

**THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' GRAMMAR MASTERY  
AND STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY AT THE FIFTH SEMESTER  
STUDENTS OF UNISMUH MAKASSAR**

*Hubungan antara Penguasaan Grammar Siswa dan Kemampuan Speaking  
Siswa pada Mahasiswa Semester Lima Unismuh Makassar*

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**ABSTRACT**

This research aimed at finding out the correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' speaking ability. The researcher used a descriptive method. The population was the fifth semester students of Unismuh Makassar and the number of sample was 35 students and it used random sampling technique. There were two kinds of instruments; the first was grammar test used to find out the students grammar mastery in comprehending any provided item of test and the second was speaking test used to find out how the students' vocabulary and fluency in speaking English. The research findings found that the grammar mastery of the fifth semester students of Unismuh Makassar was categorized poor, it was indicated by the mean score (68.57) while the students speaking ability was categorized into fair, it was indicated by the mean score (70.28). The rate of the correlation between students' grammar mastery and speaking ability was in 'substantial' level correlation with ( $r_{xy}$  was 0.615) where  $r_{xy}$  (0.615) >  $r$  table (0.344). It indicated that there was a positive and significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' speaking ability at the fifth semester students of Unismuh Makassar.

**Keywords:** *correlation, grammar mastery, speaking ability.*

**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan hubungan antara penguasaan grammar siswa dan kemampuan berbicara siswa. Peneliti menggunakan metode deskriptif. Populasi diambil dari mahasiswa semester 5 Unismuh Makassar dan jumlah sampel adalah 35 siswa yang diambil dari teknik random sampling. Terdapat 2 jenis instrument, pertama adalah tes grammar yang digunakan untuk menemukan penguasaan grammar siswad dalam memahami berbagai bentuk tes dan kedua adalah tes berbicara yang digunakan untuk mengetahui kosakata dan kelancaran siswa dalam berbicara

Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa penguasaan grammar pada mahasiswa semester lima Unismuh Makassar dikategorikan rendah, hal itu ditandai oleh nilai rata-rata siswa (68.57) sementara kemampuan berbicara siswa dikategorikan rata-

rata, hal itu dilihat dari nilai rata-rata siswa (70.28). hasil perhitungan hubungan antara penguasaan grammar siswa dan kemampuan speakingnya berada pada tingkat 'tinggi' dengan ( $r_{xy}$  adalah 0.615) dimana  $r_{xy}$  (0.615) >  $r$  table (0.344). hal itu menandakan bahwa terdapat hubungan positif antara penguasaan grammar dan kemampuan berbicara siswa pada mahasiswa semester lima Unismuh Makassar.

**Kata Kunci :** *Hubungan, penguasaan grammar, kemampuan speaking*

## INTRODUCTION

Grammar has an important role in English because grammar permeates all language skills like speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Grammar informs the students to develop the skills because Grammar is structure of language which guides students to understand about language. Azar (1993:13) said that grammar promotes the development of all language skills in a variety of ways. One of the skills which have a strong effect of grammar is speaking. Speaking is oral communication that usually used in daily activity. Speaking can be used to give information, idea, opinion, and feeling to the other people.

Some aspects that can make success students' ability on speaking are using grammar accurately, assessing characteristic of the target audience, selecting vocabulary that is appropriate, applying strategy to enhance comprehensibility, and paying attention to the success interaction. The students can speak well if they have sufficient knowledge of grammatical structure because they know the patterns of English sentences. At the other case when students perform speaking, grammar is usually neglected. Some students think that grammar can impede their speaking. Speak by considering grammar rule will make their speaking limited. It causes they have to think the grammar's rule because they are afraid produce a wrong sentences.

Based on the case and explanation above, the researcher interested to find the correlation between the students' grammar and speaking skill ability to know the significance correlation of the two variables, it was have a positive or negative impact. So the researcher conducted a research titled "*The correlation between Students' Grammar Mastery and Speaking Ability at the fifth Semester Students of English Department Unismuh Makassar.*"

## **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

“Is there any correlation between students’ grammar mastery in term of tenses and speaking ability in term of vocabulary and fluency at the fifth semester students of English Department Unismuh Makassar?”

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

There are some previous related of the research as the following.

