

**A Correlational Study between the Students' Reading Habit of English Texts,  
Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Skill**

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**Abstract**

The study is aimed to find out the correlation between: (1) reading habit of English texts; (2) vocabulary mastery; and (3) reading skill of the eleven grade students at one of senior high school in Sragen, both partially and simultaneously. The method used in this study is correlation study. This study used test and questionnaire to collect the data. There are two different types of test: objective test and oral test. The techniques used to analyze the data were Pearson Product Moment and Multiple Correlations. The results of the study showed that in the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$ : (1) Students' reading habit of English texts correlated positively with reading skill ( $r_{x1y} = 0.5754$ ); (2) Students' vocabulary mastery correlated positively with reading skill ( $r_{x2y} = 0.6574$ ); and (3) Students' reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery simultaneously correlated positively towards reading skill ( $R_{x1x2y} = 0.726$ ). This research showed that reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery contribute to the students' reading skill. Both reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery need to be considered in improving reading skill. However, reading skill does not completely depend on those two variables.

**Keywords:** *Correlation, Reading Habit of English Texts, Vocabulary Mastery, Reading skill*

**INTRODUCTION**

English is a foreign language for Indonesian students. Students are expected to learn four languages: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These abilities will assist students in communicating in English. Uma and Ponnambala (2001) agree, stating that mastering

language skills determines students' communicative competence in the target language. Reading is one of the language skills that students must master at almost all levels of education. It is because reading is the primary concern of English materials, such as texts, books, articles, journals, and others.

Reading literacy issues can be found in Indonesia. According to the Progressive International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) by Wiedartati et al. (2016), Indonesia ranked 45th out of 48 countries in reading ability among fourth-grade students in 2011. Meanwhile, the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) said Indonesia ranked 64th out of 65 countries in 2012 for children aged 15 and over. According to National Library data from 2015, only 10% of Indonesian children over the age of ten are interested in reading. The above results show that most Indonesians do not fond to read, whereas, it is the first step to build reading habit.

Reading has so many benefits in the learning process. Harmer (2007) states reading is useful for language acquisition. Students can get new knowledge by reading the materials in the book that is taught at school. Besides that, they also can read for pleasure. For instance, they can read magazines, novels, or newspapers to amuse themselves. So, reading can be used both in the academic and in a non-academic context, for getting knowledge and getting pleasure or other purposes. It is supported by Cunningham and Stanovich (1998), who report that reading both inside and outside the school has a good impact on their vocabulary, academic achievements, general knowledge, reading speed and fluency

Knowing that reading is essential in the learning process, various factors influence one's reading ability. Vocabulary mastery is one of these factors (Roehrig & Guo, 2011). When pupils master vocabulary, they will be able to understand the meaning of each sentence and paragraph in the text as a whole. According to Lehr (2004: 1), vocabulary involves knowledge of words and their meanings in both oral and written language, as well as in productive and receptive forms utilized in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Vocabulary can be described as the knowledge of words and their meanings in both spoken and written form. Oral words are vocabulary words recognized and used by the learner while listening and speaking. Meanwhile, written words include vocabulary terms that the learner identifies and employs in reading and writing

Another aspect that influences one's reading skill is the habit of reading English texts. Students' habit of reading English texts is an important activity for students. Reading habits provide numerous advantages to students. The reading habit is a powerful and long-lasting method for improving student achievement in school. Students will gain knowledge and improve their attention and concentration as a result of making reading a habit. A study by Jack (2008), the benefits of reading habit are as follows: 1) reading habit makes the mind work effectively, 2) reading habit encourages learners to have a positive mind, 3) reading habit creates academic curiosity, and 4) reading habit helps the reader develop a good vocabulary.

A study by Furqon (2013) found out that vocabulary mastery has positive effect towards reading skill. This research also confirmed the effect of students' reading habits on their reading skill. Darajat et al. (2020) and Adriyani (2019) show that There is a significant relationship between pupils' reading habits and their reading comprehension. Wahyudi (2016) shows contradicting findings that there is no statistically significant relationship between reading habit and reading skill. due to three factors: 1) students' misperception of good reading habits, 2) students' preference for reading with pleasure, and 3) students' preference for reading for pleasure, despite the fact that the exams for this study were obtained from reading for academic purposes materials. Similarly, Sulaiman and Harpiansi (2018) reveal low correlations between reading habit and reading skill. This discrepancy requires further investigation. So, the purpose of this study is to fill that gap while also include another variable, namely vocabulary mastery.

