A CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' READING INTEREST AND THEIR LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE OF COLLOCATIONS TOWARDS THEIR READING ABILITY

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to identify a correlation between students' reading interest and their lexical knowledge of collocations towards their reading ability. This study was particularly aimed at: 1. to identify students' responses in reading interest, 2. to identify students' lexical knowledge of collocations, 3. to describe students' ability in reading and 4. to correlate if there is a significant correlation between students' reading interest and their lexical knowledge of collocations towards their reading ability. The design of this research was correlational research. Population of this research was 88 students of second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University. In choosing the sample, the writer used Cluster random sampling.

In relation to the objective, data to study were collected through questionnaire, lexical knowledge of collocations test and reading test. The questionnaire was used to find out the students' response in reading interest. The lexical knowledge of collocations test was used to measure student's knowledge in lexical collocations. The reading test was used to find out students' ability in reading. Then the data are correlated by using the formula to find out a correlation or not.

The result of analyzing data of this study indicated a significant correlation between the students' reading interest and their lexical knowledge of collocations towards their reading ability. More than half of the students (63.33%) had interest in reading. Then, 20% students had high knowledge in lexical knowledge of collocations, 66.67% students had moderate knowledge and 13.3 of students had low knowledge. In reading ability found that 33.33% students had high ability in reading, 36.67% students had moderate ability in reading and 30% students had low ability in reading.

Keywords: *Reading interest, lexical knowledge of collocations, reading ability*

Introduction

Language is very important in human's life. . Lie (2007:1) states that English is taught and used as foreign language in Indonesia. And today the most important to learn English is an international language and most people all over the world use it as a means of communication.

Students should master four skills in English. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Reading is one of the important skills that play role in teaching and learning process. Reading is not straightforward process of lifting the words off page. It is a complex process of problem solving in which the reader works to make sense of a text not just from the words and sentences on the page but also from the ideas, memories, and knowledge evoked by those words and sentences. Reading is an essential skill in our culture. Through reading, students practice and develop important thinking strategies such as making informed predictions, separating essential from nonessential information, forming main ideas, organizing ideas and details, gathering evidence, drawing conclusions and making interpretations, and raising questions, among others (Silver et al, 2009: 1).

Wade *et al* (2007: 8) state a large number of characteristics that contribute to interest in text-based materials and to positive learning outcomes (e.g., text recall, comprehension, attention). These characteristics include: neighborhood, importance/ value, unexpectedness (topics that have elements of surprise, unusualness, or abnormality), institutional factors, writing style (using active rather than passive constructions), themes, prior knowledge (the connection between what students know about a topic and their interest in it), story elements with goal-directed activities and human interest factors, simple descriptions of such activities (e.g., how to do the activity) and graphic aids (e.g., charts, maps, lists, quantified information).

One of major problems met by college students are they cannot read effectively and understand fully the materials assigned to them. Reading problem can partially be attributed to the fact that English is one of the most difficult languages to learn. It is made up of 43 phonemes (sounds), 26 consonant and 17 vowels but only uses 26 letter symbols to represent those sounds (Perfetti 2007: 320).

Actually, looking a word up in dictionary is the first thing to do when you meet a word you don't know. However, in teaching and learning process in the classroom, most of the students still face many problems to comprehend text, especially English text. The students who master many words usually are able to understand English text better than the students who lack of vocabulary. For the students who aren't master many words, they tend to read the text word-by-word

and sentence by sentence. Klimek (2013: 1) states that lexical meaning is the meaning of a word in relation to the physical word or abstract concepts without reference to any sentence in which the word may occur. So lexical is the meaning of a word without considering any prefix or suffix which may be attached. The meaning is considered to dictionary.

