

THE EFFECTS OF GRAMMAR MASTERY AND READING HABIT ON STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS IN RECOUNT TEXT

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Abstract: This research aims to determine the effects of grammar mastery and reading habits on students' writing skills in recount text at State Junior High School in Tangerang Regency. The population is students from state junior high schools. The 60 samples were gained through a cluster. The data was analyzed by using the multiple regression method. The results are: 1) There are any significant effects of grammar mastery and reading habits jointly towards students' writing skills in recount text. It is proved by Sig.= 0.000 < 0.05 and $t_{observed} = 20.653$; 2) There is a significant effect of grammar mastery towards students' writing skills in recount text. It is proved by Sig.= 0.001 < 0.05 and $t_{observed} = 3.435$; 3) There is a significant effect of reading habit on students' writing skills in recount text. It is proved by Sig.= 0.000 < 0.05 and $t_{observed} = 4.639$.

Keywords: Grammar; Reading Habit; Writing; Recount Text.

Introduction

Education is essential for people around the world. Education is one of a tool that could change people to be a better personality. We could get an education every time and everywhere as long as we have a desire to learn. Education is a right for everyone. The right to get an education should be followed by chance, ability, and desire. Many millennial generations need to know the importance of education. Because of that, the government had a formal system that could make the millennials got the education, that was school. The school was a place for students to study many things, such as lessons, manners, how to be good children, how to communicate to others, how to respect friends. In school, students learned everything, every time and everywhere. Based on the School-based curriculum, students learn English as a foreign language for the junior high school level. Students got and learned the knowledge of English from their teacher to make them understood everything about English. The curriculum's goal was that they could use English in their daily life, verbal or non-verbal. Students expected to master English to communicate with each other to share information spoken or written. It meant that students should be able to use English as an interactive language to communicate.

Indonesia was one of many countries that made English a subject in learning in school. Some schools used English as their main subject and also made English as their introductory language. Based on the explanation above, the students should learn English seriously and should master the English language. Students should know the four skills in English that were listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The writing subject was one of the most challenging subjects in the school since the students had to produce a text using English. They had to write about what they thought and state it on a paper using the correct procedure. The writing was also an action or a process of discovering and organizing the ideas, putting them on paper, and reshaping and revising them. The writing was a way to produce language that comes from our thought. It is written on paper or a computer screen. The writing was also a tool to interact or communicate with the other about the writer's feeling and something that they think to make the audience, reader, understand about their content or messages in their writing. Besides, writing also not an instant

process. It required several steps and careful thought for good writing. The necessary skill to write a good text was knowing many vocabulary items (Fatah, 2018; Misliyah, 2019). Besides, knowledge about what was happening and social sensitivity also influential toward the text. There were some rules in writing text that was grammar. Therefore, students need to understand grammar. In writing, people had to express themselves in a clear grammatical manner. Writing sentences without applied grammar will encounter ambiguity, imprecision, and unintelligible result.

In education, especially in the learning and teaching of a foreign language, grammar was usually considered one of the language components beside the vocabulary and sound system that students should acquire. Grammar gave language users control of expression and communication in everyday life: "Grammar deals with the form of sentences and smaller units such as clauses, phrases, and word" (Payne, Huddleston, & K. Pullum, 2010) Students could make a good text if they know the grammar. Grammar is an essential thing in writing. Students should follow the rules in grammar to write a text. In grammar, students learn about tenses, verbs, adverbs. They learned it for the basic knowledge before writing a text. If they know well about grammar, they will enjoy writing, and the result of the text will be acceptable. Besides grammar, another essential thing to produce good writing was the reading habit of the students.

Reading habit was a well-planned and deliberate pattern of study that had attained consistency on the part of students toward understanding academic subjects and passing at examinations. Reading habit was someone's behavior that did not need a much-thinking process or repeated activity, which was done regularly by him then continuously; thus, it becomes a habit. Habit cannot come instantly since it needed a long process to be built factors influencing habits such as interests, motivation, and environment. The factors were integrated, so that was they cannot be separated. For instance, to build a reading habit, if someone wanted to read, he could start reading by choosing engaging and knowledgeable resources such as books, articles, newspapers, or magazines they would try to spend his or her time to read. It could be started to choose an exciting book to be read.

