A CORRELATION BETWEEN LEARNING MOTIVATION AND VOCABULARY MASTERY AND READING COMPETENCE

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Abstract

This research is aimed to find out: (1) whether there is any correlation between learning motivation and reading competence; (2) whether there is any correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence; and (3) whether there is any correlation between learning motivation and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and reading competence. The research is carried out at SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta. The research is conducted from January – April 2012 in the second grade students, academic year 2011-2012. The data of the research is collected using questionnaire to collect the data of students' learning motivation and test to collect the data of vocabulary mastery and students' reading competence. The data are then being analyzed using simple correlation and multiple linear regression. The research findings show that (1) There is significant positive correlation between learning motivation and reading competence ($r_{y1} = 0.735$ > r table = 0.206); (2) There is significant positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence (0.710 > 0.206; (3) There is a significant positive correlation between learning motivation and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and reading competence (F observation 91.931 > F table 3.11).

Keywords: Learning Motivation, Vocabulary Mastery, Reading Competence

Reading is one of language skills noted as a part of important ability in broadening readers' perspectives, giving them a chance to see the world. The ability to read empowers the readers to take control of their own knowledge and further to decide their future. Having reading skill will ease one in understanding information and knowledge. This skill will also be a useful mean to gain successful in academic.

Reading is one of skills which should be mastered by students of Junior High School. Reading means understanding the text. In language learning, reading plays an important role in mastering other language skills. Reading nowadays is not learnt apart from other skills. It should be integrated and put in whole context (holistic). To achieve this, the support of language elements such as vocabulary and grammar, and the existence of an appropriate reading strategy or model are required. Reading without understanding will not mean as reading. The successful of reading is influenced by many factors. Those factors come from either inside or outside the individual of learner, both related to linguistic factors or non-linguistic factors.

Nunan (2003: 22) says that motivation and learning attitude are important predictors of achievement. In relation with that statement, Slavin (2009: 302) says that students who are highly motivated to learn something are more likely than others to consciously plan their learning, to carry out a learning plan, and to retain the information they obtain.

Motivation and engagement contribute to reading comprehension. It is increasingly evident that the acquisition of reading strategies and reading comprehension skills demands a large amount of effort and motivation and that outstanding teachers invest substantial time and energy in supporting students' motivation and engagement in reading. One reason that motivation and engagement may influence the development of reading comprehension is that motivated students usually want to understand text content fully and, therefore, process information deeply. As they read frequently with these cognitive

purposes, motivated students gain in reading comprehension proficiency (Guthrie et al., 2004: 403).

Students with high motivation to learn English will better prepare themselves to engage the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. Teachers, parents or observer will be easy to recognize student with high motivation to learn and will also be easy to differ them with one with low motivation. Students with high motivation will prefer to read more books, ask many questions to teachers, do the exercises, expose themselves to English language using, trying to use their English skill to communicate with others, or happily engage in the process of teaching and learning English. Meanwhile, students with low motivation usually have no strong will to engage in the process of teaching and learning English. They rarely ask questions even though they do not understand the subject. They will have to be forced by teacher or parents to read the book, do the exercises, and or do the tasks from teacher. Students with low motivation usually assume English subject as a difficult or even the most difficult subject to be learned.

The low or high motivation to learn English finally influenced the result of the learning. The higher motivation will result in higher achievement, while the lower one will also result the lower achievement. It means that the high motivation has encouraged and supported students to put all of their effort to master English subject. It leads them to get better result in the test or examination. Intrinsically motivated students do much better in classroom activities, because

they are willing and eager to learn new things. Their learning experience is more meaningful and they go deeper into the subject to fully understand it.

Another factor influence the successful of reading is linguistic factors such as knowledge of vocabulary, knowledge of grammar, knowledge of punctuation, and other part of language. The successful of reading also need the knowledge of the world. Guthrie et al. (2004: 405) says that reading comprehension is correlated with a range of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Guthrie's statement implies that one should have proper knowledge of the world in order to understand the text. One will fail to understand the meaning of any text unless he already has proper background knowledge. Thus, the competence of students to read English text depends on their skills and knowledge. In order to gain competence in reading, one should have all of those skills and knowledge.

In addition, Murcia (2001: 154) says that there are six general component skills and knowledge areas which are involved in the process of reading. Some of them are (1) vocabulary and structural knowledge, (2) formal discourse structure knowledge, and (3) content/word background knowledge. This statement also suggests students to have all of the three knowledges in order to be successful in reading. This statement coincides with the result of research conducted by Cabaroglu and Yurdaisik (2008: 133). It is found out that the most important problems instructors face in a reading class is the unknown vocabulary and unfamiliar topic. Most students have difficulty in understanding the text because they do not have enough vocabulary knowledge and knowledge about the topic. As Laufer (2003 in Cabaroglu and Yurdaisik, 2008: 137) states no text

comprehension is possible without understanding the text's vocabulary and it has been consistently demonstrated that reading comprehension is strongly related to vocabulary knowledge, more strongly than to the other components of reading.

