

THE CORRELATIONAL STUDY BETWEEN STUDENTS' INTEREST AND THEIR READING COMPREHENSION OF THE THIRD YEAR STUDENTS AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The type of this research was correlational design. The purpose of this research was to describe the correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension. The population of this research was 86 of third year students at English Department in Bung Hatta University. In selecting the sample, the researcher used cluster random sampling technique. The number of sample members was 30 students from class C. The instruments used to get the data were the questionnaire of interest and reading comprehension test on three articles. The researcher tried out the test to the students out of sample. The researcher found the reliability of reading comprehension was high .79. Then, the reliability of questionnaire on interest was very high .89. It means that the test were reliable. Based on the result of data analysis the value r -calculated in this research was .63 with the level significant 95 % (α .05) and the degree of freedom (df) $n-2(28)$, the value of r -table was .361. It means that r -calculated (.63) was higher than r -table (28). The alternative hypothesis that said there is a significant correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension of the third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University was accepted. Based on the conclusion, for the lecturer should encourage the students' interest, the students should improve their ability in reading comprehension by increasing their interest in this subject, and next researchers are suggested to conduct other relevant to make the thesis perfectly.

Key words: Correlation, Interest, Reading Comprehension.

Introduction

One of the factors that influence students' achievement in reading is their interest to read. Interest indicates how readers give more attention to a reading task, how they are interested in

understanding reading material. By having students in reading interest, they will achieve what they want to get through reading.

The experts have certain ideas that effective way to build students' interest on a new subject is by using their own interest. According to Smith and Ellsworth in Silvia (2006: 20), interest is most closely related to the emotions of enjoyment and surprise. Appraisal research finds that situations that arouse interest are rated as pleasant, and that interest most often blends with positive emotions. Therefore, interest is a tight stimulus for someone to do everything to reach his/her destination and hope that being desire. Furthermore there are some indicators that influence students' interest. They are motivation, enthusiasm, attention, and expectation. The first is motivation; to make somebody wants to do something, especially something that involves hard work and effort (Hornby: 2010). The second is enthusiasm; a strong feeling of excitement and interest in something and a desire to become involved in it (Hornby: 2010). The third is attention; the act of listening to, looking at or thinking about something or somebody carefully (Hornby: 2010). And the last is expectation; a belief that something will happen because it is likely (Hornby: 2010).

Reading ability is related to reading comprehension. Whorter (2006) states reading is a thinking process, in which the students interact with textual

material, evaluate, and reacts to its organization and content. Reading comprehension needs the ability to think, conceptualization, and reasoning. Reading comprehension is a process to get comprehension level information that we read and comprehend about what the text tells about and article is defined as the text to inform reader about issues, such as ; education, politic, social, economic and culture. The comprehension levels of reading are literal, interpretive, applied and appreciative. The literal level is based on what is actually stated in the material. The second level is interpretive. This level requires the subject material is not only understood, but also that a general understanding of what was implied is reached. The third level is applied is the level that deals with the student applying what is shared to real life events or situations. The final level, appreciative is based on the student's or reader own feelings towards the material or author.

In accordance to identification of the problem, the researcher limited her study to the students' interest and their reading comprehension. Furthermore, she focused her study on the correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension of the third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University. The research hypothesis

of this study was stated as follow : Null hypothesis (Ho): there is no significant correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension. Alternatives hypothesis (Ha): there is significant correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension.

Based on the discussion above, the researcher is in interesting in conducting a study The Correlational Study Between Students' Interest and Their Reading Comprehension at English Department of Bung Hatta University.

Research Method

Type of this research was correlational design which has purpose to know to what extent the correlation between two variables (independent and dependent) (Iskandar 2008:63). Furthermore, according to Gay (1987: 230), correlational research involves collecting data in order to determine whether and to what degree a relationship exist between two or more quantifiable variables. The degree of relationship is expressed as a correlation coefficient. In this research, independent variable is interest (X) and dependent variable is reading comprehension (Y).