As previously indicated, research have confirmed the relationship between reading habit and reading skill, as well as vocabulary mastery and reading skill. However, information about the contribution of both reading habit of English texts, vocabulary master to reading skill in the EFL contexts, it appears to be minimally provided. Therefore, this article aims to verify the contribution of reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery both partially and simultaneously towards students' reading skill and the extent to which these two variables influence to reading skill.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Reading Habit of English texts**

Reading habit relates to the behaviour that indicates individual reading preferences and inclinations. (Chettri & Rout, 2013). It means that an individual organized his or her reading in a way that suited his or her preferences. Similarly, Aramide (2015) identifies a reading habit as individual behaviour that reflects the reader's preference for reading. Reading habits are frequently measured in terms of the amount of reading materials, frequency of reading, and average time spent reading (Wagner, 2002). He also states that reading habit is a repeated activities. Repeatedly means someone who does an activity at a regular time. It can be every day, every three days, or every week and it depends on someone who does it (Ismail & Elias, 2009). Besides, Shen (2016) categorizes reading habit as how many the number of books read, how much time is spent on reading, and what does read. It is clear from the definition above that a reading habit is an activity that expresses people's desire to read a text for the aim of gaining knowledge and is done frequently or on a regular basis. Students that have good reading habits will get the benefit of more insight.

Reading does not always imply reading books, people may read a variety of texts daily, either purposefully or unintentionally. Aebersold and Field (1997) state Reading texts

can be as short as a few words, as long as a single sentence, or as long as thousands of words that compose hundreds of sentences. Brown (2007) mentions many types of written language genres that can be referred to as types of texts for reading input.

### **Vocabulary Mastery**

The collection of words that everyone knows is known as vocabulary. Vocabulary consists of verbs, adverbs, nouns, prepositions, etc (Linse, 2005). Ur (1991) states that vocabulary refers to being taught in a foreign language. He also explains aspects that should be taught in mastering words. The aspects include the knowledge of form (pronunciation and spelling) grammar, aspect of meaning (denotation, appropriateness, connotation), collocation, word formation and meaning relationship (superordinates, antonyms, hyponyms, co-hyponyms, synonym and translation). In addition, Watkins (2005) states aspects of vocabulary included the form of words (spelling, pronunciation, and word formation), the meaning of words, word class, collocation, appropriateness, and grammatical consideration.

Mastery refers to reaching a certain level of understanding of specific content (Guskey & Anderman, 2014). Mastery can be defined as a level of comprehension in which a student demonstrates skill in a subject area as determined by a recognized standard. Hornby (1984) defines mastery as skill or knowledge. It means that students apply their knowledge of a specific subject. Mastery is defined as thorough understanding or application of the subject or instrument (Swannel, 1994). In conclusion, mastery can be defined as students' ability to use skill and knowledge on a certain subject.

Based on those statements, it can be inferred that vocabulary mastery is a complete knowledge of a list or a set of words that an individual knows including its form (pronunciation and spelling), meanings (synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, translation), grammar, and word formation.

### **Reading Skill**

The ability to understand text, analyze its information, and accurately interpret the author's statements and intentions is defined as a reading skill (McKee, 2012). Hans and Hans (2015) define reading skill as understanding the text. This comprehension is derived from written words and their extending knowledge beyond the text. Bulut (2017) argues reading skill relates to thinking and generating meaning before, during, and after reading. He also notes that one of the most crucial language abilities is reading, which requires interpreting and recognizing details included in written material. Reading skill means an ability to interpret information from a text Grabe and Stoller (2011). They also state reading skill is very complex that involves several processing skills that are combined in an efficient combination.