A collocation is essentially word-oriented and cohesive: it refers to the extent to which the presence and meaning of a word 'coheres 'or depends on the presence of another word (or words) in the same stretch of text. According to (Shammas, 2013: 109) there are two kinds of collocations; grammatical collocations and lexical collocations. Grammatical collocations are exemplified by nouns, verbs or adjectives in association with restricted prepositions or grammatical structures, such as *give in, demand for, dependent on*, and include phrasal verbs. Lexical collocations are combinations of nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs, such as *official permission, arbitrary government, seriously injured.*

Based on the problem above the researcher is interested in conducting a research entitled "*A Correlation Between Students' Reading Interest and Their Lexical Knowledge of Collocations towards Their Reading Ability*"

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research was correlational. According to Creswell (2012; 338), correlational design provides an opportunity to predict scores and explains the relationship among variables. . In this research, the researcher tried to find out the degree of relationship between reading interest and lexical knowledge of collocations and how these affected to reading ability of the second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University.

The population of this research was the second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University attending the class of 2013/2014. The number of population of this study was 88.

Sample for the research was selected using cluster sampling technique. Cluster sampling technique is sampling in which groups, not individuals are randomly selected. All the members of population were homogeneous or they had the same syllabus, time allocation and the same test. For correlational study, approximately 30 samples were regarded enough that relates variables. These numbers were based on the size needed for

statistical procedures so that the sample was likely to be a good estimate of the characteristics of the population, (Creswell, 2012: 146).

The instruments used to collect the data in this research are questionnaire, lexical knowledge of collocations test and reading test.

Table 3.1

Objective of the Instruments

No	Objectives	Instruments
1	To find out the students' response in reading interest	Questionnaire
2	To measure students' knowledge in lexical knowledge of collocations	Lexical knowledge of collocations test
3	To find out students ability in reading	Reading test

According to Heigham and Croker (2009: 201), in a questionnaire there can be two types of items: close response items and open-response items. In this case, the researcher used the close-response items. The researcher used this type of questionnaire due to what the students

know about the information; that they were willing to provide it; and they were able to understand questions consistently; the last condition in turn depended on the way to formulate and present the questions and, where appropriate, the response options.

Table 3.2

Indicators of Questionnaire

No	Topic	Indicators	Number of questions
1	Neighborhood	1. Parents' role in students' reading 2. Family's role in students' reading 3. Friends' role in students' reading 4. Teachers' contribution in students reading	4
2	Sources	1. Library (a place for students read books) 2. Library (interesting books available in library or not) 3. Blog/ article	1 1

4

		4. (know about blog, like/ dislike read a blog, maintain a personal blog, write a personal blog)	14
3	Instituti onal factors	1. Gender (enjoy reading as a child or mature) 2. Age (influence) 3. Inelegancy 4. Reading ability 5. Attitude	5

The questionnaire included 15 statements. The researcher used likert scale to collect the data. Likert scale was used to measure the study variables (specific social phenomena), such as attitudes, opinion and social perception of a person or group of people. This scale consisted of a number of statements asked to respondents.

The second instrument was lexical knowledge of collocations test. Researcher took 20 questions for lexical knowledge of collocations test by using multiple choice tests.

Table 3.4

Indicators of Lexical Knowledge of Collocations

No	Types of Lexical Collocations	Examples	Number of Question
1	Verb + Noun	Combine the verb and noun: Take a chance, do the housework, keep an eye, give an advice	4
2	Adjective + Noun	combine the adjective and noun: Hard smoker, Strong flavor, empty tape, rudimenta ry attempts	4
3	Noun + Verb	combine the noun	2

		and verb: Bombs exploded, alarms go off	
4	Noun + Noun	combine the noun and noun: Blues musician, body weight, bone structure, book review	4
5	Adverb + Adjective	combine the adverb and adjective: Quite safe, deeply absorbed	2
6	Verb + Adverb	combine the verb and adverb: Walk heavily, argue heatedly, climb	4
		quickly, work carefully	

