

# THE EFFECT OF STUDENTS' READING INTEREST AND VOCABULARY MASTERY ON STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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## Abstract.

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan apakah ada pengaruh yang *significant* dari minat membaca dan penguasaan kosakata terhadap pemahaman membaca siswa. Desain penelitian ini kuantitatif menggunakan *ex post facto designs*. Populasi dari penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas dua SMA. Sampel dari penelitian ini adalah sebanyak 30 siswa. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis menggunakan SPSS 16.0 dan Analisis Path. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa koefisien pengaruh langsung dari minat membaca siswa terhadap pemahaman membaca dan penguasaan kosakata siswa terhadap pemahaman membaca siswa adalah .278 and .700. Sedangkan, pengaruh langsung dari minat membaca dan penguasaan kosakata siswa terhadap pemahaman membaca siswa .978. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa ada pengaruh yang *significant* dari minat membaca dan penguasaan kosakata terhadap pemahaman membaca siswa. Semakin tinggi minat membaca dan penguasaan kosakata, maka semakin tinggi pemahaman membaca siswa.

The purpose of this study was to find out whether there was a significant effect of students' reading interest and vocabulary mastery on students' reading comprehension. This was quantitative research applied *ex post facto designs*. The research population was second grade students of SMA. The sample was 30 students. The researcher analyzed the data by using SPSS 16.0 and Path analysis. The results of the research showed that the coefficient direct effect of students' reading interest on students' reading comprehension and students' vocabulary mastery on their reading comprehension were .278 and .700. Meanwhile, the direct effect of students' reading interest and vocabulary mastery on their reading comprehension was .978. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a significant effect of students' reading interest and vocabulary mastery on students' reading comprehension. The higher reading interest and vocabulary mastery had gotten by the students, the higher reading comprehension had gotten by the students.

**Keyword:** reading comprehension, reading interest, vocabulary mastery

## **INTRODUCTION**

Reading is one of the important skills in learning English especially for students. They need to read English materials for their English subject. In high school, reading competence becomes even more important because students are more active to gain written information. Reading comprehension is generally defined as understanding of a text written in English proved by the competence to correctly choose the right answer of the question asked from the text. High school students have to master reading comprehension in order that they can get a good score in English subject. All students are expected to be able to understand the main idea of the text, factual information, vocabulary, and stated and unstated information the text.

Depending on the purposes of reading, reading can also be classified into two types of activities (Grellet, 1981), intensive and extensive reading.

a. Intensive reading

Intensive reading means reading shorter texts to extract specific information.

b. Extensive reading

Reader deals with a longer text as a whole, which requires the ability to understand the component part and their contribution the overall meaning, usually for ones' own pleasure.

Nuttal (1985) states that there are five reading skills that should be mastered by reader to comprehend the text deeply; they are as follow:

1. Determining main idea

Determining idea is a skill to grasp and find the main point of the passage by summarizing the passage and look for repetition of ideas/words.

2. Finding the specific information or part of text

Finding the specific information or part of text means looking for the information that relevant to the goal in mind and ignores the irrelevant.

3. Finding reference

Reference is the intentional use of one thing to indicate something else in which one provides the information necessary to interpret the other. Finding reference means interpreting and determining one linguistic expression to another.

4. Finding inference

Inference is good guess or conclusion drawn based on the logic of passage. Finding inference means the reader imply the sentences or passages understand and conclude it logically.

5. Understanding vocabulary

Understanding vocabulary means comprehend what the words mean. When vocabulary mastery improves, comprehending will be deeper. Since comprehension is ultimate goal of reading, the reader cannot overestimate the importance of vocabulary development.

Reading a book, an article, or passage in English for some students is (sometimes) not an easy work. It relates to some factors, one of them is their lack of vocabulary.

As we know, every language has vocabulary and the mastery on vocabulary plays a

very significant part in learning new language. People cannot master a language well unless they have a good mastery on vocabulary we are learning. Learning a foreign language is basically a matter of learning the vocabulary of language. Vocabulary mastery is an important element used to support the mastery of the four major skills i.e. speaking, reading, writing, and listening. According to Wilkins as stated in Thornbury (2002), “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.”