Priyanto and Amin (2012) said that there was a correlation between English grammar competence and speaking fluency of eleventh grade students in SMAN 1 Sidoarjo. While it did not signify a causal relationship, it could still be inferred that good competence tended to go with good speaking fluency and so the otherwise.

Afidatun (2009) about “Grammar Mastery and Speaking Skill of the Fifth Year English Department Students of STAIN Salatiga” the finding of the study is there is a correlation between grammar mastery and speaking ability so they could do exercises given by the lecturer.

Kianiparza and Vali (2010) stated that learning grammar is effective in speaking English as foreign language. In order to speak a foreign language fluently it is necessary to learn grammatical rules. It has been suggested that grammatical knowledge is complementary for speaking a language.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that there is correlation between grammar mastery and speaking ability because students want to speak English well, they must speak with a good language, sentence, and structure.

### **A. Grammar Mastery**

#### **1. Definition of Grammar**

Grammar is one of knowledge that informs the students to construct a sentence becomes a paragraph. Language cannot be separated from grammar because grammar is one of the basic in the study language. Besides that, grammar is the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves. Chowdhury (2014) defines

that grammar as the rules in a language for changing the form of words and joining them into sentences.

In addition, Kolln and Funk (2010: 4) point out three definitions of grammar. First, grammar is the system of rules in our heads. Second, grammar is the formal description of the rules. And the third, grammar is the social implication of usage. Swam (2005: 19) states that grammar is the rules which show how to combine, arrange, and change the words in order to show particular kinds of meaning.

## 2. The Importance of Studying Grammar

- a. Great grammar will make someone becomes a better listener, speaker, reader, writer, and communicator.
- b. Great grammar build up our own style  
Someone becomes more advanced in English when she/he can develop her/his own unique style of communicating, which can lead to rewarding career as a writer or public speaker.
- c. Logic and reasoning  
Understanding and using grammar properly will help people think logically.

## 3. The types of Grammar

Grammar has many patterns that depend on situation and condition, generally called by “tenses”. Tenses are an important material in learning English, because it helps us to compose sentence well, especially in using verb. There will be formed sixteen tenses, but at this part the researcher only explains about three tenses that will be used on this research; they are Simple Present Tense, Simple Past Tense, and Simple Future Tense.

### a. Present Tense

Present Tense is used to talk about something in general. And it is also used to talk about something which is happened repeatedly or habitually activities.

Form:

(+) S + Verb(s/es) + Object
(-) S + do/does not+ Verb1 +O
(?) Do/Does + S + Verb1 + O ?

### **b. Simple Past Tense**

This tense are used to talk about actions or situations in the past

Form:

(+) S + Verb2 + O
(-) S + did + not + Verb1
(?) Did + S + verb1 + O ?

### **c. Simple Future Tense**

To declare an act or event that will be done at the time will come.

Form:

( + ) S + shall/will + V1
( - ) S + shall/will + not + V1
( ? ) Shall/will + s + V1 ?

## **B. Theory of Speaking**

### **1. Definition of Speaking**

Speaking is one of the skills that have to be mastered by student in learning English. Speaking is the way to express the ideas or feelings. Many experts define speaking in different ways. Nematovna (2016), defines speaking is an active skill. Speakers think of everything themselves, the ideas, the words, and the grammar. Finally, all of the words and grammar must be pronounced clearly. This is much more difficult than listening.

Brown (2001: 271) says that speaking skill is always related to communication. Speaking skill itself can be stated as the skill to use the language accurately to express meanings in order to transfer or to get knowledge and information from other people in the whole life situation.

## **2. The Elements of Speaking**

### **a. Accuracy**

Accuracy is a manner of people in using appropriate word and the pattern of sentence. In this case, accuracy is divided into three elements. They are pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.

#### 1) Pronunciation

Pronunciation is an act or result of production the sound of speech including articulation, vowel formation accent, and inflection.

#### 2) Vocabulary

Vocabulary means the appropriate diction which is used in communication. Vocabulary is central to English language teaching because without sufficient vocabulary students cannot understand others or express their own ideas.

#### 3) Grammar

Grammar is one of the important things in English because it not just to make the sentence good but also it will refers to its meaning.

