The Correlation Between Students' Learning Interest And Structure Mastery and Students' Reading Skill

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Abstract: The objective of this research is to find out whether there is a correlation between (1) students' learning interest and students' reading skill; (2) students' structure mastery and students' reading skill; and (3) students' learning interest, students' structure mastery simultaneously, and students' reading skill. This correlational study involved 36 students at one of state senior high school in Sukoharjo. The technique of choosing the sample was cluster random sampling. Data were collected through questionnaire and test. Single and Multiple Regresssion and Correlation were used to analyze the data. The result of the data analysis shows that: (1) there is a positive correlation between students' learning interest and students' reading skill; (2) there is a positive correlation between students' structure mastery and students' reading skill; and (3) there is a positive correlation between students' learning interest, students' structure mastery simultaneously, and students' reading skill. It means that students' learning interest and students' structure mastery cannot be neglected in teaching reading skill.

Keywords: *correlation, learning interest, structure mastery, reading skill*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of language skills which has to be learned and is considered as the most important one because it can influence other language skill such as listening, speaking, and reading. For students who are studying languages, reading is something that has to be learned. They have to read their books or other materials related to their lesson. By reading, students get the information that they need. There are several factors influencing reading skill such as learning interest and structure mastery. Learning interest is one aspect or factor that can encourage someone to achieve the goal, in this case learning interest of learning English. A student who has learning interest, tends to pay attention in learning English. Another aspect that influences students' reading skill is structure or grammar mastery. Grammar is the basic knowledge and skill for understanding and using the language. Grammar is the rules by which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences. It can be said that grammar plays an important role in how learner can master a language. Without learning and mastering grammar, learners cannot arrange sentences properly and without having a good comprehension and competence in arranging sentences, it is impossible for learners to be able to master reading skill. Thus, learning interest and structure mastery can give benefit to reading skill.

Reading is important basic skill which helps students master the other skills. Hodgson (1960) as cited by Tarigan (2008:

7) states "Reading is a process that is carried out and used by the reader to get a message, which would be submitted by the author through the media of words or written language." It means that reading is an activity which gives the reader information or message. The readers gain the information or message through media which is written. Reading skill is an individual"s standing on some reading assessment (Perfetti, 2001). Skilled readers are those who score above some standard on this assessment. Further, Erfort (2014) argues that reading skills enable readers to turn reading into meaning and achieve the goals of independence, comprehension, and fluency. Moreover reading skills will enable the reader to make meaning out of written language, interact and engage with the language, comprehend and analyze the language.

According to Tarigan (2008: 9-11) there are seven purposes of reading:

a. Reading for details or facts
b. Reading for main ideas
c. Reading for sequence or organization
d. Reading for inference
e. Reading for classify
f. Reading to evaluate.
g. Reading to compare or contrast.

Lück (2008:307-308) also states that there are two reading techniques, skimming and scanning. Skimming involves searching for main ideas in by reading, for example, the first and last paragraphs and noting summaries, conclusions, and suggestions by the author. Scanning is a very effective technique to locate specific information in a text. Scanning involves running „one"s eyes down the page," looking for important facts or key aspects.

Reading involves some skills which are needed by the reader to understand and get the meaning of the text. Brown (2004:

187) proposes these following micro and macro skills;

a. Microskills
   1) Discriminate among the distinctive graphemes and orthograpic patterns of English.
   2) Retain chunks of language of different lengths in short-term memory.
   3) Process writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose.
   4) Recognize a core of words, and interpret word order patterns and their significance.
   5) Recognize grammatical word classes (noun, verbs, etc.), system (e.g., tense, agreement, pluralization), patterns, rules, and elliptical forms.
   6) Recognize that a particular meaning may be expressed in different grammatical forms.
   7) Recognize cohesive devices in written discourse and their role in signaling the relationship between and among clauses.

b. Macroskills
   1) Recognize the rhetorical forms of written discourse and their significance for interpretation.
   2) Recognize the communicative functions of written texts, according to form and purpose.
   3) Infer context that is not explicit by using background knowledge.
   4) From described events, ideas, etc., infer links and connection between events, deduce cause and effects, and detect such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.
   5) Distinguish between literal and implied meaning.

