



THE INFLUENCE OF INTEREST IN LEARNING AND MASTERING GRAMMAR ON THE STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIVE ENGLISH WRITING ABILITY AT PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOLS IN SOUTH TANGERANG

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between learning interest, grammar mastery, and descriptive writing skills among grade XI students at Private High Schools in South Tangerang. Learning interest plays a crucial role in student outcomes, as high interest fosters active engagement in learning, including in English language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Descriptive writing is a key skill that many students struggle with, particularly when it comes to mastering grammar. The study focuses on how learning interest and grammar mastery influence students' descriptive writing abilities, identifying obstacles that affect both factors. The research aims to provide insights into these influences and offer recommendations for improving writing skills. The findings are expected to benefit students, teachers, and future research by offering valuable information on grammar mastery and descriptive writing. Ultimately, the study seeks to enhance understanding of how learning interest and grammar knowledge affect descriptive writing skills in this context, offering practical guidance for educational development.

Keywords: Learning Interest, Grammar Mastery, English, Writing, Descriptive Text.

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning is the process through which individuals acquire knowledge or intelligence, and it requires effort from students to comprehend the material being taught. A student's interest in a subject plays a key role in determining their learning outcomes, as it drives attention and engagement. When something is enjoyable or intriguing, individuals are more likely to actively seek additional information, which further deepens their understanding. A student who is highly interested in a subject will devote full attention, not only listening to the teacher but also exploring additional resources to enhance their knowledge.

As Hamka et al. (2021) notes, a person's attraction to an object is determined by their

interest in it, and this interest drives them to pay attention. Low attention to an activity indicates low interest in it. In the context of English, it serves as a critical tool for both oral and written communication, allowing people to express ideas and understand others in social interactions.

For high school students, mastering various language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, is essential. Among these, descriptive writing presents a particular challenge due to its need for both linguistic accuracy and content coherence. Writing requires the correct use of grammar, a system of rules that dictates how words and sentences are structured to form meaningful units.

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Many students struggle with English grammar, which can decrease their interest in learning and, in turn, affect their writing ability. This issue motivates this study, which aims to examine the influence of learning interest and grammar mastery on students' descriptive writing skills in English. Specifically, the research seeks to determine:

1. The influence of learning interest on English descriptive writing skills of class XI students of private high schools in South Tangerang.
2. The effect of grammar mastery on English descriptive writing skills of grade XI students of private high schools in South Tangerang.
3. The influence of grammar mastery on English descriptive writing skills of grade XI students of private high schools in South Tangerang.

Through this study, the researcher aims to provide a deeper understanding of how these two factors affect students' writing skills, ultimately contributing to improved learning outcomes in English.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

1) *Writing English Descriptions*

Language plays a crucial role in human life, and as social beings, humans rely on language for communication. According to Jujun, the uniqueness of humans lies not in their ability to think but in their ability to speak, as language is the tool for thinking. Without language, human thinking would be impossible, distinguishing humans from other creatures. As social beings, humans use language to interact, build relationships, and fulfill their social needs. Language serves as a means of communication and is learned within society. Both spoken and written language are ways to express thoughts and feelings, with written language allowing individuals to communicate ideas, provide information, and engage readers in imaginative or informative ways.

Writing, in general, is the ability to express ideas and thoughts through written media. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, writing refers to the act of creating letters and symbols to communicate thoughts or feelings. Angelo (1980), Merris & Sari (2019) and Siregar (2024) defines writing as a form of thinking aimed at a specific audience and time, with the writer needing to master the principles of writing, including invention, structure, and style. Henry Guntur Tarigan (2018) views writing as expressing ideas using written language. Gebhardt and Rodrigues (1989) emphasize that good writing skills are essential for success in school, including tasks like writing reports or assignments. Slamet (2008) and Baleghizadeh & Maryam (2011) describes writing as exploring thoughts and feelings on a subject, selecting what to write, and organizing it clearly for the reader.

