

## A CONTRIBUTION OF HABIT IN WATCHING CARTOON FILMS AND LEXICAL MEANING MASTERY TOWARD READING SKILL

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**Abstract:** This research aims at finding the correlation between (1) habit in watching cartoon films and reading skill; (2) lexical meaning mastery and reading skill; and (3) habit in watching cartoon films, lexical meaning mastery simultaneously and reading skill. The study was carried out in August 2013 at SMA Negeri 2 Sukoharjo. The population of the study is all of the eleventh grade students in that school. This research involves 35 students taken randomly as the sample. Data are collected through questionnaire which is used to collect the data of habit in watching cartoon films and objective test which is used to collect the data of lexical meaning mastery and reading skill. The techniques used to analyze the data are Simple and Multiple Linear Regression and Correlation. The result of analysis shows that there is a positive correlation between (1) habit in watching cartoon films and reading skill; (2) lexical meaning mastery and reading skill; and (3) habit in watching cartoon films, lexical meaning mastery simultaneously and reading skill. It means that habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery cannot be neglected to improve reading skill.

**Keywords:** *habit in watching cartoon films, lexical meaning mastery, reading skill*

### INTRODUCTION

Readers read for two basic reasons: to get information and enjoyment (Nuttal: 1996). To get the information and enjoyment, the readers go through a complex process that involves the ability to recognize words, comprehend, and evaluate the meaning of written text (Heilman: 1965). To get the information from the text, the readers must comprehend the written text by interpreting sign, letters, or symbol by assigning meaning in receiving ideas and intuition from author via printed words (Petty: 1980). From the definition, it can be

concluded that reading is the process of getting information or meaning from the text. A reader understands a text if he or she is able to get the main idea of the text, understand the meaning of words, and get detail information both implicit and explicit from the text.

Furthermore, reading involves a variety skill and the main ones are recognizing the script of language, deducing the meaning, and using unfamiliar lexical items, understanding explicitly stated information, understanding information when not explicitly stated, understanding

conceptual meaning, understanding the communicative value (function) of sentences and utterances, understanding the relations within the sentences, understanding between the parts of the text through lexical cohesion devices, interpreting text by going outside it, recognizing indicators in discourse, identifying the main point or important information in a piece of discourse, distinguishing the main idea from supporting details, extracting salient points to summarize (the text an idea, etc.), selective extraction of relevant points for a text and the basic reference skills, skimming, scanning to locate specifically required information, and transcoding information to diagrammatic display (Grellet, 1984).

Based on the explanation, it can be concluded that reading skill is the ability of the reader to search, predict, and think in order to extract the required information from the text that comes from training and technique. It is an active skill that constantly involves guessing, predicting, checking, and asking oneself question. The process involves the reader, the text, the interaction between the reader and the text.

Reading involves various different skills. The researcher restricts on the five aspects of reading skills as follows: (1) reading to find main idea of the text, (2) reading to find explicit information of the text, (3) reading to interpret word meaning from the text, (4) reading to recognize implicit meaning in text, and (5) reading to find referent of pronoun in a text.

Krashen and Terrell (1995: 32) states "A large vocabulary is, of course, essential for mastery of a language. Second language acquirers know this; they carry dictionary with them, not grammar books, and regularly report that lack of vocabulary

is a major problem." It means that vocabulary is an important factor that supports language learning including reading. Nation in Prichard and Matsumoto (2011: 210) explains, "In order to understand 95% of reading content, readers have to know at least 4000 word families, including 2000 high frequency words, 570 general academic words, at least 1000 technical words, and proper low-frequency word families." Limited vocabulary will hinder reading comprehension.

Reading skill cannot be separated from vocabulary or lexis, because the reader will have difficulty in understanding the text if they do not understand the meaning of vocabulary or lexis contained in the text. Bensoussan, et al. in Prichard and Matsumoto (2011) say that when looking up a word, readers must identify the correct definition as it applies to the context in the text. The meaning that the readers find in the dictionary is called lexical meaning.

Lexical meaning is a meaning when it stands alone whether in lexeme or in affixation form, it has a constant meaning, like what the readers have read in certain dictionary. Further, Verhaar in Pateda (2001: 74) states, "... we have not to describe more about lexical semantic in here; a dictionary is an appropriate example from lexical semantic and it also contained the meaning of each words."

In line with the development of technology, there are many ways to make children interested in reading activity, not only by using printed material but also visual material such as film. Films are made of visual or images sequence in which sometimes the images speak by using sounds and written words.

