

## **Students' Reading Interest in English Short Stories and Vocabulary Mastery as Correlation Research**

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### **Abstract**

In understanding an English text, something interesting is needed in reading a text. Higher interest in reading affects vocabulary mastery. Through reading, students will gain new experiences and knowledge. It will make it easier for students to receive messages from the teacher to increase students' interest in reading short stories in learning English. The purpose of the study was to find any correlation between students' reading interest in short stories and vocabulary mastery. The research design for this study was a correlational study. Using simple random sampling, it took 80 Eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 8 Cibitung in the academic year 2021-2022. The result found that students' interest in English Short Stories was 63% in the middle category of interest. Second, there were 42 students (53%) with good vocabulary mastery. Third, the correlation calculations found that H<sub>0</sub> was rejected, and H<sub>1</sub> was accepted. There was a significant correlation between students' reading interest in English short stories and vocabulary mastery, and the correlation direction was positive. Therefore, interest in reading and vocabulary mastery are two important things in learning English. It means the two things are related to the achievement of learning English. If students have no interest in reading English stories, then vocabulary mastery will not increase.

Keywords: correlation, reading interest, vocabulary mastery.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Reading is one of the most important things in learning a language, reading can help students to get more information needed to look for evidence for their new ideas, to develop their intellectual level. This activity is driven by the desire of the individual who called reading interest, then when someone already has an interest in reading, the individual will make reading activities a fun activity to create a reading culture in the community. Efforts that can be made to overcome interest in reading are when in their spare time such as at home or during school breaks they like to go to the library (Shapiro & Whitney, 1997). Reading interest is also determined by the number of books read in a month and number of times students read in a week and the favorite genre of English reading material.

There are several difficulties faced by students in learning English, one of which is mastery of vocabulary. Because they have a limited vocabulary, students will have difficulty mastering English skills. It is impossible to learn a language without vocabulary (Susanto, 2017). It should be presented, explained, included in all kinds of language learning activities, and should be studied by students. This means that without vocabulary mastery, people cannot master English. In other words, students' vocabulary mastery is very important to increase their reading interest. Based on the observations made by researchers on students of SMP Negeri 8 Cibitung. Researchers found problems in learning English. Some of the problems are: (1) lack of interest in reading short stories (Nurzaiyanah, Hamsa, & Daeng, 2021), (2) difficulty in fostering a reading culture (Adler,

2008). (3) has limited vocabulary knowledge and is not easy to master (Keenan, 2020), (4) the lack of interest in reading in learning English makes them uninterested (Miller, 2009; Nurzaiyanah et al., 2021), (5) the teaching method is monotonous orally alone (Awalia, 2021). To help students read effectively and easily to understand reading objectives, the teacher's task is to facilitate students by providing a reading corner when starting the lesson. So that they use appropriate strategies according to students' needs in responses to learning reading interest which will make them more comfortable, and more vocabulary that can be mastered makes it easier for students to understand what students read to increase students' responses to learning reading interest short stories in learning English. According to Swartawan (2016) aims at building a pattern of communication with oneself so that readers can obtain information from writing as a process of changing mindsets to develop self-quality.

Reading interest must start from childhood, which can be started in the family environment, school, and even the community environment (Boerma, Mol, & Jolles, 2018). People who have an interest in reading will more often develop strong literacy and manifest it to get reading material and then read it on their own consciousness. A person is used to reading because it starts from one's own desire which will eventually become a reading interest, namely reading short stories is satisfaction and not boring because in one day you can read more than one short story that has an interesting story. Vocabulary mastery is the competence to know words and meanings. This means that students have the ability to understand and use words and meanings. According to the Oxford dictionary "Great knowledge about or understanding of a particular thing". Then vocabulary mastery means a great skill of knowledge about a set of words known by a person as a part of a specific language. The mastery here is restricted to the vocabulary that was taught to the students. Vocabulary mastery is crucial to language acquisition. The teachers are not only hoped to select which words are suitable to be taught to the students. The importance of vocabulary aims so that students have language skills to build adequate meaning from texts that are good language skills. It depends on the quality and quantity of vocabulary they master. The richer the vocabulary that can be mastered by students, the better the skills that can be achieved in using language.

## **2 RESEARCH METHODS**

Research takes a quantitative approach in this study. Quantitative methods are used to collect numerical data using various research instruments. According to Arikunto (2014), the objective of a correlational study is to see whether there is a correlation between two or more variables. It is to see how far the variations of a factor related to one or more other factors based on the correlational coefficient. The researcher wants to collect sufficient proof if there is any significant students' reading interest in English short stories and vocabulary mastery at SMP Negeri 8 Cibitung.