Tarigan (1993) explains that writing involves expressing ideas and feelings in an organized and understandable manner. (Flower & Hayes (1981) argues that writing requires conscious effort, where one must carefully structure sentences and communicate effectively. Langan & Winstanley (2013) defines writing as producing graphic symbols representing language that others can understand Hyland (2019) and Isgiaro et al. (2020) adds that writing is the transfer of thoughts into language symbols. Dorn & Jones (2023) and Sreeletha (2022) sees writing as a way to convey knowledge or support ideas. Byrne (1988) and Pratiwi et al. (2022) further states that writing is not about creating isolated sentences but crafting a coherent series of connected ideas. Crimmon (1984) and Silalahi (2016) views writing as hard work but also an opportunity to communicate ideas and learn something new. Fahmi & Rachmijati (2021) defines writing as the ability to express ideas through written patterns, including mastering ideas, language elements, style, and punctuation.

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2) *Understanding Descriptive Text*

Descriptive text is a genre of writing that aims to describe a subject—whether an object, place, person, or living creature—in a way that allows the reader to form a clear mental image of it. The main communicative purpose of descriptive text is to provide detailed characteristics, helping readers imagine what the subject is like. As suggested by Gebhardt and Dawn Rodrigues (1989), "Writing is one of the most important things to do in school. Good writing skills play a vital role in success." The structure of descriptive text typically consists of two parts: identification, where the subject is introduced, and description, where details about the subject's appearance, qualities, and behaviors are elaborated upon. This approach aims to evoke sensory experiences in the reader, making descriptive writing highly effective for conveying vivid images and detailed information (Fadilah et al., 2023; Putri et al., 2023).

In constructing descriptive text, grammar plays an essential role in enhancing the clarity and depth of the description. According to Henry Guntur Tarigan (2018), "Writing is the activity of expressing ideas using written language as a medium of delivery." Key grammatical elements include the use of the simple present tense to describe permanent or habitual characteristics, adjectives to provide specific details about the subject, and linking verbs to connect the subject with its attributes. For instance, adjectives like "beautiful" or "tall" help describe the subject's physical features, while adverbs modify these adjectives to provide further depth, such as "extremely tall." The combination of these grammatical elements ensures that the text is both clear and engaging, creating a more vivid and accurate portrayal of the subject for the reader.

• Understanding Learning Interest

Understanding learning interest - Interest is a constant tendency of the soul to pay

attention to and remember some activities or activities (Slameto, 2020). Someone who is interested in an activity and pays attention to it consistently with a sense of pleasure.

• Understanding Learning Interest Students According to Experts

Student learning interest is a psychological factor that significantly influences academic success. According to experts like , interest is a mental tendency that directs an individual's attention towards a subject, driven by emotional or cognitive factors. In the context of biology, interest can either foster a positive attitude towards learning or lead to disengagement, depending on the student's personality (Ahmadi, 1998). Interest plays a crucial role in learning, as it motivates students to study diligently, engage in activities, and overcome difficulties. It is closely related to motivation and concentration, which are essential for effective learning (Hasnawiyah, 1994). Gie (1998) emphasized that interest triggers spontaneous attention, strengthens memory retention, and reduces boredom, all of which are necessary for academic achievement.

Interest is not an innate trait but is shaped by both internal and external factors, such as personal needs, satisfaction, and external influences like teacher strategies and the learning environment (Slameto, 2020). Teachers can foster interest by presenting material in an engaging way, providing relevant stimuli, and creating a supportive learning environment (Slameto, 2020). Furthermore, Loekmono (2014) suggested that intrinsic motivations, such as the desire to excel in exams or satisfy curiosity, can encourage students to focus on their studies. Effective learning requires developing concentration, which is deeply tied to the student's interest in the subject (Sudarmono, 2014). Overall, fostering student interest is essential for successful learning outcomes, and

educators can employ various strategies to ignite and sustain this interest throughout the learning process.

3. METHODS

The research uses a survey method with a correlational approach to assess the influence of learning interest and grammar mastery on the ability to write descriptive essays in English among private high school students in South Tangerang. Data will be collected through questionnaires on learning interest, grammar tests, and descriptive writing assignments. A bivariate-product moment correlation test will be used to determine the relationship between the variables. The study's design focuses on the independent variables: learning interest (X1) and grammar mastery (X2), and the dependent variable: descriptive writing skills (Y).

To ensure validity and reliability, the instruments will undergo validation using the Point Biserial correlation and the KR-20 coefficient for reliability. Sampling will involve 20% of the population, randomly and stratified. The instruments used for measuring learning interest, grammar mastery, and writing skills are designed with specific indicators and scoring guidelines. The research also includes statistical hypothesis testing, including regression analysis, to evaluate the influence of both independent variables on the dependent variable.