6) Detect culturally specific references and interpret them in a context of the appropiate cultural schemata.

7) Develop and use a battery of reading strategies, such as scanning and skimming, detecting discourse markers, guessing the meaning of words from context, and activating schemata for the interpretation of texts.

Based on those explanations, it can be summarized that reading is a process of constructing meaning through media of words or written language that gives the reader information, perception, and different thought. There are some purposes in reading: reading for main idea, reading for inferences, reading for details, etc. Reading skill is the ability to use mind, thought, and ideas in constructing meaning of written language to get an information or message. In reading, skills and strategies are needed for success in an academic situation such as skimming for gist and the main idea, scanning to get the detail information, reading for details, and reading for inference.

Reading involves various different skills. Dealing with the standard of competence and the basic competence of English reading at the eleventh grade of senior high school and the skills above, the researcher restricts on five reading skills that include such activities as being able to find out main idea of the text, being able to find out explicit information of the text, being able to interpret word meaning from the text, being able to recognize implicit meaning in text, and being able to recognize pronoun reference.

Reading is clearly stated as an active skill which interelates with the meaning. Each text which is read consists of sentences which are formed using certain rules. Those rules in forming sentences are usually known as a grammar. As cited by Chang (2011:13)"grammar is a set of rules that define how words (or parts of words) are combined or changed to form acceptable units of meaning within a language" (Penny, 2000). Students must be able to recognize and analyze the form of the sentences if they want to have reading skill. Grammar or structure mastery is needed to help students recognize and analyze the word structure, phrase, and sentence structure in a passage, so they will comprehend the text well. Thus, grammar or structure mastery can influence the students in reading skill.

Halliday (1985: xiv) argues that grammar consists of syntax and morphology. According to him, morphology is the forms of words, and syntax is the forms of sentences. This statement is supported by Thornbury (1999:2) "Grammar is conventionally seen as the study of the syntax and morphology of sentences." Thornbury (1999: 2) defines syntax as a system of rules that cover the order of words in a sentence. Morphology is a system of rules that cover the formation of words. Similarly, Palmer (1971: 51) states that grammar is not merely a matter of morphology, it is also concerned with syntax. Here palmer (1971: 13) defines "Syntax as the way in which words combine to form sentences." He also defines that morphology deals with the forms of words.

Previously it has been pointed out that learning is relatively permanent change in behavior as a result of experience of individual interaction. Learning interest is a feeling of anxiety or pleasure in terms of learning. There are some types of interest: individual interest, situational interest, and topic interest. Factors that influence interest are individual factors and situational factor.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that interest can be the motivational factor in learning and development, interest can affect the quality of student achievement, interest becomes a facilitator of student attention and memory, interest is central in determining how we select and persist in processing certain types of information. Besides, interest allows for correct and complete recognition of an object, leads to meaningful learning, promotes long-term storage of knowledge and provides motivation for further learning. The indicators of learning interest involves: attention, pleasure, consciousness, and willingness.

Reading skill is also influenced by learning interest. Reading will be an enjoyable activity if someone has desire or like to enjoy his activity. Interest is needed to encourage the readers in reading activity. Interest is a situation where a person has an attention, curiosity, and desire to know and learn further about something. Attention and desire are needed in learning activity. Djamarah says that interest is a feeling of love (like) and attraction in a thing or an activity, without being asked (2011: 166). It means that interest cannot be forced. Feeling of love (like) and attraction comes from within the individual. According to Hornby (2005:778) "Interest is the feeling that you have when you want to know or learn more about something." Here interest makes someone curious and they will pay more attention to a particular thing that he or she likes.