In learning English, writing is an essential skill that language learners must have because it means communication you must consciously learn. Writing as one of four language skills is considered a difficult skill because the writer should make some writing aspects such as content, organization, purpose, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling in a balanced way. Writing is the activity or occupation of writing, For example, books, stories, or articles. We can take more time to think and choose words to express our ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

Writing communicates without facial expressions, gestures, or body English of any kind. Writing is a solitary act. Unlike when we talk to someone who talks back, who raises questions, you work alone when you write. Good writing requires a good working knowledge of grammar, a refinement of basic knowledge. Writing is the application of the aggregate of grammatical rules, lexical items, and rhetorical patterns needed by an individual to produce a finished text. It means that writing has an essential role as a medium of communication. It can be a tool for clear thinking, solving problems, and shaping arguments. On the other hand, writing is a complex activity because the students need the ideas to express in the written form and need knowledge about how to arrange word by word to be a good sentence that forms the text. From the definitions above, the writer concludes that writing provides excellent benefits than the talk, which gives time to think, try to write down ideas on paper, to select the words, reading what we write, can be rethought, revised, set back and that is important to consider effects of the reader.

Writing gives the time and the best possible way of what we mean. Writing is continuously ongoing in developing a description, narration, explanation, recount, or argument that brings the reader from beginning to end. Good writing can be obtained with a good knowledge of grammar and considerable knowledge of sentences required following the topic to be written.

In general, grammar is the knowledge of learning a language. Richards and Schmidt (2010, pp. 251–252) said that "grammar is a description of the structure of a language and how language units such as words and phrases are formed into sentences." Grammar is concerned with how sentences and utterances are formed. Grammar is a crucial element of a language. Mastering the grammar of a language will affect the mastery of language skills (Burke, 2007; Misemer, 2013). Therefore, in studying language formally, grammar is a subject that should be studied in depth. The students need to be given an adequate provision of grammar so that they have good language skills. Grammar, for many students, is considered an unattractive and challenging subject. They do not like learning grammar, and therefore they cannot have good achievement in learning it. Even students who have learned grammar for some years in college still struggle to construct excellent and correct sentences.

English grammar is one of the crucial parts that students need to master when studying the English language. Grammar is concerned with how sentence and utterance are forming. Carter and McCarthy (2006, p. 2) said that “in a typical English sentence, it has two basic principles of Grammar, the arrangement of items (syntax) and the structure of items (morphology).” Grammar does not exist separately from other level languages; there is a secure link between grammar and lexis given to the meaning, structure, and formation of individual words. Mastery is the knowledge and skill that allows us to do, use, or understand something very well. Mastery is the skill or knowledge of a master. Mastery is a term that all educators use and believe they understand well.

Nevertheless, when pressed to describe precisely what it means to "master" a concept, skill, or subject, everyone has a different definition. In other words, mastery is a construct that cannot be observed directly but can be inferred from observable performance on a set of items or tasks related to a particular concept, skill, or subject. In education settings, we verify mastery by asking individuals to respond to a series of questions or perform a sequence of tasks. Then we judge the adequacy of their responses or performance as measured against specific criteria.

Wiggins (2014, p. 14) said: "Mastery is the effective transfer of learning in an authentic and worthy performance. Students have mastered a subject when they are fluent, even creative, in using their knowledge, skills, and understanding in key performance challenges and context at the heart of that subject as measured against reasonable and high standards". Referring to Wiggins's opinion, it can be concluded that the gist of mastery is the learning transferred or using knowledge and skills effectively with fluency and creativity. From the definitions stated previously, mastery is someone's ability or knowledge of a subject. In this case, a subject is vocabulary and past tense in a foreign language, which students learn.

Grammatical mastery includes tenses. There are many tenses of the verb in English. Tense is one of the problematic English elements to understand and mastered by the students who learn English because tense does not have in Indonesian grammatical. In short, it can be said that the tenses are verb forms changing that depend on the time and nature of happening. All sentences in English cannot be separated from these tenses elements because all sentences must have something to do with time, past, present, and future. The tense is going to discuss in this case is a simple past.