Statistical tests such as normality, reliability, and linearity tests will be performed before hypothesis testing, which will determine if there is a significant influence of learning interest and grammar mastery on writing ability. The regression model will assess the causal relationship between the independent variables and descriptive writing skills (Sukardi, 2010; Arikunto, 2006).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the author presents research data for the variables of English

descriptive writing ability or Y, learning interest X1 and grammar mastery or X2.

A. Descriptive Data

1) English descriptive writing ability data or Y

English descriptive writing ability data was obtained from the test scores of respondents who were the research sample of 60 students. The scores obtained were the lowest score of 65, the highest score of 95, the average score of 79.67, the median of 80, the mode of 80 and the standard deviation of 9.605.

Table 4.1 Description of English Descriptive Writing Ability Research Data

Statistics		
English Descriptive Writing Skills		
N	Valid	60
	Missing	0
Mean		79.67
Median		80.00
Mode		80
Std. Deviation		9.605
Minimum		65
Maximum		95

When viewed from the calculation results above, it can be said that the descriptive writing ability of English of private high school students in South Tangerang is quite good. This is indicated by the average score of 79.67 to clarify the data above, depicted in the histogram as follows:

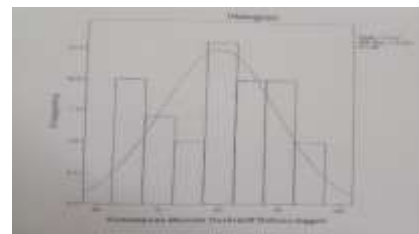


Figure 4.1 Histogram of the Polygon of the English descriptive writing ability variable

From the histogram and frequency polygon above, it can be concluded that the descriptive writing ability of English of

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private high school students in South Tangerang has a normal distribution.

2) Learning Interest Data (X1)

Learning interest data was obtained from a questionnaire answered by 60 students, resulting in the lowest score being 60, the highest score being 90, the average score being 74.12, the median being 74, the mode being 74 and the standard deviation being 6.847.

Table 4.2 Description of Research Data Learning Interest

Statistics		
Learning Interest		
N	Valid	60
	Missing	0
Mean		74.12
Median		74.00
Mode		74
Std. Deviation		6.847
Minimum		60
Maximum		90

From the calculation results above, it can be said that the learning interest of private high school students in South Tangerang is quite good. This is indicated by the acquisition of a score of 74.12 above the median value.

To clarify the data above, it is depicted in a histogram as follows:

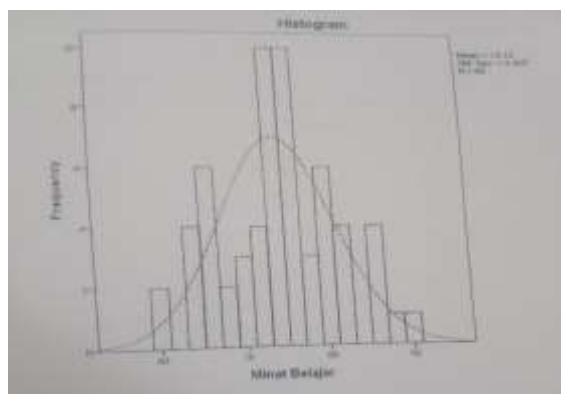


Figure 4.2 Histogram Poligon Variabel Learning Interest

From the histogram and frequency polygon above, it can be concluded that the learning interests of private high school

students in South Tangerang have normal distribution values.

3) Grammar mastery data or X2

Grammar monitoring data was obtained from test scores answered by 60 respondents, resulting in the lowest score being 55, the highest score being 98, the average score being 76.67, the median being 77, the mode being 77 and the standard deviation being 9.861.