Hidi and Renninger (2006: 113) state two types of interest:

a. Situational Interest
   Situational interest refers to focused attention and the affective reaction that is triggered in the moment by environmental stimuli, which may or may not last over time.

b. Individual Interest
   Individual interest refers to a person"s relatively enduring predisposition to reengage particular content over time as well as to the immediate psychological state when this predisposition has been activated.

There are four aspects of interest in a certain object. Those four aspects can be explained as below:

a. Attention
   Attention is the concentration or awareness towards an object or set of objects or stimulants. Attention influences one"s interest in doing something. Someone who is interested in English, he or she will pay attention more to learn it and focuses on learning English.

b. Pleasure
   Pleasure is supposed to be derived from simply watching movement of people and objects. Students learn to avoid activities that make them unsatisfied and they don"t want to do the activities repeatedly (Skinner, 1984: 338).

c. Consciousness
   Student can be said to be interested if he or she has consciousness. The consciousness always exists in every student because the student will be interested in something if he or she is conscious that the objects are interesting (Witherington, 1982: 122).

d. Willingness
   Willingness means a motivational desire directed the purpose of life controlled by thought. This motivational desire will produce a will, attention, and concentration to a given object; then the interest of the individual will appear.

Students who have high interest will have high curiosity and desire than others. Their attention, curiosity, and desire lead them to be more active to read a text to get the information that they are looking for. Besides, they will be able to comprehend the detail information accurately and clearly. The great interest also motivates students to develop their skill in reading. By developing the skills of reading, they will comprehend the text easily.

Although there are many factors that contribute to reading skill, the researcher highlights the link of learning interest, structure mastery, and reading skill in this research. Therefore, the following hypotheses in this research are outlined and examined: (1) There is a positive correlation between students" learning interest and students" reading skill, (2) there is a positive correlation between structure mastery and reading skill, (3) there is a positive correlation between students" learning interest and students" structure mastery simultaneously and students" reading skill.

Based on the hypotheses above, the purpose of this research is to find the correlation between: (1) learning interest and reading skill; (2) structue mastery and reading skill; and (3) learning interest and structure mastery simultaneously, and reading skill.

RESEARCH METHOD

Related to the objectives of the study, the method used in this is correlational study. According to Purwanto (2007: 177) "Correlation method is method or research which involves one or more variables with one or more other variables." The reason of choosing this method is the researcher wants to know the level of correlation between two or more variables.

The correlation coefficient can range from -1 to +1. If the coefficient results negative numbers, it means that there is negative correlation or inversely. But if the correlation index is a positive number, it means there is a positive correlation or directly proportional (Sudjana: 2009: 78). There are two kinds of variables in this research, namely dependent variable and independent variable. The dependent variable is reading skill (Y), while the independent variables are students" learning interest(X_1) and structure mastery (X_2). The researcher examined the correlation between students" learning interest and students" reading skill. After that, she examined the correlation between students" structure mastery and students" reading skill. Finally, she examined the correlation between students" learning interest, students" structure mastery simultaneously, and students" reading skill.

The writer chose all of the eleventh grade students as the population. There are eleven classes. The sample of this research consists of 36 students. The students come from class XI MIA 6. The writer uses cluster random sampling to choose the sample.

The researcher used test to get the data of the structure mastery and reading skill. The type of test is objective test. In this research, researcher used questionnaire to know whether the participants" learning interest.

The researcher used descriptive statistics to describe the basic features of the data in a research. Descriptive statistics provides simple summaries about the sample and the measures. Descriptive statistics includes statistical procedures that is used to describe the data. It involves mean, mode, median, and standard deviation.

The next step is analyzing Normality, Simple Linear Regression, Multiple Linear

Regression, and Correlation. To find out the normality of the sample, the researcher used the formula $( ) ( )$. After that, to find out the Significance of Regression the researcher used formula $\overline{\quad}$. Then, to find out the Linearity of Regression the researcher used formula $\underline{\quad}$.

