



THE CORRELATION BETWEEN FONDNESS FOR READING AND VOCABULARY MASTERY OF THE FOURTH SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY MUHAMMADIYAH MAKASSAR

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Abstract

It is commonly accepted that students who read frequently tend to develop a broader vocabulary. Fondness for reading is considered an essential trait, particularly among university students. This study aimed to investigate whether there is a correlation between students' fondness for reading and their vocabulary mastery. The research employed a quantitative method with a correlational design. Data were collected using a fondness-for-reading questionnaire and a multiple-choice test to measure vocabulary mastery. Since the data did not meet the normality assumption based on the Shapiro-Wilk test, Spearman's rho correlation test was used for analysis. The results showed a very weak correlation ($\rho = 0.054$) with a significance level of 0.771, indicating that the relationship between the two variables is not statistically significant. This implies that, in this study, fondness for reading does not significantly or directly influence vocabulary mastery.

Keywords: correlation, fondness for reading, quantitative research, students, vocabulary mastery

INTRODUCTION

All nations utilize English as their universal language of communication. According to Forsia et al (2022) writing, speaking, listening, and reading are the four language skills that are taught in English language instruction. English language proficiency should be divided into two categories: productive and receptive. Speaking and writing are regarded as productive abilities, but listening and reading are regarded as receptive skills. One of the important skills that should be mastered by students is reading.

By reading books, blog posts, articles, or newspapers, students may develop their knowledge. Students who enjoy reading will know more about a wide range of topics from what they have read (Forsia et al., 2022). One of the many qualities that students need to possess both inside and outside of the classroom is a fondness for reading. According to Kurniawan et al (2021), fondness for reading is the experience of enjoying and developing the habit of reading. One quality that is necessary in the field of education is a fondness for reading. Reading to enhance and expand vocabulary is one of the best learning activities for vocabulary mastery (Walansih et al., 2022). Students who are fond of reading are sure to have a large vocabulary.

Vocabulary is one area of language that requires mastery. Vocabulary examines how many words are in a language that is being studied. Of course, every sentence, paragraph, and text that is read has a large number of words in it and vocabulary is the term for these terms (Walansih et al., 2022). Increasing one's vocabulary is crucial to using language more effectively when reading and speaking. A strong vocabulary is certain to make it easier for students to comprehend the meaning of the texts they read, so vocabulary mastery can aid students in understanding what they read.

Consistent reading helps expand vocabulary and improve language comprehension. It enhances the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. According to Ariyanti & Qomar (2016) in (Forsia et al., 2022)

those who read a lot have a large vocabulary and can always add to it. Students might discover new vocabulary in the texts they read when they develop a passion in reading. It will undoubtedly increase their vocabularies. When you read extensively, be it fiction, non-fiction, newspapers, or academic texts, you will come across a wide array of words. This exposure exposes you to vocabulary that may not be part of everyday conversation, thus expanding your vocabulary. Fondness for reading and vocabulary acquisition go together, each supporting and enhancing the other in various ways.

Based on the explanation above, one of the important skills that must be mastered by students is reading and reading to increase and expand vocabulary is one of the best learning activities for vocabulary acquisition. The researcher found some problems in the English learning process based on what she observed in the reading class. The majority of them still lacked understanding of the words in the text and had limited vocabulary. This statement is based on what the lecturer of the reading course said. She stated that the students had many errors in pronunciation, seemed unaccustomed to reading English texts and lacked vocabulary so they did not understand the English terms in the text. The researcher's observation from the reading class is the basis of this data. The main theme of the book was difficult for the students to find. Given the students' fondness for reading and their vocabulary acquisition is very poor.

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the correlation between fondness for reading and vocabulary mastery for the fourth semester English education students at University Muhammadiyah Makassar. It's important to determine whether someone's fondness for reading and their vocabulary mastery are related. This is because one of the skills that must be mastered in English is reading, and reading to increase and expand vocabulary is one of the best learning activities for vocabulary acquisition. The researcher's experience in a reading class inspired this investigation. The researcher noticed that a lack of fondness for reading could have a detrimental effect on learning vocabulary, which could then have an influence on communication skills, reading skills, and overall academic success. Understanding how these two factors relate to one another will help educators create more successful teaching methods that will help students become more proficient readers and language learners.

METHOD

In this research, the researcher used correlational research. Correlational research was a procedure in quantitative research in which the researcher measures the degree of association (or relationship) between two or more variables using statistical procedures of correlational analysis. In this research, the researcher used two instrument, namely fondness for reading questionnaire, focus on (reading frequency, reading duration, reading preferences, reading motivation (intrinsic)) and vocabulary mastery test, focus on (verbs and adjectives). The researcher intends to find out whether there is a relationship between fondness for reading and vocabulary mastery.

The research subjects that the researcher used were fourth semester English education students at University Muhammadiyah Makassar. The researcher used class A, B and C in this study. The number of students in class A was 11 students, class B was 12 students and class C was 8 students. The total number of students who were the subject of this research was 31 students.

The instrument that was used in this research is a form of field research. There were two instruments in this research. The first was a questionnaire to find out students fondness for reading, which consists of 14 checkbox items. In the fondness for reading questionnaire, the researcher found out the level of students' fondness for reading which is focused on (reading frequency, reading duration, reading preferences, reading motivation (intrinsic)). The second instrument was a vocabulary mastery test consisting of 50 multiple choice questions with four answer choices. In the vocabulary mastery test, the researcher found out the level of students' vocabulary mastery which focuses on (verbs and adjectives).