Table 4.3 Description of Research Data Grammar Mastery

Statistics		
Grammar Mastery		
N	Valid	60
	Missing	0
Mean		76.67
Median		77.00
Mode		77
Std. Deviation		9.861
Minimum		55
Maximum		98

From the calculation results above, it can be said that the mastery of grammar in private high schools in South Tangerang is quite good. This is indicated by the average vote acquisition of 76.67 above the median value to clarify the data above, depicted in the histogram as follows:

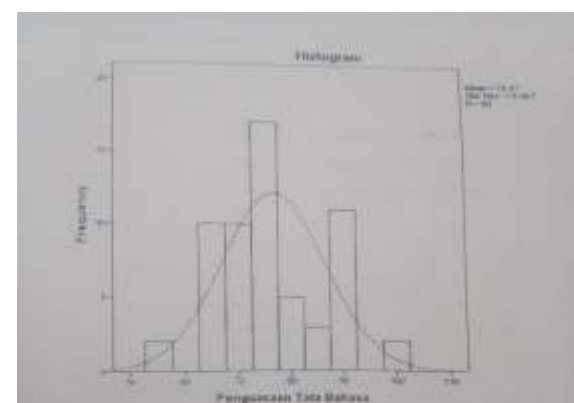


Figure 4.3 Histogram Poligon Variable of Grammar Mastery

From the histogram and frequency polygon above, it can be concluded that the grammar mastery of private high school

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students in South Tangerang has a normal distribution.

B. Regression Analysis Requirements Test

1) Classical Assumption Test

a. Data Normality Test

Good regression requirements if the research data follows a normal distribution.

Table 4.4 Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test				
		English Descriptive Writing Skills	Learning Interest	Grammar Mastery
N		60	60	60
Normal Parameters ^a	Mean	79.67	74.12	76.67
	Std. Deviation	9.605	6.847	9.861
	Absolute	.147	.110	.137
Most Extreme Differences	Positive	.126	.082	.137
	Negative	-.147	-.110	-.111
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.140	.851	1.057
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.149	.464	.213
a. Test Distribution is Normal.				
b. Calculated from data.				

From the table above shows that the hypothesis test stating the data distribution in this regression analysis follows a normal distribution. This is indicated by all Sig. values more than 0.05. This means that all data is normally distributed.

a. Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test aims to test whether the regression model finds a perfect correlation between independent variables or independent points. A good regression model should not have a perfect correlation between independent variables. One way to detect multicollinearity is to look at the tolerance or variance of the inflation factor. If the tolerance <0.1 or the vif value > 10 then multicollinearity occurs.

Table 4.5 Multikolinearitas Test

Coefficients ^a			
Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Learning	.909	1.100

	Interest		
	Grammar Mastery	.909	1.100

The results of the multicollinearity test in the table above show that the tolerance result is 0.909 > 0.1 or the inflation factor variant or vif = 1.100 < 10 points so that it can be stated that there is no multicollinearity between learning interest and grammar mastery in this multiple regression analysis.

C. Heteroscedasticity Test

The definition of heteroscedasticity is when the observed error or residual does not have a constant variance. Heteroscedasticity conditions often occur in cross-section data or data taken from several respondents at a certain time point. One method to detect heteroscedasticity is to create a scatter-plot between the standardized residual or ZRESID and the standardized predicted value or Y hat. The image below shows no change along the y hat, so it is stated that there is no heteroscedasticity in the error or residual.

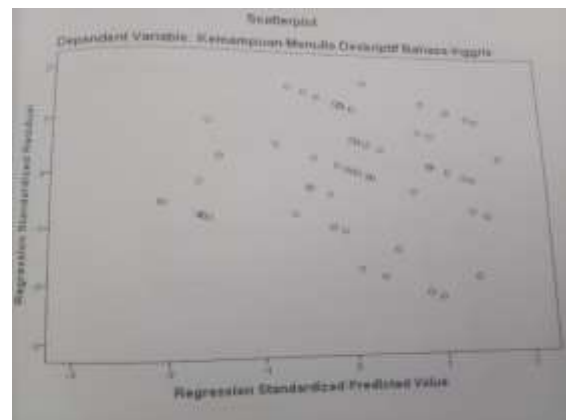


Figure 4.3. Scatterplot of Heteroscedasticity Test

From the image above, it shows that the points are spread randomly and do not form a certain pattern that is explained and are spread above and below the number 0 on the Y axis. This shows that there is no heteroscedasticity in the regression model, so it can be used to predict the variable of

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descriptive English writing ability based on learning interest and grammar mastery.

D. Error Normality Test

Good regression requirements if the research data follows a normal distribution.