Films are divided into several kinds, and among the films, cartoon films

are considered as the closest one to the children or in this case, young learners. Because of their strong characters and entertaining story, cartoon films are positioned as one of entertainment media. According to Wittich and Schuller (1962: 135), "Cartoon is pictorial representation or caricature of a person, idea, situation that is designed to influence public opinion." In addition, Poulson in *Analysis of Cartoon* (2008) says that basically a cartoon is a form of media where, using animation, characters are shown with simplified features, but still maintaining an ability to recognize. Cartoon films provide colorful and interesting pictures that can attract students' attention. Besides entertaining, cartoon films can also be used to teach students to study since children are more likely to imitate what they see. Cartoon films combine audio and visual materials; the students can see the real objects and hear the correct English pronunciation. Moreover, with the combination of word and pictures, cartoon film can attract students' attention and interest.

Habit which is habituated routines of behavior that are repeated regularly surely makes students familiar with some components of some activity, watching cartoon films for example. When students internalize watching cartoon films as their regular activity or habit, films are probably influential aspects in order to support their English language learning including reading as one of English language skills. Ariza and Hancock (2003: 2) state "Teachers can make language input comprehensible through a variety of strategies, such as linguistic simplification, and the use of realia, visuals, pictures, graphic organizers, and other current ESOL strategies." It might be beneficial to their reading skill dealing with

words in a sentences since films are made of visual or images sequence as a symbolic language which has meaning inside each image presented in which sometimes the images speak by using sounds and written words. Habit in watching cartoon films can be used as one of the media to increase students' interest in reading.

If the children watch films regularly as one of their habit, they can acquire their vocabulary (word meaning) by making sense of words and expressions through context which is provided. The children can also train their language acquisition through this activity. Language acquisition occurs when learners receive message that they can understand. Acquisition of language is a subconsciously process of which the individual is not aware. One is unaware of the process as it is happening and when the new knowledge is acquired: the acquirer generally does not realize that he or she possesses any new knowledge (Krashen: 2003).

Habit of watching cartoon films is believed to be able to enrich students' vocabulary and it can be used as one of the way to increase student's interest in reading by using audiovisual by making sense of words and expressions through context which is provided in the form of film setting and situation. Hence, instead of merely being an entertaining activity, habit in watching cartoon films can be considered as one of certain habits which aid learners' reading skill which can be utilized as learning resource for reading activity in an English class.

Based on the rationale above, the hypotheses of the research can be formulated as follows: (1) there is a positive correlation between habit in watching cartoon films and reading skill; (2) there is a

positive correlation between lexical meaning mastery and reading skill; and (3) there is a positive correlation between habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery simultaneously and reading skill.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Sukoharjo, which is located at Jl. Raya Sala-Kartasura, Mendungan Pabelan Kartasura. The population of this research is the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Sukoharjo in the academic year of 2013/2014. The sample of this research is 35 students. The research is conducted in August 2013.

Related to the objectives of the study, the method used in this study is correlational study. Hallonen and Santrock (1999) define correlational study as a method to describe the relationship between two or more events or characteristics. The researcher used this method because she wanted to know the level of correlation between habit in watching cartoon films, lexical meaning mastery, and reading skill. There are three possible results of a correlation study: a positive correlation, a negative correlation, and no correlation.

In this research there are two kinds of variables, namely independent variable and dependent variable. The independent variables are habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery, while the dependent variable is reading skill.

The researcher used questionnaire and test as the techniques to collect the data of the study. Nunan (1995: 231) states "Questionnaire is an instrument for collecting the data, usually in written form, consisting of open and/or closed questions and other probes requiring a response from subject." In this study the researcher used

questionnaire to measure the data of habit in watching cartoon films consists of 50 items in the try-out test and 29 items in the test. The researcher used the positive and negative items.

Beside questionnaire, another techniques used to collect the data is test. A test can be defined as a systematic procedure for observing one's behavior and describing it with the aid of numerical devices or category system (Cronbach in Syakur: 1995). The researcher used test to measure the data of lexical meaning mastery and reading skill. The type of test is objective test.

The first is test on lexical meaning mastery. It is used to collect the data about the students' lexical meaning ability mastery. This test consists of 60 items in the try-out test and 35 items in the test, which covers word meaning, the relation between lexemes such as synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, homonymy, and polysemy.

