

The Effect of Reading Interest and Vocabulary Mastery towards Recount Text Reading Skills

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of reading interest and vocabulary mastery towards recount text reading skills in public junior high school students in West Bandung Regency. The research sample consisted of 125 eighth-grade students randomly selected from a population of 627 students. The method used was quantitative with a survey design. Data were collected through multiple-choice tests for vocabulary mastery and reading skill variables, as well as a questionnaire for reading interest. Data were analyzed using correlation and multiple linear regression techniques. The results of the study showed: (1) reading interest and vocabulary mastery together had a significant effect towards reading skills (contribution of 58.4%); (2) reading interest had a significant positive effect; and (3) vocabulary mastery had the strongest effect towards recount text reading skills.

Keywords: reading interest; vocabulary mastery; reading skills

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh minat baca dan penguasaan kosakata terhadap keterampilan membaca teks recount pada siswa SMP Negeri di Kabupaten Bandung Barat. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 125 siswa kelas VIII yang dipilih secara acak dari populasi 627 siswa. Metode yang digunakan adalah kuantitatif dengan desain survei. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes pilihan ganda untuk variabel penguasaan kosakata dan keterampilan membaca, serta angket untuk minat baca. Data dianalisis menggunakan teknik korelasi dan regresi linear ganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan: (1) minat baca dan penguasaan kosakata secara bersama berpengaruh signifikan terhadap keterampilan membaca (kontribusi 58,4%); (2) minat baca berpengaruh positif signifikan; dan (3) penguasaan kosakata memberikan pengaruh paling kuat terhadap keterampilan membaca teks recount.

Kata kunci: minat baca; penguasaan kosakata; keterampilan membaca

INTRODUCTION

English plays a vital role as a global communication tool in various fields, including education, business, science, law, and technology. This is reflected in the learning outcomes of the Independent Curriculum, as outlined in Regulation No. 032/H/KR/2024 issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (2024). In the Independent Curriculum, English language learning



focuses on four fundamental skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Reading, in particular, is essential, as it broadens students' horizons and enriches their cognitive and linguistic development (Simaibang & Lestari, 2017). However, the reading skills of Indonesian students remain relatively low, as reflected in the consistently declining scores of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2009, 2012, 2015, and 2018 (Khurniawan, 2019).

This situation highlights the urgency of conducting further studies to enhance students' reading abilities in alignment with curriculum demands, particularly in the form of the English text. A recount narrative is one of the texts that recall previous experiences chronologically (Autila, 2017). Mastering recount texts requires students to identify both explicit and implicit meanings while connecting new information to their prior knowledge (Nunan, 2003). Based on the teacher's experience at a public junior high school in West Bandung Regency, it was discovered that students frequently struggle to understand English texts due to low reading interest, poor vocabulary knowledge, and reliance on non-culturally relevant textbooks, restricting their exposure to different reading materials.

Interest is defined as a psychological state characterized by sustained attention, intensive effort, and continuous involvement in an activity, accompanied by feelings of enjoyment and achievement (Renninger & Hidi, 2019). In other words, interest functions as an intrinsic motivator that keeps students engaged and focused. It provides positive reinforcement and a strong drive to learn. In the context of reading, reading interest refers to a strong inclination or willingness to participate in reading activities (Dewi et al., 2020). Students that have a strong reading interest process information more effectively, understand texts better, and perceive reading as both necessary and enjoyable. When students show an interest in reading, it is considered that they are more likely to read accurately, process information effectively, comprehend the book, and recall its content. Reading interest reveals how students value reading. As a result, interest is a great motivator for reading because if students are engaged in reading, they will focus on the content and find it enjoyable.

Besides interest, vocabulary mastery plays a vital role in improving reading skills. Harmer (2007) defines vocabulary mastery as a collection of words in a language that encompasses meaning, form, grammar, and their use in communication. This means that readers require vocabulary to gain meaning from any reading text, and reading allows them to learn new words. For example, students with extensive vocabulary knowledge are better able to understand texts, as they can grasp word meanings and contextual nuances more easily. According to Kilic (2019), vocabulary knowledge is an effective predictor of performance in reading comprehension. In other words, students with a large vocabulary will have no trouble grasping the meaning of words in a book, making it easier for them to grasp the context and issue under discussion or narration.