The population of this research will be the 240 students from the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 8 Cibitung in the academic year 2021/2022. The sample of this research using simple random sampling will be used by the researcher to choose the sample size for this study. There are numerous reasons why this sampling technique was selected, one of which. According to Sugiyono (2017), is a technique that can be used that is done simply because the sampling of members from the population is done randomly without being determined before.

## **3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Data Description for Students' Reading Interest Variable**

For this analysis, the researcher gathered data on students' interest in English short stories using a questionnaire of 15 items with 80 Eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 8 Cibitung

in the academic year 2021-2022. It showed some statements and scales indicating the students reading interest. To make it easy to determine in an interval the score of the questionnaire sheet, all answers would be changed to become score by using Linkert Scale. According to Sarjono, the Linkert scale is a scale that is used to measure the attitudes, choices, and perceptions of a person or group of people towards a social situation. The researcher will using the six sets of reading interest of short stories as the indicator for the questionnaire. In the questionnaire there will be information about the respondent's personal data (name, class, and school) and questions related to interest in reading short stories in English. The scale used in this questionnaire is a four-point Likert scale where questions are written in the form of statements and participants' answers are measured on a scale strongly agree--agree--neutral--disagree. Participants will also be asked for additional information to convey things that are not listed in the questionnaire

Based on the frequency distribution list above, the researcher could describe the data of students' reading interest in English short stories as follows:

Tabel 1. Distribution Frequency of Students' Reading Interest

Kategori	Score	Frequency	Percentage
High	76-100	7	9%
Middle	56-75	50	63%
Low	0-55	23	29%

Based on Table 1, there are seven students (9%) in the high category of interest, 50 students (63%) in the middle category of interest, and 23 students (29%) in the low category of interest. So, the percentage of students' interest in English Short Stories is 63% in the middle category of interest.

### 3.2 Data Description for Vocabulary Mastery Variable

In collecting the data to measure students' vocabulary mastery, the researcher uses Vocabulary test which was adapted and modified from the five aspect of vocabulary and consisted of 25 items. The aspects which are quantified collocation, antonym, hyponym, and synonym. In the process of collecting data, the researcher gave 45 minutes to the students' vocabulary test, the content of 25 questions of multiple-choice, which were given to find out students' vocabulary mastery. The students were asked to choose the correct word for each question. The researcher needed to know the statistical score of the data, the finding will be presented in Table 2.

Tabel 2. Distribution Frequency of Vocabulary Mastery

Level	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Very Good	86-100	6	8%
Good	71-85	42	53%
Average	56-70	30	38%
Poor	41-55	2	3%
Very Poor	<40	0	0%

Based on Table 2, there are six students (8%) in the very good level of vocabulary mastery, 42 students (53%) in the good level of vocabulary mastery, 30 students (38%) in the average level of vocabulary mastery, two students (3%) in the poor level of vocabulary mastery, and 0 students (0%) in the very poor level of vocabulary mastery.

### 3.3 Correlation between Students' Reading Interest and Vocabulary Mastery

To answer the research question: of whether there was any significant correlation between students' reading interest in English short stories and vocabulary mastery or not, Excel was applied. The result is in Table 3.

Based on Table 3, it was found that the value of  $r$  was 0.533. It means that  $H_0$  was rejected, and  $H_1$  was accepted. Therefore, there was a significant correlation between students' reading interest in English short stories and vocabulary mastery, and the correlation direction was positive. Since the value of  $r$  was 0.533, it is categorized as a moderate correlation.

Tabel 3. Correlation

	Vocabulary Mastery	Reading Interest
Vocabulary Mastery	1	0,533
Reading Interest	0,533	1

The result of students' interest in English Short Stories was 63% in the middle category of interest. That means the student's interest in reading short stories was moderate. A short story is a tool of teaching and learning that can attract learners and build their interest in learning. The result analysis for students' vocabulary mastery was divided into five score levels. Based on the result, there were 42 students (53%) with a good level of vocabulary mastery. Teaching vocabulary is considered one of the most confusing parts of teaching English as a foreign language. The correlation calculations found that the  $p$ -value was 0.000, and the value of  $r$  was 0.533. Because the  $p$ -value (0.000) was lower than 0.05,  $H_0$  was rejected, and  $H_1$  was accepted. Therefore, there was a significant correlation between students' reading interest in English short stories and vocabulary mastery, and the correlation direction was positive.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the findings and discussion with 80 Eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 8 Cibitung in the academic year 2021-2022, some conclusions could be presented. Firstly, students' interest in English Short Stories was 63% in the middle category of interest. Second, there are 42 students (53%) with a good level of vocabulary mastery. Third, the correlation calculations found that the  $p$ -value was 0.000, and the value of  $r$  was 0.533. Because the  $p$ -value (0.000) was lower than 0.05,  $H_0$  was rejected, and  $H_1$  was accepted. Therefore, there was a significant correlation between students' reading interest in English short stories and vocabulary mastery, and the correlation direction was positive.

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