Fries (1970) classified English vocabulary or word into four groups, they are:

1. Content word

Content word represents the name of the subject or thing, that is concrete noun (*book, scissors, and bag*) action done by with these things, that is verb (*go, find, and run*), and the qualities of these things, that is adjective (*small, tall, and far*).

2. Function word

Function word are those word which are used as a means of expressing relation grammar structure, such as conjunction (*but, or, and*), article (*a, an, and the*), and auxiliaries (*are, be, is*).

3. Substitute word

Substitute word are those, which represent the individual things or specific action as substitute for whole from classes of words, that is, identifies (*anything, anyone*).

4. Distribute word

Distribute word are those are distribute in use according to grammatical matter as presence of a negative such as *either, too, or, yet*.

Words are classified into functional and content words. Functional words are the words we use to make our sentences grammatically correct. Pronouns, determiners, and prepositions, and auxiliary verbs are examples of function words. Content words refer to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Functional words have major classes; there are pronoun, preposition, conjunction, and determiner. So, word classification membership is an important lexical feature. In the study of word classification, the researcher limits on nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

a. Nouns

A noun is a word (or group of words) that is the name of a person, a place, a thing or activity or a quality or idea; nouns can be used as the subject or object of a verb.

b. Verbs

Verbs are words that denote or describe an action, experience or state.

c. Adjectives

Adjective is a modifier that used to highlight quantities or attributes. Its most usual position is before the noun it modifier, but it fills other positions as well.

d. Adverb

Adverb is a word that adds to the meaning of a verb, adjective, another adverb or a whole sentence.

On the other hand, reading comprehension is also dependent upon the student's interest. Poor reading or reading failure may be caused by lack of interest. Reading interest is a feeling that accompanies or causes special attention to reading. The students may read actively if they are interested in reading. Reading interest can

make them consider reading activity as a habitual activity for them. Interest is the set of attending, the tendency to give selective attention to something. Interest arises through the interaction of basic needs and the means used to satisfy them. The students who are interested in reading are those who satisfy the basic needs of personal adequacy or self-esteem, esteem of others, curiosity, or success.

As is generally known, interest is a motivational variable that involves not only the emotions but also the intellect, making it a powerful energizer indeed (Hidi, Renninger, & Krapp, 2004). Interest is positive attitudes of attraction toward objects or events. They learned responses which predispose the organism to certain lines of activity and which facilitate attention. Regarding to the explanation above, it is reasonable because reading comprehension is naturally different skill to achieve, because of some crucial factors such as grammar, vocabulary, reading interest, etc.

Crawley and Mountain (1995) identified six factors that influenced the development of children's interests. These factors are as follows:

1. Previous Experience.

Students may not develop their interest toward something new that they have never been experienced.

2. Self-Concept.

Students may reject information that feels threatened; otherwise the student may receive it if it is felt useful and help them to improve their skill.

3. Values.

Student interest arises if a subject is presented by an authoritative people.

#### 4. Understandable Subject

Information that is easily understood by students may attract their interest.

#### 5. The Level of Pressure Involvement.

If students feel that they have some rate options and is less pressure, their reading interest may be higher.

#### 6. The Complexity of subject material.

Students who are better intellectually and psychologically flexible are more attracted to something more complex.

Based on theories states, it can be inferred that interest includes; previous experience, self-concept, values, understandable subject, level of pressure involvement, and complexity of subject material.

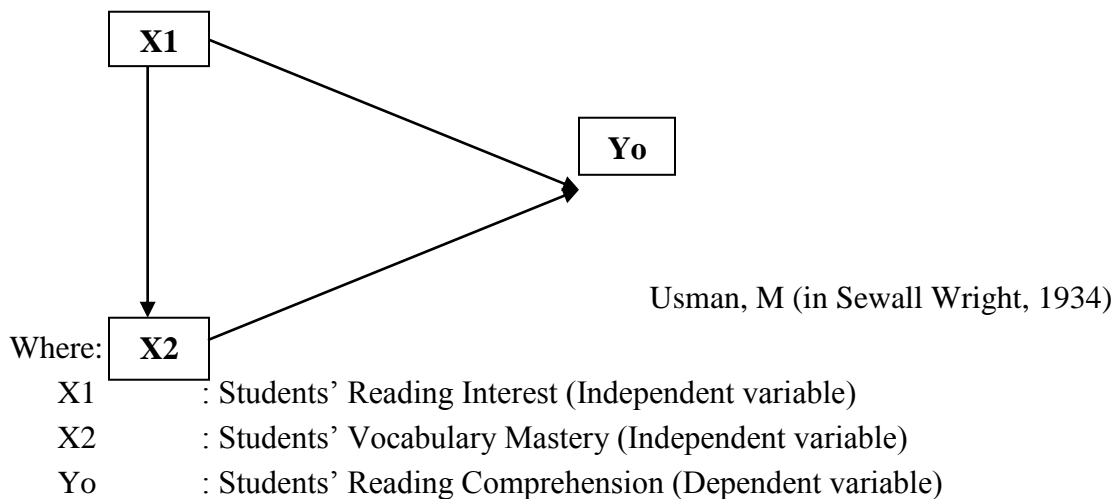
Considering the theories described above, the researcher assumed that reading interest and vocabulary mastery has an important and special place in the reading comprehension. Therefore, the researcher is interested in investigating the effect of students' reading interest and vocabulary mastery n their reading comprehension.