Based on the previous description, this study focuses on the effect of reading interest and vocabulary mastery towards recount text reading skills in junior high school students in West Bandung Regency. Previous research has found a link between reading interest, vocabulary mastery, and reading comprehension; however, additional aspects need to be investigated further, particularly at the junior

high school level in West Bandung Regency. Given the importance of developing reading skills, more research is needed to assess the effect of reading interest and vocabulary mastery on recount text reading skills among junior high school students in West Bandung Regency. As a result, the researcher is eager to examine (1) whether there is a combined effect of reading interest and vocabulary mastery on the reading skills of recount texts among junior high school students in West Bandung Regency, (2) whether reading interest independently affects students' reading skills, and (3) whether vocabulary mastery independently influences the reading skills of recount texts among the students.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative method with a survey design to examine the effect of reading interest and vocabulary mastery towards recount text reading skills. The research population consisted of 627 eighth-grade students from two public junior high schools in West Bandung Regency. Proportional random selection was used to select a sample of 125 students (20% of the total population). The study involved two independent variables reading interest (X_1) and vocabulary mastery (X_2) and one dependent variable, recount text reading skills (Y). The research instruments included multiple-choice tests containing 30 items each to measure vocabulary mastery and recount text reading skills, as well as a questionnaire to measure students' reading interest.

The research procedure comprised several stages: instrument development, validity and reliability testing, data collection, and data analysis. The Pearson product-moment correlation was used to assess instrument validity, while Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to measure reliability. The results showed that all items in the vocabulary and reading tests, as well as in the questionnaire, demonstrated high validity and reliability, with alpha values exceeding 0.70, confirming the instruments were consistent and suitable for use. After validation, the data were evaluated with descriptive statistics, prerequisite tests (normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity), and multiple regression analysis to assess the research hypotheses. The findings are expected to provide insight into the extent to which reading interest and vocabulary mastery, both individually and jointly, influence students' recount text reading skills in public junior high schools in West Bandung Regency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study used multiple linear regression to examine how reading interest (X_1) and vocabulary mastery (X_2) affect recount text reading skills (Y). Tables 1.2 and 3 show the analysis results.

Table 1. Results of the Multiple Correlation Coefficient Test of Variables X_1 and X_2 towards Variable Y



Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.764 ^a	.584	.577		3.650
a. Predictors: (Constant), Reading Interest, Vocabulary Mastery					
b. Dependent Variable: Reading Skills					

Table 2. Results of the Regression Coefficient Significance Test of Variables X1 and X2 towards Variable Y

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2281.519	2	1140.759	85.615	.000 ^b
	Residual	1625.569	122	13.324		
	Total	3907.088	124			
a. Dependent Variable: Reading Skills						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Reading Interest, Vocabulary Mastery						

Table 3. Results of the Multiple Regression Equation Variables X1, X2 towards Variable Y

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	14.599	4.117		3.346	.000
	Reading interest	.108	.043	.149	2.542	.012
	Vocabulary mastery	.715	.055	.757	12.946	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Reading Skills

Tables 1, 2, and 3 demonstrate that hypothesis testing is conducted both statistically and verbally, as follows:

The Effect of Reading Interest and Vocabulary Mastery Simultaneously towards Reading Skills in Recount Text

Table 1 shows the multiple correlation coefficient of the effect of the independent variables of reading interest (X1) and vocabulary mastery (X2) on students' reading skills (Y) is 0.764. This computation yields a significant correlation coefficient; in other words, the independent variables of reading interest (X1) and vocabulary mastery (X2) have a significant effect on students' reading skills (Y). Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination of 7.64% indicates that the effect of reading interest (X1) and vocabulary mastery (X2) combined on students' reading skills (Y) is 58.4%; the remainder (41.6%) is due to the effect of other factors.



Based on the results of the SPSS version 20.0 data analysis, it can be seen in table 3 that the results of the regression equation $Y = 14,599 + 0.108 X_1 + 0.715 X_2$, which means that every addition of one unit or one level of reading interest (X_1) and vocabulary (X_2) has an impact on increasing recount text reading skill. Meanwhile, the regression line's significance is tested by examining the computation results in Table 2. Existing criteria for regression significance are "if Sig value < 0.05 , then H_0 is rejected" or "if Fcount $> F_{table}$, then H_0 is rejected," which means that the regression coefficient is significant; in other words, there is a significant effect of the independent variables X_1 and X_2 on the dependent variable Y . The Sig value is the number shown in the Sig column of Table 4.2. The Fcount value is the number listed in the F column in Table 2. Meanwhile, the F-table value is the value of the F-distribution table at a 5% level of significance with a numerator (k) = 2 and a denominator ($n - k - 1$) = 122, where n is the number of respondents and k is the number of independent variables.