Thus, from the explanations above, it can be said that reading skill refers to the thinking process of comprehending ideas and extracting the necessary information from the text that used the reader's experience and background knowledge.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a correlational research design. The correlational method is a statistical instrument for determining the relationship between two or more variables (Creswell, 2012). The researcher wants to determine the level of correlation between two or more variables based on the correlation coefficient's quantitative statistical analysis. The research was carried out at the second grade of Senior High School in Sragen in the academic year 2022/2023. The sample of this research was taken by random sampling. Creswell (2012) stated that Random sampling is a technique conducted in such a way that every person in a certain population has a similar chance of being selected. From the lottery, the 36 students of class XI G became the sample of the try out. Then, 33 students of class XI E became the sample of the test. The writer used questionnaire and test as instrument to collect the data for this study. The questionnaire item instrument was used to get the data of students' reading habit of English texts, while the test item instrument was used to get the data of students' vocabulary mastery and students' reading skill. The validity and reliability of all items from each of the following instruments were tried out in this study. The validity test use the bi-serial point correlation formula, while the reliability test employs the Kuder-Richardson formula for multiple choice instruments (the discrete score) and Alpha Croanbach for questionnaire instruments (continuum score).

## RESEARCH FINDINS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the questionnaire of the students' reading habit of English texts, it was found that. The students' best score was 117, and their lowest score was 72, for a range of 45. It was also determined that the mean or average score is 91.015. The mode is 89.707, the median is 91.214 and the standard deviation is 9.152. Then, from the test of the students' vocabulary mastery, it was found that the students' best score was 92.7 and the lowest score was 36.3, for a range of 56.4. It was also determined that the mean or average score is 68.03. The mode is 74.20, the median is 71.70 and the standard deviation is 16.07. Meanwhile, from the test of the students' reading skill, it was found that the highest score achieved from the test was 91.4, and the lowest score was 37.1, resulting in a range of 54.3. The average or mean score is 67.85. The mode is 66.9, the median is 69.025, and the standard deviation is 46.513.

The finding of the study from testing the first hypothesis shows that there is a positive correlation between the students' reading habit of English texts and reading skill. The calculation shows that the coefficient of single correlation ( $r$ ) between the students' reading

habit of English texts ( $X_1$ ) and reading skill ( $Y$ ) is 0.5754. It is also found that the value of coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) is 0.3310. It means that that 33.10% variance in reading skill is determined by the students' reading habit of English texts and 66.90% is determined by other factors.

The result from testing the second hypothesis shows that there is a positive correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and reading skill. The calculation shows that the coefficient of single correlation ( $r$ ) between vocabulary mastery ( $X_2$ ) and reading skill ( $Y$ ) is 0.6574. It is also found the coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) is 0.4321. It means that 43.21% variance in reading skill is determined by vocabulary mastery and 56.79% is determined by other factors.

The finding of the study from testing the third hypothesis shows that there is a positive correlation between the students' reading habit of English texts, vocabulary mastery and reading skill. The calculation shows that the coefficient of multiple correlations ( $R_{x_1x_2y}$ ) between the students' reading habit of English texts ( $X_1$ ), vocabulary mastery ( $X_2$ ) simultaneously and reading skill ( $Y$ ) is 0.726. It is also found the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is 0.5278. It means 52.78% in the variance of reading skill is determined by the students' reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery, while 47.22% is determined by other factors.

### **Students' Reading Habit of English Texts Correlated Positively with Reading Skill**

According to the findings of this study, there is a positive relationship between students' reading habits of English texts and their reading skill. The positive correlation and the percentage of determination indicate that the reading habit of English texts can be a factor to improving reading skill. Reading is a skill that must be practiced continuously. Reading habit of English texts become a demand because, through routine activities, the students will implement the skill during the reading process, allowing them to progressively learn and master the skill. Reading habit of English texts and reading skill are related to each other since the activity of reading habit of English texts helps the students to expand their knowledge, increase their skill in comprehending English texts, and enable the students easily understand long English texts without numerous obstacles. The process of reading habit of English texts provides the students a chance to practice reading skill.

This discovery confirms the findings of previous research. Andriyani (2019) find that reading in English has positive effects on students reading comprehension. The students with high reading habits have better results in their reading comprehension. It can be said that both of them are synchronized with each other. In addition, Suhana & Haryudin (2017) discover that reading habits have a significant impact on reading comprehension. Other findings concerning the aspects of reading habit from this study include what students read, how frequently they read, how much time they spend reading and why they read. Only the time spent reading demonstrates a partial influence on reading comprehension among these four aspects.

To conclude, it is certain that reading habit of English texts has a close relationship with reading skill because the beneficial aspect that reading habit of English texts gives to reading skill is unavoidable.