### **METHOD**

This research was about multiple correlation research using quantitative approach. Quantitative research was associated with social survey technique like structured interviewing and self-administered questionnaires, experiments, structured observation, content analysis, and the analysis of official statistics. It implied that the application of measurement of predetermined variables, as well as to the gathering and analysis of numerical data. The design used in this research is *ex post facto*

*design* because there was no control group and no treatment to the subject but collecting the data by seeing the correlation between cause and effect that happened. The data of the research were students' reading interest, students' vocabulary mastery and students' reading comprehension. This study dealt with three kinds of variables, i.e. reading interest as the independent variable, vocabulary mastery as the independent variable, and the achievement reading comprehension as dependent variable. The ultimate purpose of the study as determines the effect of the independent variable (interest of reading and vocabulary mastery) on the dependent variable (reading comprehension).

1. Reading interest (X1) and vocabulary mastery (X2) as independent variables because it is assumed that reading interest and vocabulary mastery influence students' reading comprehension.
2. Students' reading comprehension (Y) as a dependent variable because it is assumed that reading comprehension is affected by students' reading interest and students' vocabulary mastery.





## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Effect of Students' Reading Interest on Students' Reading Comprehension.**

In order to determine the effect of students' reading interest on their reading comprehension, the researcher calculated the data by analyzing the data using Linear Regression in SPSS 16 then writer analyzed the data by using path analysis to see the cause and effect of each variable.

Based on the calculation, the researcher found that the coefficient effect of students' reading interest and their reading comprehension was .278, this means that for every one standard deviation increment of students' reading interest, the students' reading comprehension tends increase for about 0.278 standard deviation. It was found from the test statistics (table 4.23)  $t = 2.318$  with  $p\text{-value} = 0.028 < 0.05$ . So, the null hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) can be rejected and the alternative hypotheses can be accepted ( $H_1$ ). So, it can be understood that there is a very significant direct effect from students' reading interest to students' reading comprehension and from table (table 4.23)  $t = 5.842$  with  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ . ( $p < .01$ ;  $p = .000$ ).

### **Effect of Students' Vocabulary Mastery on Students' Reading Comprehension**

In order to determine the effect of students' vocabulary mastery on their reading comprehension, the researcher calculated the data by analyzing the data using Linear Regression in SPSS 16 then writer analyzed the data by using path analysis to see the cause and effect of each variable.

Based on the calculation, the researcher found that the coefficient effect of students' vocabulary mastery and their achievement in reading comprehension was 0.700, this means that for every one standard deviation increment of students' vocabulary mastery, the students' reading comprehension tend increase for about 0.700 standard deviation. It was found from the test statistics (table 4.23)  $t = 2.318$  with  $p\text{-value} = 0.028 < 0.05$ . So, the null hypotheses (H0) can be rejected and the alternative hypotheses can be accepted (H1). So, it can be understood that there is a very significant direct effect from students' vocabulary mastery to students' reading comprehension and from table (table 4.23)  $t = 5.842$  with  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ . ( $p < .01$ ;  $p = .000$ ).

### **Effect of Students' Reading Interest and Students' Vocabulary mastery on their Reading Comprehension**

In order to determine the effect of students' reading interest and students' vocabulary mastery on their reading comprehension, the researcher calculated the data by analyzing the data using Linear Regression in SPSS 16 then writer analyzed the data by using path analysis to see the cause and effect of each variable.