Nunan (2006, p. 69) said that “reading is a set of skills that involves making sense and deriving meaning from the printed word.” It means that reading is a process to establish the reader’s comprehension, making sense and deriving meaning from printed words with different purposes. Reading is essential for students in order to cope with new knowledge in a changing world. For students, reading becomes an essential tool to increase their background knowledge. Especially since English becomes one of the subjects that is tested in the final national examination, for that reason, the students have to read many kinds of references. Therefore, emphasizing the student's ability to grasp the idea from the written text has to be considered. The student's ability to understand content material will eventually affect their study.

From the statement above, the writer can conclude that reading is the process of achieving information from the printed page and understanding the meaning of written symbols, which depends on the reader's perceptual skills, decoding skills, experiential backgrounds, mindsets, and reasoning abilities.

Our habits can build an attitude, stimulate, and develop someone's goal through repetition, which is done regularly. These habit patterns have created our reality and have been accumulating throughout our life. It has been dragging it along with us; some patterns we create become our safety zones, our way of thinking, our activities, and influence our behavior in general (Gardner, Lally, & Wardle, 2012; Kirshner, 2013). Habit is an action that an individual regularly and consistently shapes one's character into an effective or ineffective person. Habit will apply to everything we do in our life. One's may have a good habit that is very advantageous to the individual and a bad habit that will be destructive.

There is no specific definition for the term reading habits that have been given by experts. However, we can understand from the elaboration of reading and habits in the previous sections. Reading habit is reading or getting new information from a printed material that is done frequently and it creates a joyful activity because the readers enjoy doing it. It is also mentioned that “lifelong reading habit can be developed by learners reading a large number of books and other materials in an environment” (Renandya & Harmer, 2002, p. 296). Reading habit plays a vital role in helping someone to acquire language competence (Ahmad, Dar, & Lone, 2019; Pater, 2016). From the many definitions above, it is apparent that reading habit is a way to grasp the billions of knowledge, including language knowledge. Through reading habits, one's can develop writing skills, including each element of it. The vocabulary and the structure and reading habit should be promoted to children as early as possible to grow to be a lifelong habit.

Methods

This research emphasizes the effects of grammar mastery and reading habit altogether on students' writing skills in recount text. It means there were two independent variables and one dependent variable; variable X1 as the first independent variable (grammar mastery) and variable X2 as the second independent variable (reading habit), which will interconnect and influence the variable Y as the dependent variable (students' writing skill in recount text). The method uses a survey with a multi-correlation technique. Therefore, this research would be seen clearly throughout the research design in the following figure:

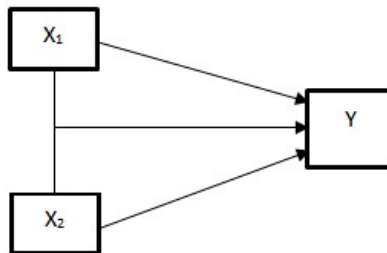


Figure 1. The constellation of relationships between variables

Information:

X1 = Grammar Mastery

X2 = Reading Habit

Y = Writing Recount Text

Result and Discussions

1. Description of Research Data

a. The Data of Grammar Mastery (X1)

The data on students' grammar mastery was taken from a set of objective tests. The objective test consisted of 30 items out of 60 respondents. Each item grades from 1 if the answer is correct and 0 if the answer is incorrect. Thus, the maximum score will be 30, while the minimum score will be 0. It is known that the score is in the range of 47 – 77. It means that the minimum score is 47, and the maximum score is 77. The grammar mastery level of the respondents is on the average 62.53 (mean), standard deviation 7.031, median (score at the center of distribution) 63, and mode (most frequently score in the data set) 65. The score of standard deviation is 7.031, which means equal to 35.6% from the average score. It shows that the disparity of grammar mastery among the respondents is relatively low. So, we can conclude that the grammar mastery level of the respondents is homogenous.