The second is test on reading skill to collect the data about the students' reading skill. The reading skill consists of 50 items in the try-out test and 35 items in the test. The items covers finding the main idea of the text, explicit information of the text, implicit information of the text, the inference in the text, and the meaning of words.

In analyzing the data, the researcher tested the three hypotheses of the study. Product Moment Formula is used to test the first and the second hypotheses which say that there is a positive correlation between habit in watching cartoon films and reading skill, and there is a positive correlation between lexical meaning mastery and reading skill. Besides, to know whether the coefficient correlation between X and Y is significant or not, the researcher uses t test

formula. The correlation coefficient is significant if the value of  $t$  observation ( $t_o$ ) is higher than  $t$  table ( $t_t$ ), or  $t_o > t_t$ .

Multiple Linear Correlation is used to test the third hypothesis which says that there is a positive correlation between habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery toward reading skill. Besides, to find out whether or not the coefficient of  $R_y(1,2)$  is significant, the researcher uses  $F$  test formula. The correlation coefficient is significant if the value of  $F$  observation ( $F_o$ ) is higher than  $F$  table ( $F_t$ ), or  $F_o > F_t$ .

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data of habit in watching cartoon films are collected by using questionnaire. From the questionnaire, it is obtained that the highest score is 103. It indicates that the students have high automatic routines of watching cartoon films that are repeated regularly in certain duration without directly thinking consciously. While the lowest score is 72, it indicates that the students have low automatic routines of watching cartoon films that are repeated regularly in certain duration. The range between the highest score and the lowest score is 31. The mean of the student's score in habit in watching cartoon films that comes from adding up all of the student's habit in watching cartoon film's scores and then dividing this sum by the total number of scores is 84.27. The mode is 83.5. It is the most frequent score of student's habit in watching cartoon films in a distribution. While the median of the student's score in habit in watching cartoon films is 83.77. It is the middle value of student's habit in watching cartoon films scores.

The data of lexical meaning mastery are collected by using test. It is obtained that the highest score is 32. It indicates that the students have high understanding of the meaning of lexeme and also the relation between lexeme such as synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy, homonymy and polysemy. While the lowest score is 24, it indicates that the students have low understanding of the meaning of lexeme and also the relation between lexeme such as synonymy, hyponymy, antonymy, homonymy and polysemy. The range between the highest score and the lowest score is 8. The mean of the student's score in lexical meaning mastery that comes from adding up all of the student's lexical meaning mastery's scores and then dividing this sum by the total number of scores is 28.95. The mode is 29.78. It is the most frequent score of student's lexical meaning mastery in a distribution. The median of the student's score in lexical meaning mastery is 29.22. It is the middle value of student's lexical meaning mastery scores.

The last is the data of reading skill which are collected by using test. It is obtained that the highest score is 31. It indicates that the students have high ability to search, predict, and think to extract the required information from the text. While the lowest score is 23, it indicates that the students have low ability to search, predict, and think to extract the required information from the text. The range between the highest score and the lowest score is 8. The mean of the student's score in reading skill that comes from adding up all of the student's reading skill's scores and then dividing this sum by the total number of scores is 27.9. The mode is 27.92. It is the most frequent score of student's reading skill in a distribution. The median of the student's

score in reading skill is 27.91. It is the middle value of student's reading skill scores.

The researcher used Pearson Product Moment Formula to test the first hypothesis. In the first hypothesis says that there is a positive correlation between habit in watching cartoon films ( $X_1$ ) and reading skill (Y). The correlation analysis shows that the correlation coefficient ( $r_{x_1y}$ ) between habit in watching cartoon films ( $X_1$ ) and reading skill (Y) is 0.95. After being calculated to the t-value, the value of  $t_o$  (t-obtained) is 18.09. The value of  $t_t$  (t-table) at the level of significance  $\alpha=0.05$  for  $n=35$  is 1.70. Because  $t_o$  (18.09) >  $t_t$  (1.70), the coefficient correlation is significant. It means that  $H_o$  is rejected. So, there is a positive correlation between habit in watching cartoon films ( $X_1$ ) and reading skill (Y). The coefficient of determination between  $X_1$  and Y is 0.9025. It means that 90.25% variance of reading skill (Y) is determined by habit in watching cartoon films ( $X_1$ ) and 9.75% variance is determined by other factors.