Gay (1987:101-102) states population is a group which researcher to

describe the result of the research to be generalized. The population of this research was the third year students' English Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Bung Hatta University in academic 2014/2015. They are separated into three classes: class A, class B, and class C. The researcher chose the third year students as the population because they had taken the four series of reading courses namely: reading 1, reading 2, reading 3, reading 4, and advanced reading. There are 86 students as population. As shown on the **Table 3.1:**

Table 3.1: Research Population

Name of Class	Students
A	28
B	25
C	33
Total	86

In this study the researcher used sample. The sample is a part of population. Sampling is the process of selecting a representative number of individuals out of large group. To select the sample, the researcher used cluster random sampling. According to Gay (1987:110), cluster random sampling technique is a sampling technique in which groups, not individuals,

are randomly selected. The researcher used this technique because all the members of the population considered homogeneous. They had the same characteristic in terms of material, the lectures' qualification, and number of hours for studying English per a week.

To collect the data of this study, The instruments of this research were questionnaire and test. The questionnaire gives list of questions about their interest in learning, and the test used to find out reading comprehension of article.

In addition, the questionnaire was constructed in the form of Likert Scale. It was used to measure attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of a person or group of people about social phenomena occur, which has been established by researchers and hereinafter referred to be as the variable of research. Variable used as a benchmark indicators for preparing items of questions or statements, and then answered by the respondents in some of the components on the Likert scale (Iskandar, 2008:82). Grades were awarded on five options. To make clarity, it showed in **Table 3.2** below:

Table 3.2: The Grade of Questionnaire on Interest

Positive statement	Negative statement
Always = 5	Always = 1

Often = 4	Often = 2
Sometimes = 3	Sometimes = 3
Rarely = 2	Rarely = 4
Never = 1	Never = 5

To find out the reliability index of the questionnaire, the researcher used *Alpha-Cronbach*. According to Arikunto (2012:239), alpha formula is used to find out the reliability of instrumentation that scores are not 1 and 0. The variant formula that used, as follow:

$$\sigma^2 = \frac{\sum x^2 - \left(\frac{\sum x}{N}\right)^2}{N}$$

Alpha formula, as follow:

$$r_{11} = \left(\frac{k}{k-1}\right) \left(1 - \frac{\sum \sigma b^2}{\sigma^2 t}\right)$$

Where:

- r_{11} = Reliability of instrument
- K = Total number of question or statement
- $\sum \sigma b^2$ = Calculation of variants score for each item
- $\sum \sigma b^2$ = Total of variants

The researcher used the reading test to find out the students comprehension of the article. The test consisted of 30 items with three articles taken from printed materials. The test was constructed in the form of multiple choice tests. The students had 45 minutes to do this test.

Item difficulty is the extent to which an item is easy or difficult for the proposed group of test-taker (Brown: 2010:71). The researcher used the following formula suggested by Arikunto(2012: 223-225):

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

Where:

P: Item difficulty

B: Sum of students who answer correctly

JS: Sum of students who follow the test.

The result of difficulty index is classified into the followings (Arikunto: 2012:225):

P : 0.00 – 0.30 = difficult

P : 0.31– 0.70 = moderate

P : 0.71 – 1.00 = easy

Item discrimination is the extent to which an item differentiates between high and low ability test-takers (Brown: 2010:71). Relating to this, all students were divided into two groups; upper and lower group. According to Arikunto (2012: 228:232), for small size of sample, students who get score half above are classified as upper group and the students who get score half below are classified as lower group. To find the index of discrimination, the researcher used following formula:

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

Where:

D = Item discrimination

B = sum of students in the high group who answer in the item correctly

BB = sum of students in the low group who answer the item correctly

JA = sum of students in the high group

JB = sum of students in the low group

According to Arikunto (2012: 228-232), the result of item discrimination was classified into the followings:

D : 0.00 – 0.20 = poor

D : 0.21 – 0.40 = satisfactory

D : 0.41 – 0.70 = good

D : 0.71 – 1.00 = excellent

The characteristics of good instrument are validity and reliability. A good test should be valid. According to Gay (1987:128), a test is said valid if it is able to measure what it wants to be measured. In the other words, the test is valid if it fixes the material that has been given to the students.

Another characteristic of good test is reliability. Gay (1987:135) defines that reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures. Reliability is expressed numerically, usually as a coefficient; a

high coefficient indicates high reliability. The researcher used split half method, which divides the items of the test into odd and even group. To analyze the reliability of the test, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment method as following:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum xy - (\sum x) (\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

r_{xy} : the coefficient correlation between two variables of the test

- x : the even item scores
- y : the odd item scores
- n : the number of the students
- $\sum xy$: the total scores of cross product xy
- $\sum x$: the sum of even items test
- $\sum y$: the sum of odd items test
- $\sum x^2$: the square of even items test
- $\sum y^2$: the square of odd items test

Then, the result of correlation was analysed by using Spearman-Brown formula (Arikunto: 2012) to know the reliability coefficient of the whole test:

$$r_{tt} = \frac{2r_{xy}}{1 + r_{xy}}$$

Where:

r_{tt} : the coefficient reliability for the total test

r_{xy} : the coefficient correlation of the two halves of the test.

