

The Relationship between Students' Reading Motivation and the Success to Comprehend the English Texts

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ABSTRACT

Reading is one of the main skills that must be possessed by students in order to be successful in learning English as a foreign language. Meanwhile, motivation is very much needed in English learning because motivation is one of the determinant factors of student to succeed. The relationship of reading and motivation is two coin-sides that encourage anyone to read or not to read. The aim of making this study is to determine the relationship between students' reading motivation and reading comprehension. This study takes the setting of students who learn English as a foreign language at a state university in Palangka Raya–Indonesia during one month and half by selecting 36 college students with an age range between 19-21 years covered by 22 females and 14 males. This study used a correlational research design. The result shows that there is a positive correlation between students' reading motivation and their reading comprehension which means the more motivated students in reading the more increased their comprehension in reading the texts.

KEYWORDS:

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Introduction

Reading activity is important for everyone because reading can increase one's knowledge. The reason a person reads depending on his needs. Some people read to fill their spare time, to find out something they want to know. For some students, they read because their teachers or lecturers asked them to do so. Regardless one's language is in reading, it is important to keep reading because there is information that will add insight when reading. Reading plays an important role in one of the language skills where it has a significant place in foreign language learning and teaching.

In the context of college students, reading is badly needed because reading is the key to understand during the learning process. In relation to learning English, reading is very

necessary because reading is one of the main skills that must be possessed by students in order to be successful in learning English as a foreign language.

One way to make students have more desire to read is through motivation. According to Gredler, et. al, (2004) as quoted from Lai (2011) that motivation is an aspect that encourages anyone to do or not to do something. Motivation has an important role in increasing students' desire to read. It can be said that building motivation in students is an effective way to get their willingness to read (Anderson, 1985). By building motivation, it will make it easier for them to achieve their goals in understanding the contents of what they read.

Reading motivation is a factor that individuals have related to reading such as access to interesting texts, social interaction with books, and support for autonomy, or opportunities for self-selection (J. T. Guthrie & A, 2000). Motivation describes the driving force behind a learner's effort to do something. A more motivated learner will try more in terms of learning. He will be eager to go the extra mile to improve his language skills, spend more time learning a language and even tackle what he is learning on a subconscious level. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) tend to claim that motivation is eventually more important when someone wants to do something. Competent readers are intrinsically motivated and read with curiosity, are fully engaged, and prefer challenges. This motivational quality is able to predict their frequency and comprehension in reading. Motivation is very much needed in English learning because motivation is one of the determinant factors of student to succeed. Although motivation is not the only key to success in the learning process, students who have high motivation will be easier to succeed in their learning activities than students who have low motivation, (Murniasih, 2013).

In addition, motivation in relation to learning English is very important for reading activities because it can have a good influence on students to increase their interest in reading. Learning and motivation in English learning have the same importance to achieve the learning objectives. In another sense, it can be said that motivation is an attribute of students to be active in reading because with the motivation students can increase their willingness to read. Several studies examining motivation in reading, Komiyama (2013), for example, state that reading is positively relevant to the motivation factor. The positive relationship between reading and motivation can increase students' willingness to read. Lack of motivation to read is the main problem. Yuliandari (2016), stated that students do not want to read their reading material even though they are aware of the benefits. Again, this implies that without motivation a person does not want to read though he knows the benefits. This means that when someone has high motivation in reading, they feel enjoy with the valuable reading activity.

In relation to aspects of reading comprehension, this research used five aspects of reading to gain understanding of the text. Those aspects are identifying the main idea, getting

specific information, reference, inference, and understanding specific vocabulary. In identifying the main idea, the reader is asked to understand the text as a whole, the things that the reader must know is to know what the main idea of the text is. The main idea or idea in the text is the most important idea developed by the author through reading texts. Therefore, the ability to understand the main idea is not explicitly stated in one sentence. Rather, it is left to the reader to conclude, or to reason.