The second hypothesis in this research says that there is a positive correlation between lexical meaning mastery ( $X_2$ ) and reading skill (Y). To test the hypothesis, the researcher analyzes the collect data by using Pearson Product Moment Formula. The correlation analysis shows that the correlation coefficient ( $r_{x_2y}$ ) between lexical meaning mastery ( $X_2$ ) and reading skill (Y) is 0.98. After being calculated to the t-value, the value of  $t_o$  (t-obtained) is 29.55. The value of  $t_t$  (t-table) at the level of significance  $\alpha=0.05$  for  $n=35$  is 1.70. Because  $t_o$  (29.55) >  $t_t$  (1.70), the coefficient correlation is significant. It means that  $H_o$  is rejected. So, there is a positive correlation between lexical meaning

mastery ( $X_2$ ) and reading skill (Y). The coefficient of determination between  $X_2$  and Y is 0.960. It means that 96.04% variance of reading skill (Y) is determined by lexical meaning mastery ( $X_2$ ) and 3.96% variance is determined by other factors.

In the third hypothesis, the researcher analyzed the collected data by using the Multiple Linear Regression Formula. This hypothesis says that there is a positive correlation between habit in watching cartoon films ( $X_1$ ), lexical meaning mastery ( $X_2$ ) simultaneously and reading skill (Y). The multiple linear regression analysis shows that the coefficients of  $\alpha_0$ ,  $\alpha_1$ ,  $\alpha_2$  are 2.53, 0.07, and 0.67. Therefore, the multiple linear regression equation of Y on  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  becomes  $\hat{Y} = 2.53 - 0.07X_1 + 0.67X_2$ . The value of  $F_o$  is 526.91 and the distribution table ( $F_t$ ) with the degree of freedom (df) 2 and 32 at the level of significance  $\alpha=0.05$  is 3.32. It is obvious that  $F_o > F_t$ ; it means that the regression of  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$ , and Y is significant.

The multiple correlation analysis shows that the correlation coefficient  $R_o$  between habit in watching cartoon films ( $X_1$ ) and lexical meaning mastery ( $X_2$ ) simultaneously and reading skill (Y) is 0.98. After being calculated to the F-value, the value of  $F_o$  (F-obtained) is 526.91. The value of  $F_t$  at the level of significance  $\alpha=0.05$  and df (degree of freedom) 2:32 is 3.32. Because  $F_o$  (526.91) >  $F_t$  (3.32), the coefficient correlation is significant. It means that  $H_o$  is rejected. So, there is a positive correlation between habit in watching cartoon films ( $X_1$ ) and lexical meaning mastery ( $X_2$ ) simultaneously and reading skill (Y).  $R^2$  (0.97) is coefficient of determination. It means that 97% variance

of Y is determined by  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  and 3% variance of Y is determined by other factors.

The result of the correlation analysis between two independent variables (habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery) and one dependent variable (reading skill) is a positive and significant. The correlation between habit in watching cartoon films, lexical meaning mastery, and reading skill can be illustrated as follows.

Through habit in watching cartoon films, students are helped to enhance their interest in reading activity. When students internalize watching cartoon films as their regular activity or habit, films are probably influential aspects in order to support their English language learning including reading as one of English language skills. It might be beneficial to their reading skill dealing with words in a sentences since films are made of visual or images sequence as a symbolic language which has meaning inside each image presented in which sometimes the images speak by using sounds and written words.

Kemp (1963: 3) states that "Process during watching cartoon films as an audiovisual material includes some aspects which are beneficial to reading skill such as increasing understanding of a topic, add interest to a subject, lengthening the retention time of information, teach a skill effectively, contribute to a desirable attitude, stimulate people to action, offer experiences not easily obtained in other ways.". Cartoon films can also help students in reading skill by the subtitle that is available in that cartoon film, so that it can make the students easily understand the story of the cartoon films, because they can read the plot of the story on the subtitle that is available. Besides that, they can also watch the motion of the character or events in these films.

Schuller (1962: 3) say "The combination of motions pictures as visual stimuli and audio stimuli in cartoon films can present language more comprehensively."

Children who frequently watch films or are familiar with them tend to recall words better and longer than those who only read ordinary textbooks. Habit in watching cartoon films can be used as one of the media to increase students' interest in reading. Cartoon films also help them to improve their vocabulary knowledge which is useful to support their reading skill by making sense of words and expressions through context which is provided in the form of film setting and situation. Hence, instead of merely being an entertaining activity, habit in watching cartoon films can be considered as one of certain habits which aid learners' reading skill which can be utilized as learning resource for reading activity in an English class.

