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The Effect of Teachers' Explaining Skills on Students' Level of Comprehension in Pancasila and Civic Education

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Abstract
This study aims to examine the role of teachers' explaining skills in influencing students' comprehension in the subject of Pancasila and Civic Education (PPKn) at the junior high school level. Within the context of instruction in coastal regions such as Kepala Madan, teachers' educational communication serves as a critical factor that has rarely been investigated in depth. Employing a quantitative approach with a correlational design, this research involved all seventh- and eighth-grade students (N = 34), selected through a total sampling technique. The research instrument consisted of a closed-ended questionnaire utilizing a four-point Likert scale, which had undergone validity and reliability testing prior to data analysis using SPSS software. The analytical results indicate that teachers' explaining skills do not have a statistically significant relationship with students' comprehension, suggesting that the learning process cannot be sustained solely by teachers' verbal delivery. This condition demonstrates that clarity of explanation does not necessarily yield comprehension unless accompanied by a relevant and participatory learning context. These findings reinforce the perspective that instructional effectiveness requires teachers to foster interactions that actively and reflectively engage students, rather than merely transmitting information. Consequently, the contribution of this study lies in emphasizing that explaining skills must be integrated with more communicative pedagogical strategies to foster meaningful learning. Practically, these findings underscore the necessity of strengthening teachers' capacity to design explanations that are not only clear, but also contextual and capable of stimulating students' active cognitive responses.

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Introduction

Education provides a space for individuals to grow, think critically, and engage actively in social life. From an early age, this process unfolds through the guidance of families, communities, and formal institutions such as schools. Within the classroom, the teacher serves as the central figure directing the learning process to ensure it runs effectively and meaningfully. This role demands the mastery of pedagogical skills that are not merely technical, but also responsive to students' needs (Saliha, 2022; Martini et al., 2024). The quality of learning is largely determined by the extent to which teachers can cultivate active student engagement. UNESCO (2020) emphasizes the importance of humanistic learning interactions, aligning with the OECD's (2019) assertion that teacher quality dictates the trajectory of an educational system.

In Indonesia, educational challenges remain characterized by low learning outcomes, particularly at the primary and secondary education levels. A report by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek, 2022) revealed that more than 50% of students have yet to achieve minimum competency standards in literacy and numeracy. This condition is inextricably linked to the suboptimal role of teachers in designing meaningful instruction that adapts to student needs. Martini et al. (2024) also highlighted that the prevalence of one-way instructional approaches in classrooms impedes active student participation. Disparities in teacher competence across various regions further exacerbate this issue, especially in frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged (3T) areas facing limited access to professional training and information. This situation underscores the urgent need for substantial improvements in the quality of classroom instruction.

The quality of classroom learning heavily relies on the teacher's ability to deliver subject matter in a manner that is comprehensible and engaging for students. When explanations fail to stimulate understanding, students tend to become passive and lose sight of the intrinsic meaning of the lessons. This phenomenon is frequently observed in Pancasila and Civic Education (PPKn), which, despite encompassing vital civic values, is still predominantly taught through one-way lecturing. Widyastuti (2020) emphasized that uncommunicative delivery hinders students from grasping the substantive core of the material. Similarly, Lestari (2022) noted that a lack of contextualized teaching approaches weakens student comprehension. Under such circumstances, explaining skills become pivotal as the key to constructing meaningful learning.

In the instructional process, explaining skills serve as an essential medium for teachers to convey concepts systematically and intelligibly. According to Chera et al. (2022), well-structured explanations address the questions arising in students' minds and guide them toward logical comprehension. Buaton and Sihotang (2025) added that this skill encompasses the ability to organize information sequentially, enabling

students to follow the flow of the material clearly. Meanwhile, Astari et al. (2022) stressed that effective explanations encourage learners to focus on core concepts while helping them overcome limitations in learning resources. Collectively, these perspectives affirm that explaining skills constitute a vital component of teachers' pedagogical competence.