To analyze the data, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula to total score of the two tests and used Pearson's coefficient by using SPSS program ver. 16 for windows.

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum xy - (\sum x) (\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

Where:

- r_{xy} : the coefficient correlation between two variables
- x : the score of students' interest questionnaire
- y : the score of reading comprehension test
- n : the number of the students
- $\sum xy$: the total scores xy
- $\sum x$: the sum of students' interest test
- $\sum y$: the sum of reading comprehension test
- $\sum x^2$: the square of students' interest
- $\sum y^2$: the square of reading score test

Testing Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this research was that there is a significant correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension of third year

students at English Department of Bung Hatta University. To test the hypothesis, a statistical analysis is used. The statistical or null hypothesis (H_0): “there is no correlation between students’ interest and their reading comprehension of third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University”, was accepted if the value of $r_{\text{calculated}}$ was the same or lower than r_{table} . Otherwise, hypothesis (H_a): “there is correlation between students’ interest and their reading comprehension of third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University”, was accepted if the value of $r_{\text{calculated}}$ was higher than r_{table} .

After that, the researcher tried to calculate the value of $r_{\text{calculated}}$ with the value of r_{table} on the level significance 95% ($\alpha .05$) and the degree of freedom (df) $n-2$ (28). If the value of $r_{\text{calculated}}$ is higher than r_{table} . Therefore, it can be concluded the coefficient correlation of two variables is significant.

Findings

As already discussed previously, the instrument used to collect the data for the two variables research were questionnaire students’ interest and reading comprehension test. Both of instruments were given to 30 students chosen as sample of this research. There were 28

items for testing questionnaire and 24 items for testing reading comprehension.

Based on the result of two test, it was found that the lowest score for students’ interest questionnaire was 94 and the highest score was 129 (see Appendix 16), and the lowest score for reading comprehension test was 16 and the highest score was 23 (see Appendix 17).

As already discussed in previous chapter to find out the correlation between students’ interest and their reading comprehension of the third year at English Department of Bung Hatta University, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment coefficient correlation and Pearson by using SPSS program ver.16 for windows. Based on the result, it was found that the value of r between students’ interest and reading was .63 by using Pearson Product Moment, and also .63 by using Pearson in SPSS program ver.16 (see Appendix 19 and 20).

Testing Hypothesis

Based on the data analysis, it could be seen that the value of $r_{\text{calculated}}$ in this research was .63 (see appendix 20). To test the hypothesis, the researcher compared the $r_{\text{calculated}}$ with r_{table} . The hypothesis was accepted if the $r_{\text{calculated}}$ was higher than r_{table} . As the matter of fact $r_{\text{calculated}}$ was

higher than r_{table} (.63 > 0,361). It meant that, the relationship between students' interest and reading comprehension was significance. Therefore, the hypothesis that stated "there is a significance correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension at the third year of English Department in Bung Hatta University" was accepted.

Discussion

The result of data analysis showed there was a significance and positive correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension. Its index coefficient correlation was .63. In accordance to classification on correlation elaborated by Arikunto (2012), the correlation of two variables (interest and reading) could be classified as high correlation. Relating to this, it could be interpreted that an increasing grade in students' interest has relationship with an increasing grade in ability of reading comprehension.

Conclusions

Based on findings as already discussed in the previous chapter, the researcher points out the following conclusion:

1. There was a significant correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension of the third year students at English Department in Bung Hatta University. It was proved by the value of $r_{calculated}$ that was higher than r_{table} . It can be concluded that students' interest can influence their ability in reading comprehension.
2. The correlation between students' interest and their reading comprehension of the third year students at English Department in Bung Hatta University was categorized as high correlation. In other word, interest gives high effect in reading comprehension.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher can give some suggestions were presented as follows:

1. The lectures could more encourage the students' interest, by having known and handling their motivation, enthusiasm, attention and expectation in learning reading comprehension.
2. The students should improve their ability in reading comprehension

by increasing their interest in this subject since students' interest influence their reading comprehension.

3. The next researchers are suggested to find other relevant aspects in students' interest and reading comprehension to make their thesis perfectly.

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