Qiang and Wolff in Riana (2012: 47) believe that "Movies/ films are able to enrich students' English vocabulary and help students to pick up idiomatic use of words and phrases." They will more easily and quickly get new or unfamiliar vocabulary from it, because cartoon films combine audio and visual materials and it provide the real context of English matters so that the students will understand in what circumstance the words and expressions should be placed. They give audio stimuli and visual stimuli to the viewers by presenting the motion pictures and the narration/pronunciation all together. Marseli in Arsanti (2000) states that audiovisual media, in this case cartoon films, conveys the ideas by presenting the concrete object. Learners, who are exposed to visual clues, might still interpret the meaning better through the translation, especially when the

images presented do not clearly indicate the meaning of what the speakers intend to convey (Guichon and McLornan in Mukti, 2012). Children, therefore, can see the real object and can hear right expressions in English. It can be said that students' vocabulary which has been significant aspect to aid reading skill is appropriately enriched through habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery at the same time.

Simultaneously, through lexical meaning mastery, students are helped to understand the content of the text easily since lexical meaning is one of the important aspect in reading skill. Commonly there are some lexis in the films that are unfamiliar. With the visual aspect in film, it can help the students easy to know the story of the films, by seeing the picture related to the lexis. Vocabulary or lexis is one element of the language that should be learned and thought. Laufer in Prichard and Matsumoto (2011: 210) found that "Learners with knowledge of 3.000 word families, or about 5.000 individual words, were significantly better readers than those with a 2.000 word vocabulary." It cannot be denied that it will be hard to master language without understanding a certain number of vocabularies or lexis.

From explanation above, it can be assumed that habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery can be determinant factors for improving reading skill. If habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery are developed, the reading skill will be better.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

From the hypothesis testing in chapter IV, it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between habit in

watching cartoon films and reading skill, lexical meaning mastery and reading skill, and habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery simultaneously and reading skill. In other words, it can be said that the habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery are the important variables to give the contribution to reading skill.

It is considered that habit in watching cartoon films is the important aspects that influence reading skill. The teachers can use cartoon films as one of the way/ media to make the students not bored with the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The teachers should choose cartoon films that suitable with student's interest and also appropriate with the topic of discussions. Teachers can shows the trailer of the films first before asking the students to watch the whole of the films as an application in using top-down approach in order that the students could have their own expectation of the films and it can also activate their background knowledge of the films. After that, the teacher asks the students to watch the whole of the film while they confirms about their expectation of this films. The teacher should choose cartoon films equipped with English subtitle, because it can also improve the students' lexical meaning mastery which is beneficial for their reading skill too.

In order to improve the students' lexical meaning mastery the teachers should give the students various reading text, for example reading text which is related to recent news or topic which has a close relation with the student's interest, so the students can easily to remember the vocabulary. The teacher can use bottom up approach in reading process to improve the students' lexical meaning mastery by asking



them to identifying the meaning of words in the sentence. It is very important for the students to understand the smallest units from the text first like vocabulary to understand the meaning of whole text.

Based on the conclusion and implication above, the researcher would like to give some suggestions to the teachers as follows: (1) The teachers could use various media like mind mapping, cards, films, song and so on in teaching learning process, because the students can memorize words better if there is visual aids that can support the students to enrich their vocabulary, rather than by using printed materials; (2) The teachers may use cartoon films in English in teaching learning process that suitable with the topic discussion, students' interest, and does not break our polite value, by asking the students to analyze the films and ask them to make their own list of words that are new to them and than asking them to find the definition. Beside that the teacher could presenting a films with English subtitles to the students. It helps them understand the meaning of the spoken English they are hearing, as well as improve students' reading skill since reading skill is very essential in English learning.

For the students, the researcher give some suggestions as follows: (1) The students should read extensively; 2) Students should expose themselves to English in a way that they enjoy like watching cartoon films since this activity is very influential to enrich their lexical meaning mastery that is very useful for reading skill; (3) With their own willingness, students should build habit like watching cartoon films in their everyday life as out-of class learning strategy in order to support their English learning.

The researcher realizes that the result of this study is far from being perfect. The researcher hopes that there will be other research that are willing to conduct the same kind study, it is suggested to investigate the other factors for the sake of accomplishing the list of internal and external factors which influence reading skill in particular or the other language skills which are not investigated in this study, because there are many other aspects, besides habit in watching cartoon films and lexical meaning mastery, could influence students' reading skill and other language skills

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