To test the first and second hypotheses, the researcher computed the correlation between the first independent variable (learning interest) and the dependent variable (reading skill), and the second independent variable (structure mastery) and the dependent variable (reading skill). The researcher used the simple correlation technique using the product moment formula. The formula is as follows:

$$\frac{( ) ( )}{\sqrt{* ( ) + * ( ) +}}$$

Meanwhile, to find out the significance of correlation coefficient, the researcher used T-test formula as follows:
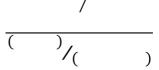
$$\frac{\sqrt{\quad}}{\sqrt{\quad}}$$

Then, to test the third hypothesis of the study, the researcher computed and analyzed the correlation between three variables, namely learning interest, structure mastery, and reading skill. The researcher used Multiple Correlation Technique. The formula as follows:

$$\sqrt{\frac{\overline{\quad\quad}}{\underline{\quad\quad}}}$$

Further, to know whether the coefficient of R_{y12} significant or not, the researcher used the formula of regression line as follows

$$\frac{\quad /\quad}{(\quad) / (\quad)}$$

After measuring multiple correlation, the researcher used F test, then the result is consulted to F-table to know it is significant or not. If F_o is higher than F_t for $\alpha = 0.05$, the coefficient of multiple correlation is significant.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this part of the research, the correlation between students" learning interest and reading skill, the correlation between students" structure mastery and reading skill, and the correlation between

students" learning interest and structure mastery simultaneously, and reading skill were presented. Before analysing the data using Product Moment Formula and Multiple Linear Regressions, the researcher tests the normality of the data. The results showed that the data of participants' learning interest, structure mastery, and reading skill are normally distributed. So, the next statistical tests in this research could be applied. The result shows that the regression is linear and significant. Therefore, the rise and the fall of students" learning interest and structure mastery are followed linearly by the rise and the fall of student"s reading skill.

The first finding came from the correlation between students" learning interest and reading skill. Based on the computation of linearity and significance of regression test of students" learning interest (X_1) and reading skill (Y), the result is linear and significant. The computation showed that the value of F_o ($F_{obtained}$) is 0.66 (Appendix 41). Then, the value of F_t (F_{table}) for df 23 and 11 at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ is 2.61. Because F_o (0.66) is lower than F_t (2.61), it can be concluded that the regression is linear. Meanwhile, the computation showed that the value of F_o is 15.16. The value of F_t for df 1 and 34 at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ is 4.13. Because F_o (15.16) is higher that F_t (4.13), it can be concluded that the regression is significant. It is also showed that the value of coefficient a = 51.434 and b = 0.354. Because the equation is linear and significant so it can be used to predict the correlation between students" learning interest (X_1) and reading skill (Y); it showed that the mean of reading skill (Y) would increase 0.354 if the students" learning interest (X_1) increased one score in the constant score of 51.434.

When examining the simple correlations associated with the regressions, the researcher noted that performance of students" learning interest was significantly related with performance of reading skill (r = 0.555, $p= 0.05$). Then, it is being calculated to the t-value, the value of t_o (t obtained) is 3.89. The value of t_t (t table) at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ for n=36 is 2.03. Because t_o (3.89) is higher than t_t (2.03) or $t_o > t_t$, it can be said that the coefficient of correlation (r) is significant. In other words, it means that the null hypotheses (H_o) is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between learning interest (X_1) and reading skill (Y). The positive correlation indicates that the students" reading skill will increase or decrease following the students" learning interest. It is also found that the coefficient of determination between X_1 and Y is $(0.555)^2$ x 100%. It means that 30.84% variation of reading skill (Y) is influenced by learning interest (X_1) and 69.16% is influenced by other factors.

The second finding is the correlation between structure mastery and reading skill. Based on the computation of linearity and significance of regression test of structure mastery (X_2) and reading skill (Y), the result is linear and significant. The computation showed that the value of F_o ($F_{obtained}$) is 0.66. Then, the value of F_t (F_{table}) for df 23 and 11 at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ is 2.61. Because F_o (0.66) is lower than F_t (2.61), it can be concluded that the regression is linear.