Table 1. Data Description

		Statistics		
		Grammar Mastery	Reading Habit	Writing Recount Text
N	Valid	60	60	60
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		62,53	68,67	66,42
Median		63,00	68,00	65,00
Mode		65	64	65
Std. Deviation		7,031	7,972	9,482
Skewness		-,152	,227	-,038
Std. Error of Skewness		,309	,309	,309
Kurtosis		-,222	,406	-,061
Std. Error of Kurtosis		,608	,608	,608
Range		30	40	45
Minimum		47	52	45
Maximum		77	92	90

Table 1 shows that the average score and median score are almost the same, by 62.53 and 63. It means that data of grammar mastery level is quite representative. Furthermore, the graph of frequency histogram illustrates the distribution of grammar mastery scores as follows:

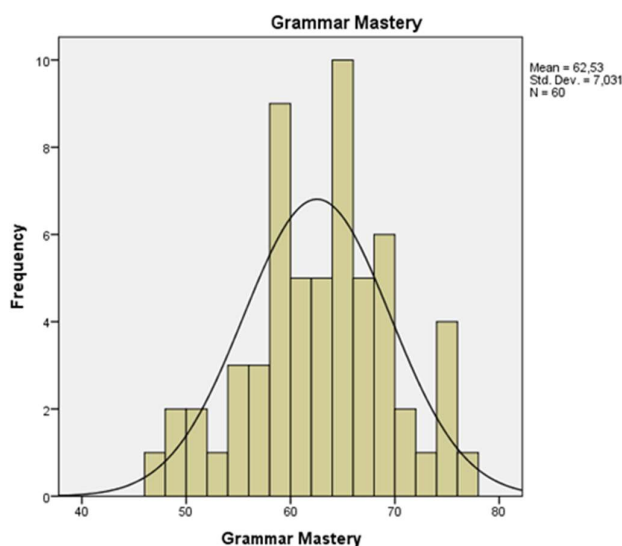


Figure 2. Histogram of Grammar Mastery

According to Figure 2 above, it can be concluded that the level of data spreading of grammar mastery of the respondents is relatively normal since the data which are scattered out of the standard curve are relatively small/negligible.

b. The Data of Reading Habit (X2)

The data of students' reading habit were taken from a set of questionnaires with Likert preferential scoring. Each item grades from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The test consisted of 30 multiple choice items out of 60 respondents.

It is known that the score is in the range of 52 – 92. It means that the minimum score is 52, and the maximum score is 92. The reading habit level of the respondents is on the average 68.67 (mean), standard deviation 7.972, median (score at the center of distribution) 68, and mode (most frequently score in the data set) 64. The score of standard deviation is 7.972, which means equal to 12.9% from the average score. It shows that the disparity of reading habits among the respondents is relatively low. So, we can conclude that the reading habit level of the respondents is homogenous.

From the description of Table 1 above, we either can see that the average score and median score is almost the same, by 68.67 and 68. It means that the data of the reading habit level is quite representative. Furthermore, the following graph of frequency histogram illustrates the distribution of reading habit scores:

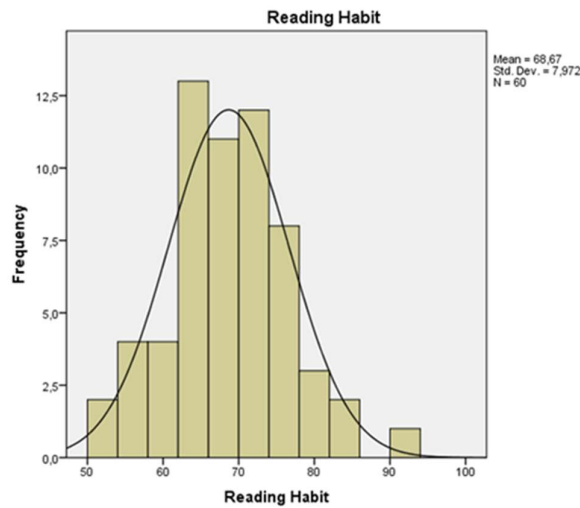


Figure 3. Histogram of Reading Habit

According to Figure 3 above, it can be concluded that the level of data spreading of the reading habit of the respondents is relatively normal since the data which are scattered out of the normal curve are relatively small/negligible.

c. The Data of Writing Recount Text (Y)

Data of students' writing recount text were taken through a written essay test. The test consisted of 6 items of assessment criteria out of 60 respondents. Each item will be graded from 1 (need improvement) to 5 (excellent), according to the level of writing mastery. Thus, the maximum score will be 30, while the minimum will be 6.