Reading comprehension can also be evaluated by getting specific information from the reading text. Specific information in the reading text can be determined through definitions, examples, facts, events, comparisons, analogies, causal statistics and quotations. Therefore, specific information will tell the reader exactly what the main idea is. Meanwhile, to understand the text through references, the reader must be able to predict or find the words or phrases used either before or after the words or phrases that will be referred to in the reading material. These words or phrases are signals for the reader to find specific meanings elsewhere in the text. In relation to inference, it is to understand the reading content. Kathleen (2000) states that inference is an educational guess or prediction about something that is not known based on facts and on available information. It is the logical relationship that draws the reader between what he observes or what he knows and what he does not know. In addition, inference is also related to the reader's ability to predict the topics discussed before and after the topic he is reading. The other ability in reading comprehension is that the reader must be able to correctly understand the unknown vocabulary or words (without using a dictionary) in the reading text. Vocabulary is fundamental for everyone who wants to understand the ideas in the content of reading. The writer sometimes also uses unfamiliar vocabulary to express something or even the writer uses unfamiliar words or low frequency words to convey the meaning of the passage. Therefore, the ability to understand reading also covers this aspect.

To relate reading motivation and reading comprehension in a correlational study, there are some studies to investigate the success of readers in understanding the content of reading texts supported by reading motivation. Slavin (2013), for instance, found motivation affects one's reading comprehension. Therefore, motivated students usually want to understand the content of the text in depth. In addition, Maleki and Zangani (2007) in their research stated that motivation is an important element that indicates whether the reader is able to recognize and understand the content of the text. Moreover, Pourhousessein, et.al. (2016) in their study prove that motivation is something that stimulates learners to determine positive or negative opinions about what they read. Still according to Pourhousessein, et.al. (2016) which states that learners' motivation to read positively affects their reading comprehension. This means that learners with stronger reading comprehension are expected

to be able to read a longer type of text. Therefore, it cannot be denied that the reading motivation affects the reader in understanding the text. This present research aims to determine (1) whether students' reading motivation has a strong relationship with their comprehension to read English texts; (2) is the relationship between reading motivation and reading comprehension linear positive or negative correlation; and (3) is the strength of the association between the two variables good or low.

Method

This study takes the setting of students who learn English as a foreign language at a state university in Indonesia for one month and half.

Participants

The subjects of this study were taken 36 college students with an age range between 19-21 years covered by 22 females and 14 males. They are second year students in the English study program who have passed Basic English Reading and Intermediate English Reading courses; and still taking Advanced English Reading class. To confirm that they are advanced learners of English is by listing them to have TOEFL scores in 500 or higher with a score classification in the Reading Session in 50 or higher.

Procedure

Researchers collected reading comprehension score data through a virtual Advanced English Reading class for five weeks. Students were provided with various reading texts and strategies in the reading course about how to understand the contents of the reading texts. Evaluation of students' reading comprehension was carried out at the end of each virtual class session. The following is the depiction of text material that is taught in each reading class session.

Table 1. Description of reading material enrichment during lecture program

Seasons	Reading text materials	Evaluations
Week-1	Identifying main idea of the reading texts	Evaluation-1
Week-2	Finding specific information from the reading text	Evaluation-2
Week-3	Finding certain reference from the reading text	Evaluation-3
Week-4	Connecting logical facts and information on the reading text through inference	Evaluation-4
Week-5	Understanding unknown and unstated vocabularies on the reading text without using dictionary.	Evaluation-5

Then, at the end of the lecture program, the researchers also evaluated the students' motivation in reading. To find out reading motivation data, online questionnaire was sent to

students via Google form to each of their account. There were 47 questions in the reading motivation assessment taken from The Motivation for Reading in English Questionnaire (MREQ) developed by Wang and Guthrie (2004). The questionnaire used close-ended questions by offering 5-scale answer options. The following is the content specification of questions on the reading motivation questionnaire.

Table 2. Content specification of questionnaire items in reading motivation

Specification content of items	Number of items
1. Intrinsic motivation	16 items
2. Extrinsic motivation drive to excel	15 items
3. Extrinsic motivation on academic compliance	8 items
4. Extrinsic motivation on test compliance	3 items
5. Extrinsic motivation on social sharing	5 items
Total number of items	47 items

Design and data analysis

This research used correlational research design where students' motivation in reading is the independent variable (X) and the scores of students' reading comprehension is the dependent variable (Y). Data on reading motivation and reading comprehension scores were analyzed using Spearman correlation statistics. After correlation coefficient met, researchers examined the direction of the correlation between two variables, and the strength of the association between both.

Result

In the following data analysis, first to describe the data from each variable investigated as depicted on Table 4, then to test the relationship between variables X and Y where the result is shown on Table 5. All data were analyzed through SPSS computation.