### **b. Fluency**

Fluency is the features which give speech the qualities of being natural and normal including native like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stressing, rate of speaking, and use of interjection and interruptions. In refers to how well you communicate in a natural manner, in this case fluency refers to self-confidence, smoothness and content. Speaking in a foreign language is difficult for foreign learners because effective oral communication requires the good fluency besides vocabulary to use the language appropriately in social interaction.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Participant*

This research applied a correlational research to give description quantitatively about the correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' speaking ability. The study population was taken from the fifth semester students of English Department Unismuh Makassar, the researcher used random

sampling technique to make the each member of the population had the same opportunity to be the sample of this research. The samples were 35 students of 382 students.

#### *Instrument*

The researcher employed grammar test and interview test. The grammar test used to determine the level of students' grammar mastery, this test consisted of 20 questions. The interview test used to determine the students' ability to speak English. The students were given one topic that have been available then the researcher recorded the students' voice

#### *Technique of data collection*

For the process of the research, to attain comprehensible description of phenomenon, classroom observations, interviews, and document. To find out the data require, firstly gather the data that the researcher have. Then the researcher arranged the data well.

## **RESULTS**

### **1. The Students' Grammar Mastery**

Table 1. The Frequency and the Percentage Rate of Students' Grammar Mastery

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Excellent	90 – 100	5	14.2%
2.	Good	80 – 89	8	22.9%
3.	Fair	70 – 79	7	20.0%
4.	Poor	50 – 69	11	31.4%
5.	Very Poor	0 - 49	4	11.4%
			35	100%

The table 1 shows that there were 5 students (14.2%) were classified excellent, 8 students (22.9%) were classified good, 7 students (20%) were classified fair, 11 students (31.4%) were classified poor, and 4 students (11.4%) are classified very poor. It means that most of the students were poor in grammar mastery.

## 2. The Students' Speaking Ability

Table 2. The Frequency and the Percentage Rate of Students' Speaking Ability

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Excellent	90 – 100	3	8.5%
2.	Good	80 – 89	8	22.9%
3.	Fair	70 – 79	14	40%
4.	Poor	50 – 69	10	28.6%
5.	Very Poor	0 - 49	-	0%
			35	100%

The table 2 shows that there were 3 students (8.5%) were classified excellent, 8 students (22.9%) were classified good, 14 students (40%) were classified fair, 10 students (28.6%) were classified poor, and no one students (0%) were classified very poor. It means that most of the students were fair in speaking ability.

Furthermore, the presentation of two mean score could be seen as follows:

Table 3: The Mean Score of Students Speaking Ability

Variable	Mean Score
Grammar Mastery (X)	68.57
Speaking Ability (Y)	70.28

The table 3 shows that the mean score of grammar mastery (68.57) was lower than the mean score of speaking ability (70.28).

## 3. The Correlation between Students' Grammar Mastery and Students' Speaking Ability

To find out the correlation between two variables above, the researcher used person product moment formula to compute the data. There were two variables, grammar mastery as variable X and speaking ability as variable Y. Based on the data from the grammar mastery and speaking ability, the degree of index correlation between variable X and variable Y was presented in the following table:



Table 4. The Mean Score and the Sum of  $r_{xy}$  Squared of the Students' Grammar Mastery and Speaking Ability

Sample	x	y	Rxy
35	68.57	70.28	0.615

Table 4 shows that the  $r_{xy} = 0.615$  that was classified "substantial" correlation where the standard correlation between 0.60 – 0.80 which the data have been calculated by using  $r$  person product moment formula. Based on the data above, it showed that there was a substantial correlation between variable X and variable Y. It was interpreted that there was positive and substantial correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' speaking ability.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. Students' Grammar Mastery

Grammar as the rules in a language for changing the form of words and joining them into sentences. The grammar test that had been given to the students to find out their grammar mastery focused on simple present tense, simple past tense, and present future tense. The test was consisted of three parts where the first part was multiple choice that consisted of 10 numbers, the second part was true-false questions that consisted of 5 numbers and the last part was rearrange the word into a good sentence that consisted of 5 numbers.

The data analysis of students' grammar mastery showed that the students' grammar mastery at the fifth semester students' of Unismuh Makassar was categorized poor. It based on the mean score was 68.57 where from 35 students there were 11 students (31.4%) was categorized poor, 8 students (22.9%) was categorized good, 7 students (20%) students was categorized fair, 5 students (14.2%) was categorized excellent and 4 students (11.4%) was categorized very poor.