It is known that the score is in the range of 45 – 90. It means that the minimum score is 45, and the maximum score is 90. The writing recount text level of the respondents is on the average 66.42 (mean), standard deviation 9.482, median (score at the center of distribution) 65.00, and mode (most frequently score in the data set) 65. The score of standard deviation is 9.482, which means equal to 31.3% from the average score. It shows that the disparity of writing recount text among the respondents is still low. It is concluded that writing recount text level of the respondents is homogenous.

From the description of table 1 above, we either can see that the average score and median score is almost the same, by 66.42 and 65.00. It means that data of writing recount text level is quite representative.

Furthermore, the graph of frequency histogram illustrates the distribution of writing recount text scores as follows:

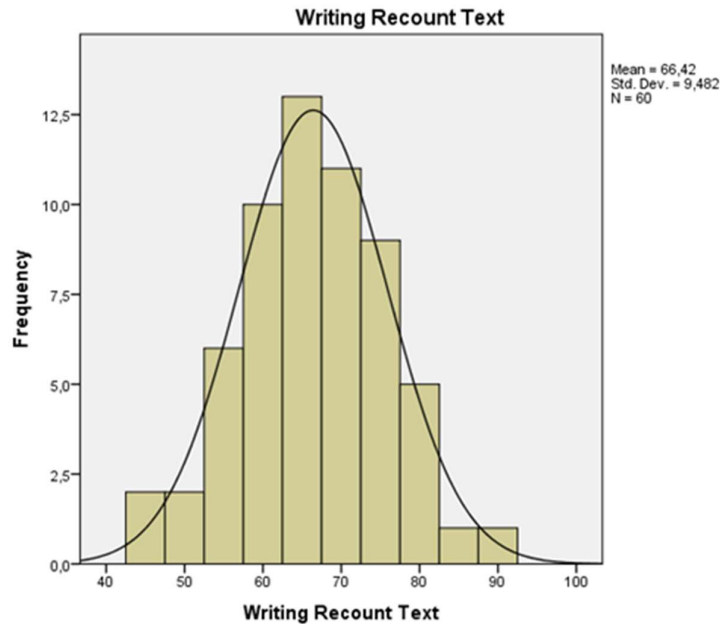


Figure 4. Histogram of Writing Recount Text

According to Figure 4 above, it can be concluded that the level of data distribution of writing recount text of the respondents is relatively normal since the data which are scattered out of the normal curve are relatively small/negligible.

1. Testing Requirements Analysis

a. Data Normality Test

A good regression requirement if the research data follows the normal distribution.

Table 2. Sample from Kolmogorove-Smirnov test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Grammar Mastery	Reading Habit	Writing Recount Text
N		60	60	60
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	62,53	68,67	66,42
	Std. Deviation	7,031	7,972	9,482
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,066	,112	,109
	Positive	,046	,105	,109
	Negative	-,066	-,112	-,107
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		,511	,871	,847
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,957	,434	,469

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

From Table 2, we can see that all the Sig value for grammar mastery, reading habit, and writing recount text are stated consecutively by 0.957, 0.434, and 0.469. As a consequence, H0 is accepted. We can conclude that all data are already distributed normally since the values of significance are all higher than 0.05.