Numerous prior studies have demonstrated that teachers' explaining skills are closely linked to student learning outcomes. Martini et al. (2024), for instance, underscored the significance of explanatory strategies in enhancing comprehension. However, these studies were predominantly conducted in urban areas and within general subject contexts, rather than specifically examining PPKn instruction in coastal regions. Abbas (2023) similarly investigated teacher strategies in social studies but did not examine explaining skills in depth. Conversely, Sarbaitinil et al. (2024) addressed the challenges faced by teachers in remote areas without isolating explaining skills as a primary variable. This study aims to bridge this empirical gap by investigating teachers' explaining skills in PPKn instruction at SMP Negeri 08 Kepala Madan using a quantitative approach.

Examining explaining skills within the context of PPKn instruction in coastal regions not only offers practical value for educators but also enriches the discourse on instructional communication theory. This study provides novel insights into how teacher explanations can function as a bridge between abstract concepts and students' lived experiences. Suparyanto and Rosad (2015) emphasized that clarity in instructional communication is fundamental to fostering learning interest. This serves as an essential foundation for developing training strategies that emphasize not only content mastery, but also the ability to deliver material sequentially, contextually, and communicatively (Fauzi & Widodo, 2022; Syahputra et al., 2021). Accordingly, this research offers both theoretical and practical contributions relevant to the needs of educators in the field.

Based on the foregoing background, this study aims to analyze the effect of teachers' explaining skills on students' level of comprehension in Pancasila and Civic Education (PPKn) at SMP Negeri 08 Kepala Madan. The research focuses on examining the extent to which these skills contribute to fostering effective and meaningful learning, particularly within coastal school settings. Ultimately, this investigation is expected to strengthen theoretical understanding and provide practical recommendations for enhancing the quality of instructional communication in formal educational environments.

Method

This study employed a quantitative approach, deemed relevant as a scientific method due to its objective, empirical, and systematic nature, which allows data to be analyzed statistically (Waruwu et al., 2025). The objective of this approach was to test

the relationship between the independent variable, teachers' explaining skills (X) and the dependent variable, students' level of comprehension (Y) in the PPKn subject. The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 08 Kepala Madan, involving the entire population of seventh- and eighth-grade students, totaling 34 participants. Given the small and accessible population size, a total sampling technique was utilized to include all members of the population as the research sample (Hermawan, 2020; Salsabillah et al., 2020). The research instrument consisted of a closed-ended questionnaire utilizing a four-point Likert scale comprising 20 statement items, evenly representing the two variables under investigation. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire underwent validity testing via item-total correlation and reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure the internal consistency of each item. Data collection proceeded through several stages: developing the instrument blueprint, piloting the questionnaire, revising the instrument, and administering it to the respondents. All collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 23. The analytical procedure commenced with descriptive statistics, followed by prerequisite tests for normality and linearity, and concluded with simple linear regression analysis to determine the extent to which teachers' explaining skills influence student comprehension (Adiansha et al., 2020).

Results and Discussion

Results

This section presents the findings of the quantitative data analysis obtained through statistical testing. The results are structured systematically, encompassing descriptive statistics, instrument validity testing, normality testing, and simple linear regression analysis. Each table is accompanied by narrative explanations to provide context, interpretation, and direct answers to the research questions.

Descriptive analysis was performed to illustrate the data distribution for each variable across grade levels. The following data depict the scores for teachers' explaining skills (X) and student comprehension (Y) based on the responses of seventh- and eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 08 Kepala Madan. Table 1. presents the distribution of respondent scores regarding teachers' explaining skills.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Explaining Skills (X)

Grade Level	Number of Respondents (n)	Total Score	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Mean
Grade VII	19	563	37	23	29.63
Grade VIII	15	471	34	17	31.40
Total	34	1,034	37	17	30.41

Source: Primary research data (processed, 2025).