Table 4.6 Normality Galat Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandarized Residual
N		60
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0E-7
	Std. Deviation	8.34325970
Most Extrim Differences	Absolute	.060
	Positive	.048
	Negative	-.060
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.466
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.982
a. Test dsitribution is Normal		
b. Calculated from data		

From the table above shows that the hypothesis test stating the residual

Table 4.7 Result Test of Linearity Regretion Variable Y and X₁

ANOVA Table							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
English Descriptive Writing Skill * Learning Interest	Between Groups	(Combined)	2587.917	20	129.396	1.767	.063
		Linearity	773.058	1	773.058	10.559	.002
		Deviation from Linearity	1814.859	19	95.519	1.305	.235
	Within Groups		2855.417	39	73.216		
	Total		5443.333	59			

Based on the calculation results above, the results of the deviation for linearity calculation are obtained with Fo = 1.305 and Sig. = 0.235 > 0.05. This means that the variable of learning interest with students' descriptive English writing ability has a linear relationship.

Table 4.8 Result Test of Linearity Regression Variable Y and X₂

ANOVA Table							
			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
English Descriptive Writing	Between	(Combined)	2037.083	15	135.806	1.754	.075

distribution in this regression analysis follows a normal distribution. This is indicated by the value of Z = 0.466 and Sig. = 0.982 < 0.05 this means that the assumptions or requirements of the regression analysis are met.

2. Linearity Test

Linearity test is conducted to determine the technique in regression analysis whether the independent variables X1 and X2 and the dependent variable Y are formed linearly. This linearity test uses SPSS 20.0 calculations.

- a. Linearity of regression of the influence of variable X1 on Y

The results of the linear regression test between learning interest and descriptive writing ability in English using SPSS 20.0 calculations are as follows:

- b. Linearity of Regression of the influence of Variable X2 on Y

The results of the linearity regression test between grammar mastery and your descriptive English writing skills calculated using SPSS 20.0 are as follows.

Skill * Grammar Mastery	Groups	Linearity	961.190	1	961.190	12.416	.001
		Deviation from Linearity	1075.893	14	76.849	.993	.477
	Within Groups		3406.250	44	77.415		
	Total		5443.333	59			

Based on the calculation results above, the deviation from linearity results were obtained with $F_0 = 0.993$ and $Sig. = 0.477 > 0.05$. This means that the variable of grammar mastery with students' descriptive English writing ability has a linear relationship.

c. Hypothesis Testing

The submission of the hypothesis is carried out in accordance with the provisions explained in Chapter 3. The results of the calculations and testing can be seen in the table below.

Table 4.9 Result Test of Coefficient Correlation Double Variable X_1 and X_2 on Y

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.495 ^a	.246	.219	8.488
a. Predictors (Constant), Grammar Mastery, Learning Interest				

Table 4.10 Result Test of Significant Coefficient Regretion Variable X_1 and X_2 on Y

Model Summary					
Model	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	1336.344	2	668.172	9.273	0.000 ^b
	4106.989	57	72.052		
	5443.333	59			
a. Dependent Variable, English Descriptive Writing Skill					
b. Predictors (Constant), Grammar Mastery, Learning Interest					

Table 4.11 Result Test of Regretion Double Variable X_1 and X_2 on Y

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandarized Coefficients		Standarized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	25.853	13.102	.275	1.973	.053
	Learning Interest	.386	.169	.337	2.282	.026
	Grammar Mastery	.329	.118		2.796	.007
c. Dependent Variable, English Descriptive Writing Skill						

One point of influence of learning interest X_1 and mastery of grammar X_2 together on descriptive English writing ability Y.

1. The influence of learning interest (X_1) and mastery of grammar (X_2) together on the ability to write descriptive English (Y).

Hypothesis Test :

$H_0 : \beta_{y1} = \beta_{y2} = \beta_{y3} = 0$

$H_1 : \text{Other Than } H_0$

It means:

H_0 :There is no influence of learning interest and mastery of grammar together on the ability to write descriptive English.

H_1 :There is a joint influence of learning interest and mastery of grammar on the ability to write descriptive English.

From table 4.10 it can be stated that there is a significant influence of learning interest and grammar mastery together on the ability to

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write English descriptions. This is proven by the F_0 value = 9.273 and Sig. 0.000 < 0.05

Meanwhile, the equation of the double Gresi sirih line can be expressed as $\hat{y} = 25.853 + 0.386 X_1 + 0.329 X_2$. This means that the weight variable and mastery of basic data provide a positive contribution to the variable of descriptive English writing ability. From table 4.9, it can also be explained that together the variables of learning interest and grammar mastery provide a contribution of 24.6% to the variable of descriptive English writing ability.