From Table 2, it can be seen that the Sig value = 0.000 and Fcount = 85,615, while $F_{table} = 3.07$. With a Sig value < 0.05 and Fcount $> F_{table}$, H_0 is rejected, indicating that the regression coefficient is significant. In other words, the independent variables of reading interest (X_1) and vocabulary mastery (X_2) have a significant combined effect on students' reading skills. From the results of the correlation and regression tests, it can be concluded that there is a significant effect of reading interest (X_1) and vocabulary mastery (X_2) together on students' reading skills (Y).

The Effect of Reading Interest towards Reading skills in Recount Text

To prove this hypothesis, the values/numbers listed in the t column or the Sig column for the Reading Interest row (Variable X_1) can be seen in Table 3. According to existing provisions, the criteria for regression significance are "if t count $> t_{table}$, then H_0 is rejected" or "if Sig < 0.05 , then H_0 is rejected," which means there is a significant effect of the independent variable X_1 on the dependent variable Y . The Sig value and the t count value are the numbers listed in the t column for the Reading Interest row (Variable X_1) in Table 3. Meanwhile, the t-table value is the value of the t-distribution table for a 5% significance level with a confidence interval ($df = n - 2$) = 123, where n is the number of respondents. From Table 3, it can be seen that the Sig value = 0.012 and tcount = 2.542 while $t_{table} = 1.657$. Because the Sig value is < 0.05 and tcount $> t_{table}$, H_0 is rejected, which means there is a significant effect of the independent variable X_1 (reading interest) on the dependent variable Y (students' reading skills).

The Effect of Vocabulary Mastery towards Reading Skills in Recount Text

Table 3 displays the values/numbers listed in the t column or the Sig column for the vocabulary mastery row (Variable X_2). The Sig value and t count value are the numbers listed in the t column for the vocabulary mastery row (Variable X_2) in Table 3. Meanwhile, the t-table value is the value of the t-distribution table for a 5% significance level with a confidence level ($df = n - 2$) = 123, where n is the number of respondents.



From Table 3. It can be seen that the Sig value = 0.000 and the t count = 12.946, while the t table = 1.657. The Sig value < 0.05 and t count > t table reject H_0 , indicating that the independent variable X_2 (vocabulary mastery) has a significant impact on the dependent variable Y (students' reading skill).

These findings support previous studies that emphasize the crucial role of interest and vocabulary in reading development. Students with low reading interest tend to perceive reading as a chore rather than an engaging activity, which hinders comprehension. Conversely, students with high reading interest are more attentive, enthusiastic, and curious when encountering complex texts. This is consistent with Chen et al. (2001), who found that immediate enjoyment is a key factor in fostering reading interest, often arising from novelty and engaging activities. In other words, students are more capable of reading difficult texts when the material is engaging.

Furthermore, students with limited vocabulary often struggle to comprehend texts, especially when confronted with unfamiliar structures or expressions. Consistent with the findings of Sidek & Rahim (2015), this study suggests that vocabulary knowledge is a decisive factor in the success of English reading comprehension. A limited vocabulary prevents students from processing key information essential for understanding the overall text. Therefore, the richer a person's vocabulary, the easier it is for them to grasp meaning and master a wide range of ideas and concepts. Conversely, restricted vocabulary significantly reduces one's ability to comprehend meaning effectively.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study indicate that reading interest and vocabulary mastery significantly influence students' English recount text reading skills. Collectively, these two variables contribute meaningfully to the improvement of reading skills, as evidenced by the statistical results (Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05; $F = 85.615$). Partially, reading interest (Sig. = 0.012; $t = 2.542$) and vocabulary mastery (Sig. = 0.000; $t = 12.946$) also showed a strong impact on student performance. These findings underscore the importance of fostering reading interest and enhancing vocabulary knowledge as key components of English reading development.

Theoretically, this study confirms that reading interest and vocabulary mastery are interrelated and serve as fundamental elements in strengthening reading skills. Furthermore, the researchers propose three implications of this study. First, English classroom materials and activities should be carefully designed to match students' needs, background knowledge, and interests in order to promote active engagement. Second, teachers should adopt a reflective approach to address students' varying levels of reading interest by conducting simple analyses and facilitating supportive discussions to overcome learning difficulties. Third, greater emphasis should be placed on cultivating reading interest and improving vocabulary mastery, as both have a significant effect on students' English reading proficiency.

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