The mean score of eighth-grade students' perceptions regarding teachers' explaining skills was higher than that of seventh-grade students. This indicates a tendency that students at higher grade levels evaluate the clarity and effectiveness of

teachers' explanations more favorably. Table 2 presents the distribution of student comprehension scores by grade level.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Level of Comprehension (*Y*)

Grade Level	Number of Respondents (n)	Total Score	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Mean
Grade VII	19	526	36	20	27.68
Grade VIII	15	471	36	24	31.40
Total	34	997	36	20	29.32

Source: Primary research data (processed, 2025).

The mean comprehension score of eighth-grade students exceeded that of seventh-grade students, reflecting a tendency toward stronger mastery of PPKn material among upper-grade students.

Instrument Validity Test. Validity testing was conducted to ensure that the instrument accurately measured the intended constructs, utilizing the Pearson Product-Moment correlation.

Table 3. Results of the Instrument Validity Test

No.	Statement Item	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
1	Teacher Explanation 1	0.312	0.007	Valid
2	Teacher Explanation 2	0.328	0.002	Valid
3	Teacher Explanation 3	0.350	0.004	Valid
4	Teacher Explanation 4	0.374	0.040	Valid
5	Teacher Explanation 5	0.391	0.036	Valid
6	Teacher Explanation 6	0.307	0.007	Valid
7	Teacher Explanation 7	0.430	0.011	Valid
8	Teacher Explanation 8	0.339	0.050	Valid
9	Teacher Explanation 9	0.629	< 0.001	Valid
10	Teacher Explanation 10	0.422	0.013	Valid
11	Student Comprehension 1	0.316	0.007	Valid
12	Student Comprehension 2	0.322	0.002	Valid
13	Student Comprehension 3	0.351	0.050	Valid
14	Student Comprehension 4	0.374	0.036	Valid
15	Student Comprehension 5	0.391	0.036	Valid
16	Student Comprehension 6	0.307	0.040	Valid*
17	Student Comprehension 7	0.430	0.011	Valid
18	Student Comprehension 8	0.339	0.050	Valid
19	Student Comprehension 9	0.629	< 0.001	Valid
20	Student Comprehension 10	0.422	0.013	Valid

Source: Primary research data (processed, 2025).

Overall, all statement items demonstrated correlation coefficients above 0.30, with the majority reaching statistical significance at $p < 0.05$, indicating high construct

validity. Item "Student Comprehension 6" was deemed conditionally valid and retained with cautious consideration.

Normality Test. The normality test was conducted to verify whether the data followed a normal distribution, a key prerequisite for parametric statistical testing.

Table 4. Results of the Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk)

Variable	Statistic	df	Sig.	Interpretation
Teachers' Explaining Skills	0.967	34	0.380	Normally distributed
Students' Level of Comprehension	0.912	34	0.009	Non-normally distributed

Source: Primary research data (processed, 2025).

The Shapiro-Wilk test results indicate that only the teachers' explaining skills variable was normally distributed ($p = 0.380 > 0.05$), whereas the students' level of comprehension variable violated the normality assumption ($p = 0.009 < 0.05$).

Simple Linear Regression Analysis. Simple linear regression was performed to determine whether teachers' explaining skills exerted a statistically significant effect on student comprehension.

Table 5. Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.036	0.001	-0.030	8.603

Source: Primary research data (processed, 2025).

The R Square value of 0.001 indicates that only 0.1% of the variance in student comprehension is explained by teachers' explaining skills. Furthermore, the negative Adjusted R^2 (-0.030) signifies a poor model fit.

Table 6. ANOVA Test Results

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.031	1	3.031	0.041	0.841
Residual	2,368.498	32	74.016		
Total	2,371.529	33			

Source: Primary research data (processed, 2025).

The significance value of 0.841 ($p > 0.05$) confirms that there is no statistically significant effect of teachers' explaining skills on students' level of comprehension.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that teachers' explaining skills do not exert a statistically significant influence on students' level of comprehension. At first glance, this outcome appears counterintuitive to the conventional assumption that clearer teacher explanations inevitably lead to higher student comprehension. However, upon closer examination, this finding opens an avenue to re-evaluate how explanations are delivered in the classroom and the extent to which they address learners' actual

cognitive needs. Accordingly, this discussion seeks to unpack the underlying factors behind this weak correlation and its contextual implications for PPKn instruction at SMP Negeri 08 Kepala Madan (Chera et al., 2022; Sarbaitinil et al., 2024).