### **Vocabulary Mastery Correlated Positively with Reading Skill**

At first, all reading materials are written and arranged by words. Reading and vocabulary are related to each other since vocabulary mastery assists the students in understanding the meaning of the sentences so that they can read the texts well. Proficiency in mastering vocabulary will make more easily for students to absorb information and comprehend the content of reading. It will help the students to understand what is meant by the words, phrases, sentences, and the whole paragraph of the text. Thus, vocabulary mastery is important for the sake of the students' understanding.

This finding supports earlier research. Lilik (2018) discovers a notable effect of grammar and vocabulary mastery on students' reading skill. Another recent empirical study had a similar notion regarding the influence of vocabulary knowledge on reading skill. It is stated that students must have an adequate mastery of the vocabulary to understand the reading skill (Fitri & Rifaat, 2021). In addition, vocabulary mastery plays a role in the development of reading skill (Bosch et.al, 2020).

In conclusion, vocabulary mastery contributes to the implementation of reading skill. Furthermore, it is obvious that Vocabulary mastery is seen as an important factor that can influence reading skill growth.

### **Students' Reading Habit of English Texts and Vocabulary Mastery simultaneously Correlated Positively towards Reading Skill**

The students' habit of reading English texts and their vocabulary mastery positively correlate with their reading skill. The combination of those two aspects together supports the enhancement of reading skill. Vocabulary is an important factor that affects reading because to have better reading, students are required to have a strong vocabulary. Peter (2018) argued vocabulary size is seen as a major factor determining reading skill. A lack of vocabulary may cause in reading difficulties, and reading difficulties may lead to problems of reading anxiety which hinders the development of reading habit. It can be shown that the reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery build favorable and beneficial relationships and contribute significantly to reading skill. Most students with high scores on the reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery can answer the reading skill questions better. As a result, the reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery assist students in reaching their goals in reading skill.

Moreover, if reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery activities keep being learned continuously and repeatedly, it will be advantageous to students' reading skill. The higher frequency of students' reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery, the higher achievement they have great reading skill. In summary, it can be said that students' reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery simultaneously support the students' reading skill.

## CONCLUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Students' Reading Habit of English Texts and Vocabulary Mastery simultaneously Correlated Positively towards Reading Skill. It indicates that the increase or decrease of reading skill is in line with the increase or the decrease of the students' reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery simultaneously. Therefore, the students should realize that the reading habit of English texts and vocabulary mastery are important factors to help them improve their reading skill.

According to the findings of this study, students' reading habits of English texts and vocabulary mastery correlate positively with their reading skill. It means that both can be employed to assist students in improving their reading skill. As a result, the student's habit of reading English texts and vocabulary mastery can be employed in the teaching and learning process, notably in the teaching and learning of reading. The teacher should plan some activities to assist students in improving their vocabulary mastery. Creating effective learning to improve vocabulary mastery expectantly makes the reading-learning process more effective. An English teacher should also inspire and urge students to read English texts. Furthermore, students must pay attention to the teacher, which improves their reading habits of English texts and vocabulary mastery. As a result, students' reading skill will improve

For students, they should have the habit of reading English texts to support their reading skill and if they already have the habit of reading English texts, increase this habit. Then students should realize that the reading habits of English texts and vocabulary mastery are important factors to help them improve their reading skill. Some suggestions for developing a regular English reading habit include: reading for at least thirty minutes each day; reading from a variety of sources (the internet, comics, magazines, novels); reading on a wide range of topics (sciences, politics, histories, etc); and being a curious reader.

For teachers, they should encourage students to read English texts to improve their reading skill. The teachers also explain the importance of reading activities so that the students are aware of reading frequently and continuously and explain the effective strategy of reading and assigning tasks relating to the subject being studied. The teachers also encourage students to develop and maintain the habit of reading English texts in their daily lives.

English teachers should help students enrich their vocabulary mastery and be creative to make them enjoy the learning. They can design an effective teaching strategy in which students actively use words to increase their vocabulary. For example, provide tasks that encourage students to discover new vocabulary and use vocabulary by adding word lists, crossword puzzles, matching projects, or other vocabulary tasks. Thus, students' vocabulary mastery can be improved.

For other researchers who would like to do similar research to this study, especially in reading skill, the researchers recommend to exploring internal and external factors that may affect the skill, and propose with better ideas, methods, or alternatives to improve reading skill. Hoping that this study will be utilized as a reference for comparable studies in the future

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