To have a valid test, the researcher used content validity. To see the reliability of the test, the researcher used split half method. Due to Creswell (2012:160), split half reliability was a method used to engage the reliability of a test; two sets of scores were obtained from the same test, one set from odd items and one set from even items, and the scores of the two sets were correlated by using Pearson Product Moment Formula as follows:

$$r_{xy=} \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum_x 2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum_y 2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Where:

r_{xy} = the coefficient correlation between x and y variable (odd and even items)

x = the odd item scores

y = the even item score

n = the number of students

$\sum xy$ = the total scores of cross product xy

$\sum x$ = the total of x

$\sum y$ = the total of y

To find out the degree of coefficient correlation of the total test, the researcher

analyzed it by using Spearman-Brown Formula (Arikunto, 2012: 93) as follows:

$$r_{II} = \frac{2r_{xy}}{(1 + r_{xy})}$$

Where:

r_{ii} = the coefficient reliability for the total test

r_{xy} = the coefficient correlation between odd and even items

The researcher classified the coefficient correlation of the test based on Arikunto (2012:89) criteria as follows:

      0.81 – 1.00   : very high

      0.61 – 0.80   : high

      0.41 – 0.60   : enough

      0.21 – 0.40   : low

      0.00 – 0.20   : very low

To find out item difficulties and item discrimination of the test, the researcher uses the following formula;

1. Item discrimination

To analyze the item discrimination, first the researcher divided the students into high group and low group. Since the size of sample was quite small, she decided that the students who got scores at half above belong to high group and those of having scores at half below belong to low group. The researcher would use the following formula (Arikunto, 2012:228) as follows:

$$D = \frac{BA}{JA} - \frac{BB}{JB}$$

Where:

D   = item discrimination

JA   = total of students in the high group

JB   = total of students in the low group

BA   = total of students in the high group who answer correctly

BB   = total of students in the low group who answer correctly

Arikunto (2010: 232) suggested the following classification of the item discrimination:

$D = 0.00 – 0.20$ = poor

$D = 0.21 – 0.40$ = satisfactory

$D = 0.41 – 0.70$ = good

$D = 0.71 – 1.00$ = excellent

2. Item difficulties

To analyze the difficulty of the test items, the researcher used the formula stated by Arikunto (2012:223) as follow:

$$P = \frac{B}{JS}$$

Where:

P   = item difficulties

B   = the total of the students who answer correctly

JS   = the total of students

Arikunto suggested the following classification the difficulty index as follow:

P   = 0.00 – 0.30   = difficult

P   = 0.31 – 0.70   = moderate

P   = 0.71 – 1.00   = easy

The test was considered good if the item discrimination was between 0.41-0.70 and item difficulty is between 0.31-0.70.

The third instrument was reading test and it was used to collect the data for students' reading ability. The form of reading test that the researcher uses was short answer tests. The researcher gave indicators of reading test as follows:

Table 3.6

Indicators of Reading Test

No	Topic	Indicator	Number of questions
1	Transitional words	- Identify a group of transitional words that functions to add information, and to contrast ideas. - Identify a group of transitional words that functions to illustrate and list. - Identify a group of transitional words that functions to introduce result. - Identify a group of transitional words that functions to cause-effect relationship.	4
2	Paraphrase	Determine ideas that have the same/ different meaning	2
3	Understand paragraph	- Identify and state the topic paragraph. - Determine and state the main idea of paragraph	2
4	Fact and opinion	Able to distinguish fact and opinion.	2

To have a valid test from the test, the researcher used content validity. A valid test measured what is supposed to be measured. Arikunto (2006) argued that one

of the characteristic of validity test was content validity. It means that the test is fitted with the material that has given to the students. For this reason, the test is constructed based on curriculum, syllabus, and teaching material used at English Department of Bung Hatta University.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

As already discussed previously, the instrument used to collect data for three variables were questionnaire, lexical knowledge of collocations test and reading test. Instruments were given to 30 students of chosen sample of this research.

The Students' Reading Interest

Data on students' reading interest were collected by using questionnaire of 15 items. The questionnaire was found that total score 1767 and average about 58.