2. Linearity Test Data

a. Linearity of Regression Line the Effect of Grammar Mastery (X1) towards Writing Recount Text (Y)

The linearity test result of regression line the effect of grammar mastery (X1) towards writing recount text (Y) is stated in the following table:

Table 3. Linearity Test Result of Regression Line the Effect of Grammar Mastery (X1) and Writing Recount Text (Y)

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Writing Recount Text* Grammar Mastery	Between Groups	(Combined)	2897,500	26	111,442	1,528	,124
		Linearity	1067,576	1	1067,576	14,636	,001
		Deviation from Linearity	1829,924	25	73,197	1,003	,489
	Within Groups		2407,083	33	72,942		
Total			5304,583	59			

Based on the Table 3 above, the Sig value from the Deviation from the Linearity column is 0.489. It means that the value is higher than 0.05. As a consequence, H₀ is accepted, and automatically H₁ is rejected. In other words, the regression line, which indicates the effect of grammar mastery (X1) towards writing recount text (Y), is linear.

b. Linearity of Regression Line the Effect of Reading Habit (X2) towards Writing Recount Text (Y)

The linearity test result of regression line the effect of reading habit (X₂) towards writing recount text (Y) is stated in the following table:

Table 4. Linearity Test Result of Regression Line the Effect of Reading Habit (X₂) and Writing Recount Text (Y)

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Writing Recount Text* Reading Habit	Between Groups	(Combined)	2252,566	9	250,285	4,100	,001
		Linearity	1592,250	1	1592,250	26,085	,000
		Deviation from Linearity	660,315	8	82,539	1,352	,241
	Within Groups		3052,018	50	61,040		
Total			5304,583	59			

Based on the Table 4 above, the Sig value from the Deviation from the Linearity column is 0.241. It means that the value is higher than 0.05. As a consequence, H₀ is accepted, and automatically H₁ is rejected. In other words, we can say that the regression line, which indicates the effect of reading habit (X₂) towards writing recount text (Y), is linear.

3. Testing the Hypothesis

Testing of hypothesis has been done, and the recapitulations of the entire test can be seen in the set of following tables:

Table 5. The Recapitulation Result of Multiple Correlation Coefficients of the Effects of Grammar Mastery and Reading Habit towards Writing Recount Text

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,648 ^a	,420	,400	7,346

a. Predictors: (Constant), Reading Habit, Grammar Mastery

Table 6. The Recapitulation Results for Regression Coefficient Significant Test of the Effects of Grammar Mastery (X₁) and Reading Habit (X₂) towards Writing Recount Text (Y)

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2228,894	2	1114,447	20,653	,000 ^b
	Residual	3075,689	57	53,959		
	Total	5304,583	59			

a. Dependent Variable: Writing Recount Text

b. Predictors: (Constant), Reading Habit, Grammar Mastery

Table 7. The Recapitulation Result for Linear Regression Equality Test of the Effects of Grammar Mastery (X₁) and Reading Habit (X₂) towards Writing Recount Text (Y)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2,392	10,855		-,220	,826
	Grammar Mastery	,477	,139	,354	3,435	,001
	Reading Habit	,568	,122	,477	4,639	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Writing Recount Text

Based on the three tables above, the testing of the hypothesis is formulated both statistically and verbally in the following:

1. The Effects of Grammar Mastery (X₁) and reading habit (X₂) towards Writing Recount Text (Y)

H₀ : β₁ = β₂ = 0

H₁ : β₁ ≠ 0, β₂ ≠ 0

Explanation:

H₀ : There are no effects of grammar mastery and reading habit altogether towards writing recount text

H₁ : There are effects of grammar mastery and reading habit altogether towards writing recount text

Refer to Table 5 above, and we can see that the coefficient correlation of the effects of independent variables: grammar mastery (X₁) and reading habit (X₂) altogether towards dependent variable: writing recount text (Y) is 0.648. It indicates that among variables have a modest effect, as stated by Samian (2012), if R_{observed} is close to 1, the correlation tight will get stronger.

Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination grammar mastery and reading habit variables contribute to writing recount text variable is 0.420. It indicates that independent variables' contribution: grammar mastery and reading habit altogether towards the dependent variable: writing recount text is about 42 %, and the other factors determine the rest (for about 58 %).