Based on the calculation, the researcher found the coefficient effect of student's reading interest and vocabulary mastery on their reading comprehension was .978. So, the null hypotheses (H0) can be rejected and the alternative hypotheses can be accepted (H1). So, it can be understood that there is a very significant direct effect from students' reading interest to students' reading comprehension and from table (table 4.23)  $t = 5.842$  with  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ . So, the null hypotheses (H0) can

be rejected and the alternative hypotheses (H1) can be accepted. So, it can be understood that there is a very significant direct effect from students' reading interest and students' vocabulary mastery to students' reading comprehension. As it indicated as the Students' Reading Interest and Students' vocabulary mastery increase so that Students' Reading Comprehension also increases.

## **DISCUSSION**

The main finding of this research was to determine whether there is a significant effect of students' reading interest, vocabulary mastery on students' reading comprehension. Based on the result above, it is in line with what has been found by previous research. It was described of each point below.

### **Reading Interest and Reading Comprehension**

Interest plays a role in decision to read, in the level of engagement with the text during reading, and thus also in the product the reader creates in terms of comprehension of the text and learning forms the text (Snow, 2002).

Students are more likely to read what they think interesting in the reading material, for example, reading programs that provide dedicated reading time do influence the students "intention to read" by making available materials of interest to students and eliminating competing factors. Besides that, Hidi, Renninger, & Krapp (2004) stated that interest is a motivational variable that involves not only the emotions but also the intellect, making it a powerful energizer indeed. Reading interest has a significant

correlation with the English language study, reading interest is very useful for students. Reading texts also provides opportunities to study language, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the way that construct sentence, paragraphs, and texts. Finally, good reading texts can introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussion, and excite imaginative responses (Harmer, 2001: 68).

### **Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension**

The role of vocabulary in reading comprehension is important. Burton (1982:98) says that we cannot do well in comprehension without a large of vocabulary, for the passage and question involve a range of word much wide than that a daily conversation. Furthermore, he says that the learner must have an adequate vocabulary because a large vocabulary is very important in learning language.

In other words, the vocabulary mastery of students is significant to improve their reading comprehension. Students who had adequate interest in reading, such as reading English story book, magazine, text narrative, descriptive, genre, etcetera would understand the message easily. By reading many passages, the students will learn the new difficult words, and then they will be curious to know the meaning of that word. In that situation, it will increase the students' vocabulary (the students' vocabulary will get richer) and not stuck only in familiar word.

### **Reading Interest and Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Comprehension**

As writer mentioned before, each student had different rate of reading interest and vocabulary mastery to reading comprehension, whether it was high, moderate or even low and those results of students' reading interest and vocabulary was correlated with their reading ability.

Interest has shown to influence reading skills in a number of ways. Sentences with high-interest content are more likely to be remembered in cued recall measures than low-interest sentences.

Besides that, vocabulary is more important than grammar for communication purpose, particularly in the early stages when students are motivated to learn the basic words they need to get by in language. So more advance students are motivated to add to their vocabulary stock, to understand nuances of meaning, to become more proficient in their own choice of words and expressions.”

It is known that English vocabulary learning cannot run successfully without English ability (English skills) because both of them are very important in English teaching and learning process. The students cannot do well in comprehension without a large of vocabularies.

As Burton and Humpries (1992:65) said that, “your vocabulary is the range of words that you can use. The larger it is, the better will be your performance in all aspects of English language work. A large vocabulary helps you to express your ideas precisely,

vividly, and without repeating yourself in composition.” As a result, reading interest, vocabulary, and reading have correlation one to the other. For understanding reading comprehension students must know the vocabulary first because it is a basis of language. It is impossible for the students to read a foreign language without having enough knowledge of vocabulary. Besides that, reading interest has important role in learning English, so it also has a big influence to reading comprehension. Reading texts also provides opportunities to study language, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the way that construct sentence, paragraphs, and texts. So, when their score of reading interests and vocabulary is high, their score in reading comprehension is also high.

## **CONCLUSION**

There is significant effect of students’ reading interest and vocabulary mastery on their reading comprehension. It means that the higher students’ reading interest and vocabulary mastery, the higher students’ get reading comprehension.

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