Table 4.1

Students' score from questionnaire

Sample	Score
1	61
2	57
3	59
4	59
5	61
6	54
7	44
8	57
9	55
10	56
11	57
12	59
13	59
14	58
15	56
16	60
17	61
18	61
19	54
20	63
21	53
22	63
23	62
24	61
25	62
26	63
27	64
28	57
29	66
30	65
total	1767

The test was found that Mean 58.9. After calculating Mean, the researcher classified the students' reading interest and calculated the percentages of the students who got interest in reading and got less

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interest in reading. The following formula is used base on Arikunto's formula, Arikunto (2012:298) into criteria below:

Table 4.2

Students' Interest in Reading

No	Students' Categories	Mean	Frequency	%
1	Interest	>58	19	63.33%%
2	Less interest	<58	11	36.67%

In this section, researcher found that there were 19 students (63.33%) from 30 students who had interest in reading Meanwhile 11 students (36.67%) had less interest in reading was shown in figure 4.1:

**Figure 4.1
Diagram of Students Reading Interest**

37%

63%

□ interest
■ less interest
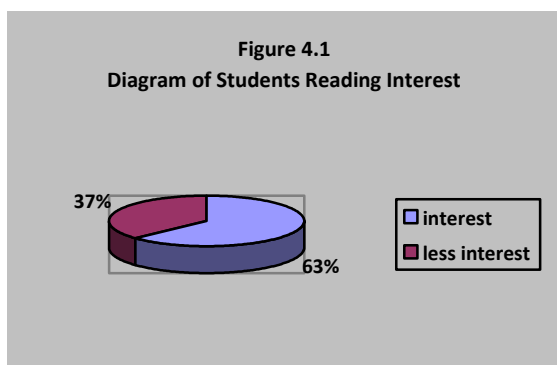
Based on the result of the questionnaire about the students' interest in reading, questionnaire consisted of 15 questions. The result of the questionnaire

based on the answer from questions was given to the students.

**The Students' Lexical Knowledge Of Collocations**

Data on students' lexical knowledge of collocations test were collected by using multiple choices test. Researcher gave 20 items to collect the data. The test was found that Mean 17.5, Standard Deviation 1.28. After calculating M and SD, the researcher classified the students' knowledge and calculated the percentages of the students who got high, moderate and low knowledge. The following formula is used base on Arikunto's formula Arikunto (2012:298) into criteria below:

Table 4.3

Percentage of Students' Lexical Knowledge of Collocations

Lexical Knowledge of Collocations	Number of Students	Percentage
High	6	20%
Moderate	20	66.67%
Low	4	13.33%
Total	30	100%

The researcher found the highest score of students' lexical knowledge of collocations in reading was 19 and the lowest score was 13. Then, the researcher calculated the Mean and Standard Deviation. The result of Mean was 17.5 and Standard Deviation was 1.28. The result showed that 6 students (20%) had high knowledge, 20 students (66.67%) had moderate knowledge and 4 students (13.33%) had low ability. It can be seen on the following figure:

Figure 4.2
percentage of lexical knowledge of collocations

13% 20%

67%

☐ High
☐ Moderate
☐ Low
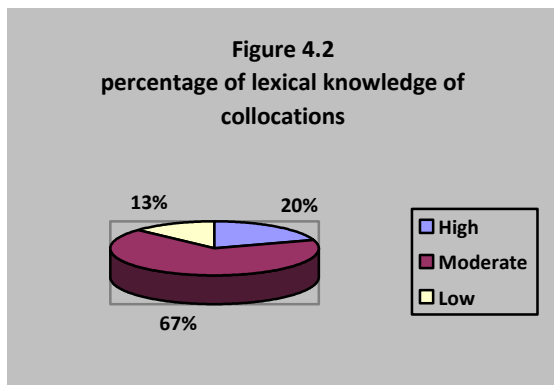
The Students' Reading Ability