For the data collection process, the researcher conducted the following research procedures:

1. The researcher distributed questionnaires and tests. First, the questionnaires were distributed to find out the number of students who had a fondness for reading and the number of students who did not have a fondness for reading.
2. After that, the researcher distributed a vocabulary test to determine the students' vocabulary mastery.

3. And the last was the researcher analyzed the results to find out whether there was a correlation between fondness for reading and vocabulary mastery in fourth-semester English education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar used SPSS software.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This data is to determine whether there is a significant correlation between students' fondness for reading and vocabulary mastery of fourth semester students of English Education Department of University Muhammadiyah Makassar. The results found that the dimension of fondness for reading has a mean score of 63.74 and was classified as low, although it was on the border to the moderate category. This shows that in general, the level of fondness towards reading activities among the students was still relatively low. This means that although there were students who are somewhat interested in reading, overall, their reading interest, motivation, reading time, and reading habits are still not high enough to qualify as medium or high levels.

Table 1. Students Fondness For reading

Aspect	Mean Score
Fondness for Reading	63.74

The results found that the average (mean) score of students' vocabulary mastery overall was 81.61. It is clear by the vocabulary mastery score that in general, students' vocabulary mastery was at a moderate level, meaning that they have a fairly good vocabulary ability but have not reached a high level of mastery.

Table 2. Students Vocabulary Mastery

Aspect	Mean Score
Vocabulary Mastery	81.61

This data is to determine whether there is a significant correlation between students' fondness for reading and vocabulary mastery of fourth semester students of English Education Department of University Muhammadiyah Makassar. After doing the calculation using Spearman Rho. To see whether there is a relationship between students' fondness for reading and their vocabulary mastery, the researcher tries to show it in the table below.

Table 3. 14 Correlation Between Fondness For Reading and Vocabulary Mastery

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation (ρ)	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Fondness for Reading	Vocabulary Mastery	0.054	0.771	31

The results of the Spearman's rho correlation test, the correlation coefficient (ρ) is 0.054 with a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.771. This value indicates that there was a very weak positive relationship or very poor correlation between the fondness for reading and vocabulary mastery variables. However, since the significance value is greater than 0.05, the relationship is not statistically significant.

Thus, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between students' fondness for reading and their vocabulary mastery in this study. That is, an increase in fondness for reading does not directly correlate with an increase in vocabulary mastery in the sample of 31 students studied.

Research Question

Is there any significant correlation between fondness for reading and students' vocabulary mastery in learning English?

The finding of this study showed that there is no statistically significant correlation between fondness to read and vocabulary mastery of the fourth-semester students of English Education Department of University Muhammadiyah Makassar. The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient (ρ) was 0.054 and the significance value

was 0.771, indicating that the correlation is very weak and statistically not significant. That is to say, increased interest or preference in reading does not necessarily relate to improved vocabulary mastery among these students.

Numerous earlier studies that found a strong and favourable relationship between vocabulary competence and reading habits conflict with this outcome. For instance, Walansih et al. (2022) researched the senior high school learners and set up a significant positive relationship ($r = 0.679$) between descriptive text reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery. Additionally, Iffah and Emilia (2023) found a significant relationship ($r = 0.680$, $p < 0.05$) between eighth-grade students' reading comprehension and vocabulary proficiency. These results imply that vocabulary knowledge and reading proficiency are closely related in the majority of situations.

By showing a stronger significant correlation ($r = 0.8769$, $p < 0.005$) between junior high school students' vocabulary mastery and reading competence, another study by Cleverisa and Perdhani (2022) validated the crucial significance of vocabulary mastery in reading competency. Similarly, Forsia et al. (2022) demonstrated that students' reading interest and vocabulary mastery significantly predicted their reading comprehension ($p < 0.05$), indicating a concurrently beneficial influence.

Kurniawan et al. (2021), with a focus on reading enjoyment and science attitude, concluded that although attitudes were neutral, reading characteristics of the students were still statistically significantly correlated with science attitudes ($p = 0.048$). This indirectly supports the suggestion that reading habits can influence academic dispositions and achievement, though perhaps in varying ways based on contexts and topics.

Concurrently, Muhammadiyah et al. (2019) emphasised that students who were also poor in mastering their vocabulary achieved lower scores in reading comprehension, which again only supported the strong correlation between these two variables. Again demonstrating the pedagogical importance of fostering a love of reading, Rahmawati (2020) found that students who were highly interested in reading demonstrated higher reading comprehension skills.

The current study did not find a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and a love of reading, despite the positive findings in the previously mentioned studies. This could be due to a myriad of reasons: differences in students' population, reading material, learning settings, or even students' perception and utilization of "fondness for reading." It could imply that although the pupils would like to read, they might not be using the books that will help them expand their vocabulary the most.

These results indicate the value of further research on what types of reading habits and materials are optimal in fostering vocabulary acquisition. To better promote vocabulary mastery, teachers may also try to integrate reading interest programs with direct vocabulary instruction.

CONCLUSION

Based on the overall findings of this study, one could conclude that there is no significant relationship between fondness for reading and vocabulary mastery. Hence, while reading can enhance language interaction and enrichment, it is not the sole element that contributes to vocabulary growth. Vocabulary acquisition can also be affected by other important variables such as learning strategies, students' intrinsic motivation, the frequency of language use in context, and formal instruction received in class. Teachers and curriculum designers are therefore invited to adopt diverse and integrative solutions when looking to improve students' vocabulary skills - not only on the grounds of improving reading interest.

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