick a number from a list of random numbers, etc. Every class the researcher will take 27 students sample.

To collect data of reading comprehension, the researcher was used multiple choice test. The reason for choosing it is the technique of scoring is easy. Because the function of test measure how students ability in reading comprehension, the test was utilized. The type of test is multiple choices with 40 question items each item was four choices, one is the right option and the rest are distracters. The researcher took the question of reading comprehension test from Book PR Bahasa Inggris PT. Intan Pariwara. The reason choose that book because the book level with students. The questions consist of descriptive passages about person.

In writing descriptive text, the researchers asked the students to write descriptive writing. Abiline (2004) describe principles in descriptive writing. First, a descriptive writing has one, clear dominant impression. If someone is describing snowfall, for example, it is important for him/her to decide and to let his/her readers know if it is threatening or lovely; in order to have one dominant impression it

cannot be both. In addition, to make scoring more objective, she emphasized the students to writing descriptive based on some pictures given. The topic that was used is "famous person". The reasons of this study choose the tittle because this study prohibited the students write besides descriptive text. To make scoring easier, she encouraged the students to write ten to fifteen sentences.

Findings and Discussion

a. Result of Reading Comprehension Test

The result of students' reading comprehension was calculated and result if 72.47, which categorized as good where Standard Deviation is 10.26. The scores above were used to determine the score qualification as the following formula:
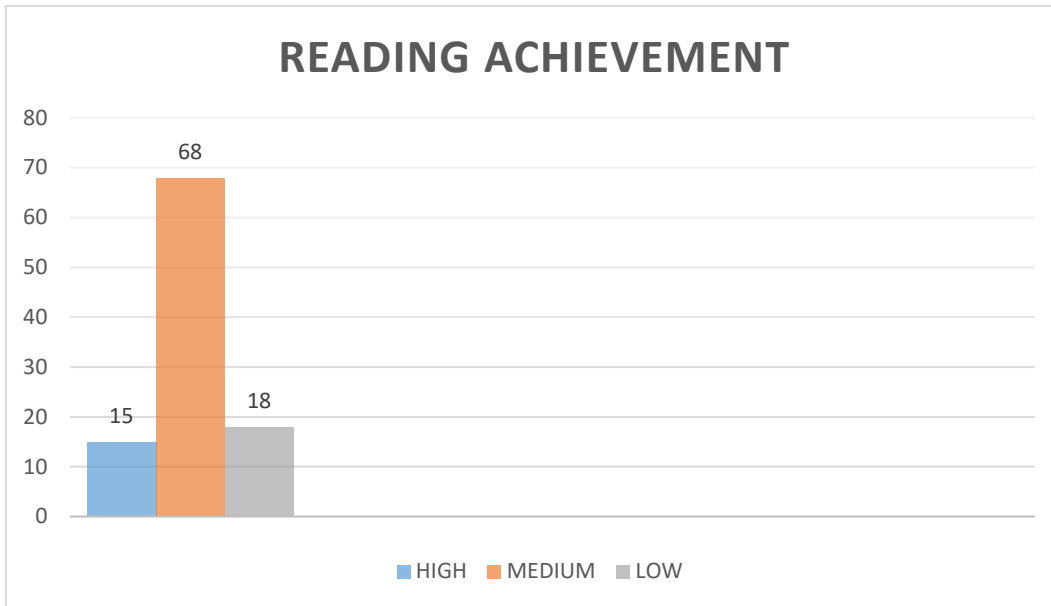
Table 4.1 formula Qualification Score

HIGH	1SD+MEAN	82.73	82.73 – 100
MEDIUM	0SD+MEAN	72.47	62.22 – 82.72
LOW	-1SD+MEAN	62.21	0 – 62.21

Table 4.2 percentage criteria of students

CRITERIA	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
HIGH	16	15%
MEDIUM	73	68%
LOW	19	18%

The following figure shows the distribution of reading achievement score in percentage:

READING ACHIEVEMENT

b. Result of Writing Ability Test

The result of students' reading comprehension was calculated and result if 61.14, which categorized as fair. The scores above were used to determine the score qualification as the following formula:
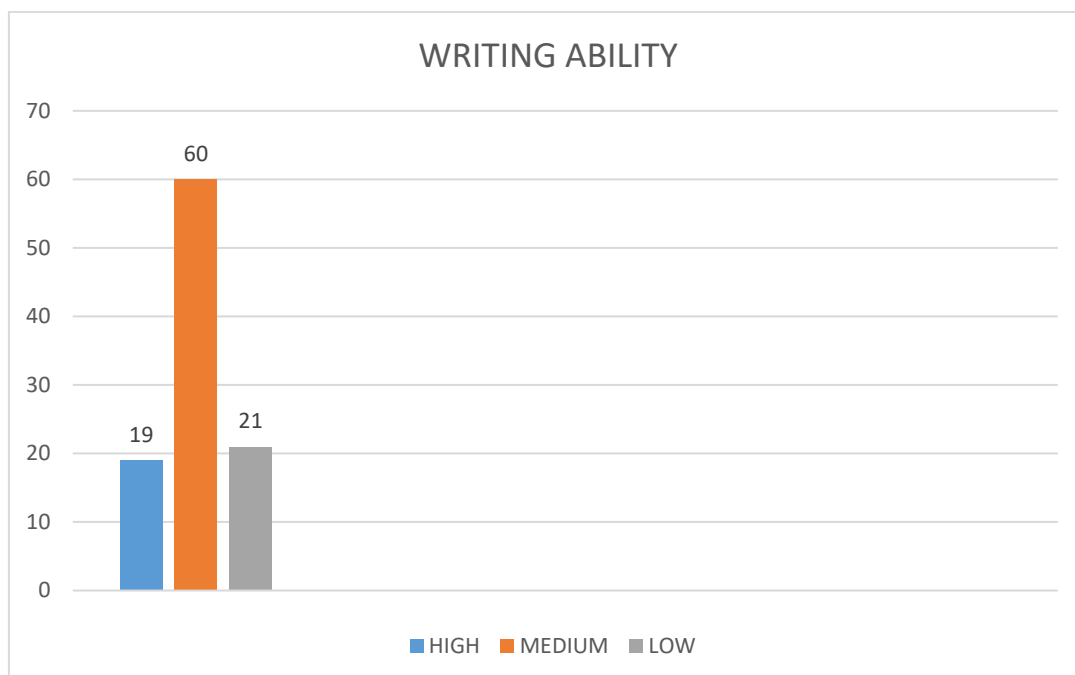
Table 4.1 formula Qualification Score

HIGH	1SD+MEAN	71	71 – 100
MEDIUM	0SD+MEAN	61	52 – 70
LOW	-1SD+MEAN	51	0 – 51

Table 4.2 percentage criteria of students

CRITERIA	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
HIGH	20	19%
MEDIUM	65	60%
LOW	23	21%

The following figure shows the distribution of reading achievement score in percentage:

WRITING ABILITY

Studens' Writing Ability of Each Aspect in Descriptive Text

No	Elements	Average score	Percentage	Frequency level
1	Content	71.44	66%	Good
2	Organization	65.74	61%	Good
3	Grammar	47.28	44%	Average
4	Vocabulary	58.15	54%	Average
5	Mechanic	62.73	58%	Good
	Total	305.34		

Based on the table above, the students ability in descriptive writing text of seventh grade students of SMP Katolik 1 W. R. Soepratman Samarinda in academic year 2016/2017 is good with average score 61.14. students ability in content is good average score is 77.44 or 66%, in organization area is good average score is 65.74 or 61%, in grammar area is average with average score 47.28 or 44%, in vocabulary area is average with average score 58.15 or 54%, and in mechanic area is good with average score 62.73 or 58%.

Correlation between Reading Comprehension and Writing Ability

This research aims to see the relationship between the result of reading comprehension score and writing ability score in descriptive text which achieved by 108 students as the research samples. The researcher calculated the data of variable X and variable Y use SPSS 20, it can be seen in the following table below:

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailes).

		WRITING	READING
	Pearson Correlation	1	,098
WRITING	Sig. (2-tailed)		,314
	N	108	108
READING	Pearson Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,314	
	N	108	108

From the calculaion above, it was calculated that applying satistical package for social science (SPSS) 20 the correlation value r$_{xy}$ 0.098. On the table of significance shows if DF value is 106, the table of significance 5% is 0.098.