The computation showed that the value of F_o is 4.73. The computation can be seen in Appendix 42. The value of F_t for df 1 and 34 at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ is 4.13. Because F_o (4.73) is higher that F_t (4.13), it can be concluded that the regression is significant. Because the

equation is linear and significant, it can used to predict the correlation between structure mastery(X_2) and reading skill (Y); it showed that the mean of reading skill(Y) would increase 0.233 if the structure mastery(X_2) increased one score in the constant score of 68.276.

The result showed that the correlation coefficient is (r = 0.349, p= 0.05)considered as a positive correlation. Then, it is calculated to the t-value, the value of t_o (t obtained) is 2.17. The value of t_t (t table) at the level of significance α = 0.05 for n=36 is 2.03. Because t_o (2.17) is higher than t_t (2.03) or $t_o > t_t$, it can be concluded that the coefficient of correlation (r) is significant. In other words, it means that the null hypotheses (H_o) is rejected. Therefore, the conclusion is that there is a positive correlation between structure mastery (X_2) and reading skill (Y). The positive correlation indicates that the students" reading skill will increase or decrease following the students" structure mastery. It is also found that the coefficient of determination between X_2 and Y is $(0.349)^2$ x 100%. It means that 12.23% variation of reading skill (Y) is influenced by structure mastery (X_2) and 87.77% is influenced by other factors.

Based on the computation of multiple correlation analysis of X_1 and X_2 and Y, the value of coefficient of correlation (R_{y12}) is 0.561. Then, it is calculated to the F-value, the value of F_o (F obtained) is 7.593. The value of F_t (F table) at the level of significance α = 0.05 with degree of freedom (df) 2 and 33 is 3.284. Because F_o (7.593) is higher that $F_{t(2,33)}$ (3.284) or $F_o > F_t$, it can be concluded that the coefficient of correlation is significant. In other words, it means that the null hypotheses (H_o) is rejected. Therefore, the conclusion is that there is a positive correlation between learning interest (X_1) and structure mastery

(X_2) simultaneously, and reading skill (Y). The coefficient of determination (R^2) is (0.3151). It means that 31.51% variation of reading skill (Y) is influenced by learning interest (X_1) and structure mastery (X_2) and 68.49% is influenced by other factors.

In terms of reading, learning interest is important in developing reading skill. Readers who have learning interest in reading will have high curiosity. Their curiosity motivates them to be more active to read and get information they need. They will note the difficult vocabularies to help them understand the text. Moreover, they will highlight and underline the main idea of the text to get the meaning of the text. Besides, readers who have learning interest will be able to choose the appropiate strategies to gain the information they need. Learning interest also influences the use of learning strategies and choices for the direction and duration of attention. It is supported by Renninger (2000) in Eidswick (2009) who says that interest enhances the ability to attend and find meaning, set goals, and use effective learning strategies. It means that learning interest will improve the abilities that are needed to achieve the purpose of reading. Moreover, students who have learning interest in reading will do their reading task wholeheartedly. They will have persistance to comprehend the text well by asking and answering spesific questions during reading. The readers also spend more time in reading because they are interested. Is is also stated by Hidi (2011) in Eidswick (2009), individual displays more persistance, engagement, and positive effect toward task that they are interested in. It means that learning interest has positive influence in reading. So, if readers have great learning interest in learning especially reading, it will develop their reading skill.