The influence of learning interest X_1 on the ability to write descriptive English. Hypothesis tested:

$$H_0 : \beta_{y1} = 0$$

$$H_1 : \beta_{y1} \neq 0$$

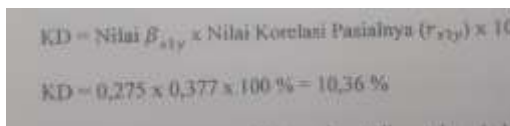
It means:

H_0 : There is no influence of grammar mastery on the ability to write English descriptions.

H_1 : There is an influence of grammar mastery on the ability to write English descriptions.

From table 4.11, it can be stated that there is a significant influence of grammar mastery on the ability to write descriptive English. This is proven by the acquisition of a calculated score of 2.796 and Sig. 0.007 < 0.05

The contribution of the variable of grammar mastery to the ability to write descriptive English can be expressed by the formula:



$$KD = \text{Nilai } \beta_{y1} \times \text{Nilai Korelasi Parsialnya } (r_{xy}) \times 100$$

$$KD = 0,275 \times 0,377 \times 100 \% = 10,36 \%$$

From the calculation results above, it can be stated that the contribution of mastery of language words in improving descriptive English writing skills is 14.15%.

Discussion

One point of influence of learning interest x_1 and grammar mastery X_2 together on the ability to write descriptive English points the results of the study above conclude that the interest in learning grammar mastery together has given a positive influence on improving the ability to write descriptive English of students

in private high schools in South Tangerang points This means that learning interest and grammar mastery have given a significant influence on improving the learning achievement of private high school students in South Tangerang.

Writing is one of the most important things to do in school. Good writing skills play an important role in success, whether it is writing reports, proposals or assignments at school (Slamet (2008:141; Dhananjaya et al., 2024; Fitria, 2024).

Many factors affect students' writing ability, including interest in learning and vocabulary skills in English. Remember the big influence on learning activities, students who are interested in biology will study biology seriously, such as diligently studying, you feel happy following the presentation of biology lessons, firefighters can even find difficulties in learning to solve practice questions and practicums because of the attraction obtained by studying biology. Students will easily memorize lessons that interest them. Interest is closely related to motivation. Motivation arises because of needs, as does interest, so it is right if interest is a physical motivational tool, the learning process will run smoothly if accompanied by interest. Therefore, teachers need to arouse students' interest in learning so that the lessons given are easy for students to understand (Hamka et al., 2021; Dash, 2022).

The influence of learning interest X_1 on descriptive English writing ability Y

The study concluded that learning interest significantly influences the improvement of students' ability to write English descriptive texts in private elementary and high schools in South Tangerang. Students with high learning interest show positive responses, such as paying more attention, being diligent in completing assignments, and actively engaging in lessons, including asking questions and studying outside of school hours. Interest in a subject, such as biology, motivates students to study seriously, making it easier for them to memorize lessons and tackle challenges. Interest is closely tied to motivation, as it drives students to achieve their goals. Teachers play a key role in fostering students' interest, making learning more effective. A lack of interest, on the other hand, can lead to disengagement, affecting students' learning outcomes and fostering negative attitudes toward the subject or teacher (Slameto,

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2020; Gie, 2005; Susanto et al., 2020; Ningsih et al., 2021).

The influence of grammar mastery (X2) on descriptive writing ability in English (Y)

From the results of the research and existing theories, it can be concluded that grammar supervision has had a positive influence on improving students' descriptive English writing skills at private high schools in South Tangerang. This means that students' positive perceptions of teacher category abilities have had a positive influence on improving students' descriptive English writing skills at private high schools in South Tangerang (Fahmi & Rachmijati, 2021; Askhatova A, 2020).

5. CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that both learning interest and grammar mastery significantly influence students' ability to write descriptive English. The combined effect of these two variables contributes 24.6% to writing ability, with learning interest alone accounting for 10.36% and grammar mastery contributing 14.15%. These results suggest that fostering both interest in learning and a strong grasp of grammar can enhance students' writing skills. Based on these findings, it is recommended that future research explore more specific teaching strategies that can further develop these areas, particularly in improving students' engagement and grammar proficiency. Additionally, further studies could examine other factors that might contribute to writing ability, such as vocabulary acquisition or writing practice.

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