Based on the result of students' grammar test, most students were difficult in part of rearrange the words into a good sentence. It because there were some words that had to be arranged into a good sentence while they were still difficult to analyze the tenses of each questions and the meaning of each words. There were only two students who answered all questions at this part with a correct answer.

At multiple choices part, there were some students who difficult to choose the correct answer of the answer available. It was caused the meaning of each words were same, so they had to analyze the tenses that was used at each questions. Nonetheless, the students' error at this part was a little more than a rearrange part. The last part at students' grammar test was true false questions. At this part most students answered the questions with a correct answer because at this part they only chose or analyzed the structure of the sentences was true or false.

## **2. Students' Speaking Ability**

Derakhshan (2016) state that speaking is a part of daily life that everyone should develop in subtle and detailed language. The speaking test that was given to the students to find out their speaking ability focused on students' vocabulary and fluency. At this test he students were asked to tell about their best experience in their life. The data analysis of students speaking ability showed that the students' speaking ability at the fifth semester students of Unismuh Makassar was categorized fair. It based on the mean score was 70.8. It was seen from the student who categorized excellent was 3 students, good was 8 students, fair was 14 students, poor was 10 students and there was no students categorized very poor.

Based on the finding of the research in speaking ability, the researcher found that the students' ability in speaking was different. It was caused by their habitual in speaking at daily life. Beside that some students had different skill in used or chose vocabulary. Based on the speaking test, there were some types of students in speaking. There were some students could speak fluency ant their vocabulary was good. At the same time there were some students could speak fluency but used a general or inappropriate vocabularies and there were some students had a good diction and used appropriate vocabularies but couldn't speak fluency.

## **3. The Correlation between Students' Grammar Mastery and Students' Speaking Ability**

After analyzing data, the result of data analysis showed that the correlation coefficient between variable X and variable Y was 0.61. It means that there was a positive correlation between two variables. To see whether the correlation between

students' grammar mastery and students' speaking ability was significant or not, the researcher concluded the result by applying the following comparison between the  $r_{xy}$  analysis and  $r_{table}$ .

If  $r_{xy} > r_{table}$ . The correlation is positive

If  $r_{xy} < r_{table}$ . The correlation is negative

If  $r_{xy} = r_{table}$  is Zero correlation.

The value of correlation coefficient obtained was 0.61, while the criteria of the correlation between 0.60 – 0.80 were considered substantial. It means that the level of relationship of the correlation coefficient of the two variables was substantial. In this research the variable Y was influenced high by the variable X.

By noting to the table of degree of freedom ( $df = N - nr = 35 - 2 = 33$ ), by consulting to " $r$ " table product moment, it was found in the table of significant of 5% = 0.344 and 1% = 0.442. By comparing the values of  $r_{xy} = 0.615$  and " $r$ " table = 0.344 and 0.442, so that  $r_{xy}$  was bigger than " $r$ " table or in short  $0.344 < 0.615 > 0.442$ . It means that there was a significant correlation between students' grammar mastery (X) and students' speaking ability (Y) at the fifth semester students of Unismuh Makassar. So, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_o$ ) is rejected.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study deals with "The Correlation between Students' Grammar Mastery and Students' Speaking Ability at the Fifth Semester Students of Unismuh Makassar. The students' mean score of grammar mastery is 68.57 in which the highest score is 100 and the lowest is 40. It means that students' grammar mastery is categorized poor. Meanwhile the students' mean score in speaking ability is 70.28 in which the highest score is 90 and the lowest score is 50. It means that the students' speaking ability is categorized fair.

The result of coefficient correlation ( $r_{xy}$ ) was 0.61 with the degree of freedom was 33. The result of  $r_t$  on the table of the degree of significance 5% = 0.344 and in 1% = 0.442. So  $r_{xy} > r_t$  ( $0.344 < 0.61 > 0.442$ ). The result means that

students' grammar mastery was positively correlated with students' speaking ability.

Based on the research analysis, the researcher concludes that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected. The researcher then inferred that this thesis answered the research question was "Is there any correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' speaking ability at the fifth semester students of Unismuh Makassar?". The answer was there is a substantial correlation between students' grammar mastery and students' speaking ability at the fifth semester students of Unismuh Makassar.

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