The descriptive score differences between seventh- and eighth-grade students are frequently interpreted as a consequence of accumulated learning experience. However, if teachers employ identical instructional methods and explanatory styles across grade levels, this disparity suggests that eighth-grade students have merely adapted to the teacher's pedagogical patterns rather than reflecting an improvement in the teacher's explaining skills. Within Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), learners comprehend material more effectively once they become accustomed to interacting socially within a supportive learning environment (Wandri, 2014). Thus, upper-grade students may exhibit higher comprehension due to familiarity with the educator rather than enhanced explanatory quality (Chera et al., 2022).

While the high validity of the research instrument ensures that students' perceptions of teacher explanations and material comprehension were measured accurately, valid measurement does not inherently reflect an effective learning process. When explanations are delivered without contextual strategies or conceptual mapping, positive student ratings may simply stem from deference to authority or classroom routine rather than genuine instructional quality. Juharti et al. (2019) noted that student perceptions of teachers can be biased when not grounded in genuinely reflective learning experiences. Consequently, teacher explanations must be evaluated not merely through perceptual validity, but through their actual impact on students' cognitive engagement (Lumuan et al., 2023).

The non-normal distribution of student comprehension scores indicates that learners do not experience the educational process uniformly. When teachers deliver material generically without accounting for individual backgrounds and readiness, students with lower academic capacities are left behind. According to Ausubel's theory of meaningful learning, new information is comprehended only when anchored to prior knowledge and experiences (Hamida et al., 2022). When a teacher's explanation fails to activate students' existing cognitive schemata, the learning process degenerates into mere information overload devoid of deep meaning-making (Agra et al., 2019; Gultom, 2025).

The non-significant regression result reinforces the conclusion that explaining skills cannot operate in isolation as the sole determinant of student comprehension. Educators who rely exclusively on verbal lecturing without incorporating interactive methodologies, such as group discussions, simulations, or conceptual visualizations. It often fail to accommodate diverse learning styles. This aligns with Sarbaitinil et al. (2024), who found that teachers in remote areas remain constrained in their repertoire of instructional delivery strategies. As Chera et al. (2022) argued, explanations only yield

pedagogical impact when framed as a dialogic process rather than a static educational monologue.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature by positioning explaining skills as an integral component of educational communication rather than a mere verbal technique. Teachers must adapt their explanatory approaches to align with classroom dynamics, student characteristics, and subject-matter context. Lumuan et al. (2023) affirmed that effective explanations occur when educators adopt multimodal approaches and remain attentive to student feedback. Practically, these findings highlight the need for teacher professional development programs that emphasize not only content mastery, but also communicative delivery strategies that stimulate active engagement and classroom dialogue.

Nevertheless, this study has methodological limitations. The small sample size and strictly quantitative design render the findings localized and unable to capture the nuanced micro-interactions occurring within the classroom. Juharti et al. (2019) recommended that future research incorporate qualitative approaches to capture non-verbal dimensions, such as facial expressions, spontaneous student responses, and classroom management dynamics. Furthermore, Sarbaitinil et al. (2024) advocated for direct classroom observations so that the quality of teacher explanations can be evaluated contextually rather than relying solely on student self-reports.

Conclusion

Within the domain of PPKn instruction, the findings of this study reveal that teachers' explaining skills, in the specific context examined, do not serve as the primary determinant of students' level of comprehension. Although teachers possess the ability to articulate subject matter, the effectiveness of their explanations cannot achieve optimal impact without the support of participatory, contextual, and student-responsive pedagogical approaches. This condition underscores that comprehension is not solely dictated by the transmission of information, but rather by the quality of educational interaction cultivated within the classroom. Thus, this research offers a theoretical contribution by broadening the conceptualization of pedagogical skills as part of an integrative learning communication system, rather than an isolated verbal competency.

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Authors' Note

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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