The Null Hypothesis shows that "there is no significant correlation between reading comprehension and the writing ability in descriptive texts by seventh grade students of SMP Katolik 1 W.R. Soepratman Samarinda in academic year 2016/2017". While, Alternative hypothesis states that "there is a significant correlation between reading comprehension and the writing ability in descriptive text by the seventh grade students of SMP Katolik 1 W. R. Soepratman Samarinda in academic year 2016/2017".

To test the hypothesis, it is important to state the acceptance criteria of hypothesis;

Null Hypothesis: r-counted < r-table

Alternative Hypothesis: r-counted > r-table

It means that, of the r-counted is more than r-table, then the alternative hypothesis is accepted. On other words, there is significant relationship between reading comprehension and writing ability. By doing the calculation, the researcher

found r-counted is 0.098, and the r- table with n = 108 (df-2 =106) with significance level = 95% (α = 0.05) is 0.1891

r-counted = 0.098 < r-table = 0.1981

Since the value of r-counted is lower than the r-table, it can be said that the Null Hypothesis is accepted. In brief, there is no correlation between reading comprehension and writing ability in descriptive text of the seventh grade students of SMP Katolik 1 W.R. Soepratman Samarinda in the academic year 2016/2017.

Based on the result of the study, the researcher found the mean score of Reading comprehension was 72.47. It means that reading comprehension of the seventh grade students of SMP Kaolik 1 W. R. Soepratman Samarinda in the academic year 2016/2017 state good. The result of the study showed that from 108 students as sample, there were 15 % or 16 students get High score, 68 % or 73 students get Medium score, and 18 % or 19 students get Low score.

From the result, the researcher also found the mean score of writing ability in descriptive text was 61.14. The result of the study showed that from 108 students as sample, there were 19 % or 20 students get High score, 60 % or 65 students get Medium score, and 23 % or 21 students get Low score. If the average score of reading achievement compared with the average score of writing ability, it shows that students reading comprehensions does not influence their ability in writing, because, the mean core of reading comprehension is higher than the mean score of writing ability 72.47 > 61.14. This comparison supports the result of SPSS 20, which found low relationship between the two variable.

From the Pearson product moment calculation, it found that the r-counted: 0.098 is less than the r-table: 0.1981, which then interpreted that there is no significant correlation between reading comprehension and writing ability, especially for descriptive text. In brief, although as it is reported in the findings that the number of students achieved medium level of reading comprehension is more than those who achieved medium level of writing ability, it does not necessarily mean that they correlate each other. Good reading comprehension does not affect students' writing ability and vice versa.

On contrary, P et al. (2012) found strong relationship between reading comprehension and writing ability among high school students. Similarly, Koons (2008) found significant relationship between reading comprehension and writing ability in each grade (4th, 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grade). Considering the level of students, this study is different with the both previous students. This study involved junior high school students. Meanwhile, P et al. (2012) involved senior high school students. Although Koons (2008) involves 8th graders which

categorized in junior high school level and found the significant correlation, still, this study did not find the strong relationship between both variables. The different education level of the samples may influence the result of this study, therefore, it needs further investigation.

Conclusion

Regarding to the research problem, the researcher concluded that insignificant correlation existed between reading comprehension and writing ability in descriptive text since the r-counted is lower than the r-table: 0.098 < 0.1981, which means, the null hypothesis is accepted. It can be concluded that students reading comprehension does not necessarily influence their writing ability, although some previous researchers found significant relationship between the two variables, this study showed different result since there is difference of students' level of education.

Based on the conclusion above, the researchers form two suggestions i.e. for educators and future researchers. For educators, since it is not found significances relationship between reading comprehension and writing ability, it is suggested to focus on reading comprehension aspect only to improve students writing ability. They need considers others aspect, such, students readiness for comprehending text and writing text, the learning materials which meet students capability, and other factor which may influence students writing ability.

Moreover, although previous finding found significant correlations between reading comprehension and writing ability, this study found the opposite.

Therefore, it is suggested for future researcher to widen their focus of study, such investigating the internal and external factors which influence students writing ability and reading comprehension. Moreover, the future researchers are also recommended to widen the variety of the research samples, such as involving senior high school students.

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