Data on students' ability in reading were collected by using reading test of 10 items covering topic, main idea, paraphrase, fact and opinion. The test was found that Mean 77.63, Standard Deviation 7.29, after calculating M and SD, the writer classified the students' ability and calculated the percentages of the students who got high, moderate and low ability. The following formula is used

based on Arikunto's formula (Arikunto, 2012: 298) into criteria below:

Table 4.4

Percentage of Reading Test

Reading Ability	Number of Students	Percentage
High	10	33.33%
Moderate	11	36.67%
Low	9	30%
Total	30	100%

The researcher found the highest score of the students reading ability was 90 and the lowest was 65. Then, the researcher calculated the Mean and Standard Deviation. The result of Mean was 77.63 and Standard Deviation was 7.29. The result showed that 10 students (33.33%) had high knowledge, 11 students (36.67%) had moderate knowledge and 9 students (30%) had low ability. It can be seen on the following figure:

Figure 4.3
Diagram of Students' Reading Ability

30% 33%

37%

☐ high
☐ moderate
☐ Slice 3
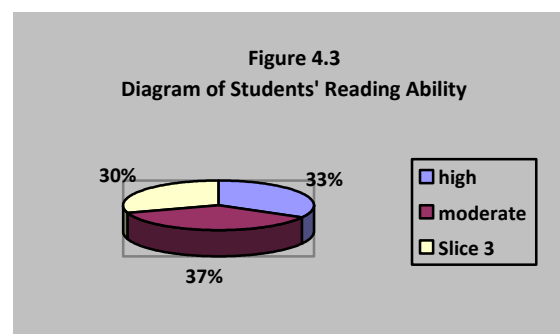
Discussions

The researcher presents the discussions of the research as follow:

Students' Reading Interest

Based on the data from questionnaire, the data analysis showed that more than half of the students had interest in reading.

Reading is one of important skill that must be mastered by students in a language teaching. It can be seen, some students lack of knowledge because lack of vocabulary. It caused the students lack of practicing and reading habit. It can be seen on questionnaire answer, Wade (2007: 2).

Students' Lexical Knowledge of Collocations

Based on the result of the research in general, the students' lexical knowledge of collocations was moderate. There were 20 students (66.67%) from 30 students who having moderate knowledge in collocations. It means that the students still had problem in lexical knowledge of collocations.

Based on students' answer sheet, some of the students are still confused to answer the questions.

Students' Reading Ability

Based on the result of the research in general, the students' ability in reading was moderate. There were 11 students (36.67) from 30 students who having moderate ability. It means that the students still confused to paraphrase the paragraph (appendix 22).

In conclusion, there is a relation between reading interest and lexical knowledge of collocations towards their reading ability.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusion

One of major problems met by college students are they cannot read effectively and understand fully the materials assigned to them. As a result, they get little from their courses. Reading problem can partially be attributed to the fact that English is one of the most difficult languages to learn. It is made up of 43 phonemes (sounds), 26 consonant and 17 vowels but only uses 26 letter symbols to represent those sounds.

Therefor the objectives of this study are: to describe the correlation between reading interest and lexical knowledge of collocations towards their reading ability.

This research used correlational research design. It correlated students' reading interest and lexical knowledge of collocations towards their reading ability at second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University. This research found that there is a significant correlation between students' reading interest and their lexical knowledge of collocations towards their reading ability.

There are some findings studies of this research:

1. A half of students (63.33%) had interest in reading and 36.67% students had no interest in reading.

2. Students' lexical knowledge of collocations was moderate.

3. Students' reading ability in reading was moderate.

Suggestions

1. For English teacher, since the students' ability in reading moderate, it suggested to be an additional intellectual source, especially, in reading comprehension class; therefore it can enrich teachers to comprehend lexical knowledge of collocations so that it can be applied in reading class. Since the finding of this

research showed that there was a significant correlation between reading interest and lexical knowledge of collocations test towards their reading ability, it is suggested to the vocabulary and reading lecturer to elaborate students' vocabulary in reading subject

2. For students, they are suggested to enrich their knowledge, especially about lexical knowledge of collocations and how it can increase their reading ability.

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