Grammar becomes the important component in reading that should be

mastered by the students. Grammar defines and explains the rule that is used in a text. According to Penny (2000) in Chang (2011) " grammar is a set of rules that defines how words (or part of words) are combined or changed to form acceptable units of meaning within language." It means that grammar is a rule or system which helps the reader to understand what makes words, sentences, and paragraphs clear in reading passage. Grammar also helps the reader understand how those words and sentences are combined into meaningful passage. Structure mastery allows the readers to have detailed reading comprehension, deepen their understanding, and increase their reading speed. By having knowledge of grammar, the students will be able to analyze the structure which is used in the reading passage. Besides, grammar helps the students to identify the patterns, the subject, predicate, and object of the sentences structure; identify the tenses that are used in the sentences and the text; identify the purpose of the text; identify the context clues; and so on. It is supported by Widodo (2006: 122) "In reading, grammar enables learners to comprehend sentence interrelationship in a paragraph, a passage, and a text." It can be said that by having grammar knowledge, the students will be able to analyze the patterns and structure of the text, and then they will be able to construct the meaning of the text. Without structure or grammar mastery, students will have difficulty to understands the function and the meaning of sentences in the reading passage. So, to avoid the misunderstanding in comprehending and understanding the reading passage, students should master the structure or grammar and improve it to comprehend the text well.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that there are two aspects affecting reading skill namely: learning interest and structure mastery. Reading skill is the ability to use mind, thought, and ideas in constructing meaning of written language to get an information or message. The first aspect that affects someone to read is learning interest. Students who have learning interest will have persistance to be more active in comprehending the text. They will enjoy and more active in finding the words meaning, noting the detail informations and the sequence ideas, and so on. It is supported by Krapp (1999) in Hidi (2001) " Interest seemed to motivate readers to go beyond the surface structure of the texts and focus on the main ideas and their underlying meaning." So, the students who have learning interest will be motivated to do a deep analyzing, such as identifying the structure of the text, noting some details, finding main idea, and so on. Those abilities are required in reading for the reader to comprehend the text well and for the better skill.

To be able to obtain all of those abilities, having high learning interest is not enough for the students. The students also need structure mastery to help and guide them to analyze the text. Structure mastery helps the students to identify patterns, subject, object, and the predicate of the sentences structure. Besides, structure mastery also helps the students to identify the purpose of the text and the context clues. If the students have good structure mastery, students will be able to identify the parts of speech and its function in a sentence. Besides, they will be able to identify the tenses and their function in the text. Also they will be able to find the meaning of unfamiliar words by using context clues. As stated by Jung (2009: 33) "the abilities to identify syntactic roles of words, dissect sentences into meaningful chunks, and recognize the syntactic structure of a sentence seem to contribute to the

construction of meaning from the text." It means using those abilities, it will be easier for the students to analyze and identify the structure of the text. Then, those abilities will help the students to get the main ideas and the students will be able to construct the appropiate meaning of the text. Without those abilities, it will be difficult for the students to comprehend the text. If the students master those abilities, they will be able to understand and comprehend the text well.

From the explanation above, it can be noted that learning interest and structure mastery can be the determinant factors for developing reading skill. Students who have high learning interest will have better reading skill than those who do not. The students who have good structure mastery will also be able to understand the text well and improve their reading skill. If learning interest and structure mastery are improved, the reading skill wil be better.

CONCLUSION AND SSUGGESTION

The empirical analysis shows that there is a positive correlation between students" learning interest and students" reading skill, there is a positive correlation between students" structure mastery and students" reading skill, and there is a positive correlation between students" learning interest, students" structure mastery simultaneously, and students" reading skill at the eleventh grade of SMA Negeri 1 Sukoharjo in the academic year of 2014/2015.

The first suggestion, for the teacher, they should be aware that there are many factors affecting students" reading skill such as: learning interest and structure mastery. In order to develop students" reading skill, the teacher should motivate them in order to develop their learning interest by using some

strategies such as games and interesting topic in reading class. The teacher should give more time in explaining grammar materials in order to help student master the grammar.

For students, they should develop their reading skill by doing more exercises in understanding reading text. Students should develop their learning interest because it will help them to obtain better reading skill easier. They should improve their structure mastery which is very important in supporting the reading skill.

The last suggestion would be directed to other researchers. The findings of the research can be used as reference to conduct better researches which are related to students" reading skill.

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