Table 3. Correlation between reading comprehension and reading motivation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reading motivation	36	94.00	178.00	138.7778	18.04615
Reading comprehension scores	36	70.30	90.60	82.6722	5.02221

Table 4. Correlation between reading comprehension and reading motivation

			Reading motivation	Reading comprehension scores
Spearman's rho	Reading motivation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.710*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.034
		N	36	36
	Reading comprehension scores	Correlation Coefficient	.710*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.034	.
		N	36	36

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Discussion

Motivation in reading greatly determines the achievement of one's competence in reading skill (Fauzi, 2018; Slavin, 2013). For someone who has no motivation to read anything, it is almost certain that he has a low level of understanding of the reading contents. This shows that the level of motivation to read is directly proportional to the level of one's understanding in the reading contents. Slavin's statement above is in line with this research finding where there is a positive correlation between reading motivation and students' reading comprehension. That is, the more motivated students in reading the more increased their comprehension with the texts.

In addition, this study also confirms Murniasih's (2013) finding that students who have high motivation are easier to succeed in reading activity than students who have low motivation. Also, the result of this research supports Guthrie and Cambria's (2010) study that found several factors affecting a person's skills in understanding reading content, namely one's interest, self-confidence, and dedication. These three things are included in one of the categories of reading motivation, namely intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, extrinsic reading motivation also specifically determine the success of comprehending texts. That is, the motivation or desire to read because of award, assessment, competition, and requirement to fulfill something (Wang & Guthrie, 2004). As the result of study found, the higher the desire to read that comes from external factors, the better the reading value obtained in terms of understanding the contents of the reading text. Again, the finding of this research also support Yuliandari's (2016) study where extrinsic motivation or a person's reading desire that comes

from outside himself has a strong contribution in increasing his competence to understand the reading content.

The more important thing from this research is that the strength association between reading motivation and reading comprehension is classified 'good' where students' reading motivation can be as the predictor to increase students' comprehension in reading the texts. This finding again confirms Komiyama's (2013) study that reading comprehension is positively relevant to the motivation factor. The theoretical base of reading motivation asserted by Guthrie and Caddington (2010) is proved by this study in which reading motivation can be determined as a pleasure and the internal result from reading activities. When someone finds a feeling of pleasure in reading, they will carry out reading activities regularly and it will have a good impact on their reading skill. In addition, reading motivation is also influenced by several factors that underlie reasons for readers in determining their goals to read, such as the reading for pleasure, or reading for learning to seek knowledge. Therefore, motivation is one of the main factors that help students to read more effectively.

Instead, Guthrie and Cambria (2010) mention that there are several factors that influence reading motivation, those are interest, self-confidence, and dedication. Students will avoid reading if there is no pleasure or desire that supports the reading environment itself. Reading motivation has an effect on students about how much content they will read (J. T. Guthrie & A, 2000). Thus, reading motivation is a kind of internal drive that forces someone to read. So that the motivation to read that comes from external encouragement can be generated by social life or external incentives such as rewards or targets to achieve goals.

Conclusion

Reading motivation can be determined as a pleasure or enjoyment and as the internal result of reading activity. When students find a mood of pleasure in reading, they will carry out reading activity regularly and it will have a good impact on their reading skill. Reading motivation is also influenced by several factors that underlie the reason for the reader in determining the purpose of reading. The reading goals can be for pleasure activities, or for learning to seek knowledge. Meanwhile, students will avoid reading if they do not have the pleasure or desire and not have support from the reading environment.

Regardless the reason, the motivational factor is a very important factor in determining the success of achieving one's reading competence, especially in reading course materials of English texts. Reading motivation for college students is a factor in understanding about something after they read a text. In addition, reading motivation is a kind of internal drive (or intrinsic motivation) that forces a person to read. Reading motivation that comes from internal is usually caused by personal desire and the motivation to read that comes from external

encouragement (or extrinsic motivation) can be caused by social life or external incentive such as reward or goal to achieve the desired targets.

The implication of this study result is that it can provide reinforcement to English lecturers, especially those who teach reading comprehension, namely that reading motivation must be instilled in students before giving them the content of the reading itself. Because of how important the motivation to read is, especially from the student individually so that it becomes one of the triggers for the success in understanding the content of the reading. Without motivation it is unlikely that a person will be fast and precise in understanding the content of a reading.

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