Based on Table 6 above, we can see that *Sig value* is stated by $0.000 < 0.05$, and F_0 is stated by 20.653. As a consequence, H_0 is rejected, and automatically the H_1 is accepted. It means that the coefficient of regression is significant. In general, we may say that there are significant effects of independent variables: grammar mastery (X_1) and reading habit (X_2) altogether towards the dependent variable: writing recount text (Y). From the recapitulation of the test result, either correlation or regression, the writer can conclude that there are effects of grammar mastery (X_1) and reading habit (X_2) altogether towards writing recount text (Y).

1. The Effect of Grammar Mastery (X_1) towards Writing Recount Text (Y)

$$H_0 : \beta_1 = 0$$

$$H_1 : \beta_1 \neq 0$$

Explanation:

H_0 : There is no significant effect of grammar mastery towards writing recount text.

H_1 : There is a significant effect of grammar mastery towards writing recount text.

To test the hypothesis above, we can simply see from the numbers stated in the t column or *Sig* column in the row of grammar mastery in Table 7. According to the general assumption, the significance of the regression is if t_{observed} is higher than t_{table} or *Sig value* is less than 0.05, it brings the consequence that H_0 is rejected, and H_1 is accepted. There is a significant effect of the independent variable X_1 towards the dependent variable Y . *Sig value* is the number stated in the *Sig* column for the row of grammar mastery (Variable X_1) in Table 7. Meanwhile, t_{observed} value is the number stated in t column for grammar mastery (Variable X_1) in table 7. The value of t_{table} for 5% real degree and degree of freedom ($df = n - 2$) is 58, where n is the total number of respondents. Refer to Table 7 above, and we can see that Sig value is stated by $0.001 < 0.05$ and is stated by 3.435. It brings the consequence that H_0 is rejected, and automatically H_1 is accepted. It means a significant effect of independent variable X_1 (grammar mastery) towards the dependent variable Y (writing recount text).

From the tabulation of the correlation test, regression test, and linear model above, we can conclude a significant effect of independent variable X_1 (grammar mastery) towards the dependent variable Y (writing recount text).

2. The Effect of Reading Habit (X_2) towards Writing Recount Text (Y)

$$H_0 : \beta_2 = 0$$

$$H_1 : \beta_2 \neq 0$$

Explanation:

H_0 : There is no significant effect of reading habit towards writing recount text

H_1 : There is a significant effect of reading habit towards writing recount text

To test the hypothesis above, we can simply see from the numbers stated in the t column or Sig column in the row of reading habits in Table 7. According to the general assumption, the significance of the regression is if t_{observed} is higher than t_{table} or *Sig value* is less than 0.05, it brings the consequence that H_0 is rejected, and H_1 is accepted. There is a significant effect of the independent variable X_2 towards the dependent variable Y . *Sig value* is the number stated in the *Sig* column for the row of reading habit (Variable X_2) in Table 7. Meanwhile, t_{observed} value is the number stated in t column for reading habit (Variable X_2) in Table 7. The value of t_{table} for 5% real degree and degree of freedom ($df = n - 2$) is 58, where n is the total number of respondents.

Referring to Table 7 above, and we can see that *Sig value* is stated by $0.000 < 0.05$ and t_0 is stated by 4.639. It brings the consequence that H_0 is rejected, and automatically H_1 is accepted. It means a significant effect of independent variable X_2 (reading habit) towards the dependent variable Y (writing recount text). From the tabulation of the correlation test, regression test, and linear model above, we can conclude a significant effect of independent variable X_2 (reading habit) towards the dependent variable Y (writing recount text).

Conclusions

There are any significant effects of grammar mastery and reading habits jointly towards students' writing skills in recount text at State Junior High Schools in Tangerang Regency. The score of Sig proves it. $= 0.000 < 0.05$ and $F_o = 20.653$. Second, there is a significant effect of grammar mastery towards students' writing recount text at Junior High Schools in Tangerang Regency. The score of Sig proves it. $= 0.001 < 0.05$ and $t = 3.435$. There is a significant effect of reading habits towards students' writing recount text at state Junior High Schools in Tangerang Regency. The score of Sig proves it. $= 0.000 < 0.05$ and $t = 4.639$.

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