Second language reading comprehension is affected by vocabulary alone (Laufer in Kuang Yu Chen, 2011: 29). The breadth of vocabulary knowledge usually is represented as vocabulary size, which refers to the numbers of the words that second language learners know, rather than emphasizing on how well learners know given words. Rumptz (2003) says that vocabulary plays important role in reading. A reader could have all of reading skills, but be impeded in understanding a text if the vocabulary of the text was not of his or her schematic knowledge.

Based on the explanation above, the writer intends to study the correlation between learning motivation and vocabulary mastery and reading competence. The problems of this research are formulated as follow.

1. Is there any positive correlation between learning motivation and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta academic year 2011-2012?

2. Is there any positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta academic year 2011-2012?

3. Is there any correlation positive between learning motivation and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta academic year 2011-2012?

And the purposes of this research are stated as follow.

1. To find out whether there is any correlation between learning motivation and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta academic year 2011-2012.

2. To find out whether there is any correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta academic year 2011-2012.

3. To find out whether there is any correlation between learning motivation and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta academic year 2011-2012.

REVIEW OF LEARNING MOTIVATION

Learning motivation is all of inner and psychological drive which pushes or prompts students to study and to learn, which guarantee the continuity of learning activities and which gives the goal to be achieved (Winkel, 2009: 169). Reena (2010: 151) say that one of the major keys to motivation is the active involvement of students in their own learning. Lecturing is a relatively poor method of teaching. It is better to get students involved in activities, group problem solving exercises, helping to decide what to do and the best way to do it, helping the teacher, working with each other and so on. Brighter students will also see themselves as necessary, integral, and contributing parts of the learning process through participation like this.

Based on the explanation above, the writer draws a conclusion that learning motivation is an inner and outer drive or force or desire, consist of

intrinsic and extrinsic factors which forces student to engage actively in learning English so that his certain objectives can be achieved successfully.

REVIEW OF VOCABULARY MASTERY

According to Manser (1995: 461) in the Oxford Learners Dictionary vocabulary is the total number of words in a language, all words known by a person or used in a particular book, subject, or a list of words with their meanings. Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary (2003) illustrates that vocabulary means the words that make up a language. It also means all of the words known and used by a person, a list or collection of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or define, a list or collection of terms or codes available for use, a sum or stock of word employed by a language group, individual or work or in a field knowledge. Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that vocabulary is the total number of words in a particular language that a person knows or uses.

Based on the explanation above, vocabulary is the total number of words in a particular language that a person knows or uses, while mastery means as comprehensive knowledge. Then, vocabulary mastery means as a comprehensive knowledge of vocabulary that one knows or uses.

REVIEW OF READING COMPETENCE

Current research generally views reading as an interactive, sociocognitive process, involving a text, a reader, and a social context within which the activity takes place (Ediger, 2001: 154). Reading is also about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading

consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text (Pang et al., 2003: 12).

In order to become a good reader, one should have the competence to read the text or reading competence. The word competence can be defined as the ability to produce and understand the sentences of a given language, and identify ambiguous and deviant sentences (Johnson & Johnson, in Sinem, 2011: 88).

Thus, reading competence can be defined as the ability of someone to understand the sentences of English written text, and understand the meaning of sentences contained in the text.

Rationale

The correlation between learning motivation and reading competence

The low or high motivation to learn English finally influenced the result of the learning. It is assumed that the higher motivation will result in higher achievement, while the lower one will also result in the lower achievement.

The correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence

Understanding English text needs understanding the meaning of vocabulary in context. It also means that it is not possible to achieve comprehension, either for native speakers or second language learners, without understanding the vocabulary in the reading text. Thus, it is assumed that in order to have good reading competency, one should also have good vocabulary mastery.

The correlation between learning motivation and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and reading competence

Learning motivation and vocabulary mastery are assumed simultaneously have correlation with reading competency. Students who enjoy reading will also develop their vocabulary mastery. Improving vocabulary is assumed lead to improving reading competence.

Hypothesis

1. There is a positive correlation between learning motivation and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta academic year 2011-2012.

2. There is a positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta academic year 2011-2012.

3. There is a positive correlation between learning motivation and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and reading comprehension of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta academic year 2011-2012.

Statistical Hypothesis

1. First hypothesis

   H_o (Null hypothesis)   : $\rho_{y1} = 0$

   H_a (Alternative hypothesis)   : $\rho_{y1} > 0$

   ρ_{y1} :   The coefficient of correlation between learning motivation and reading competence

2. Second hypothesis

    H_o (Null hypothesis)   : $\rho_{y2} = 0$

    H_a (Alternative hypothesis)   : $\rho_{y2} > 0$

    ρ_{y2} :   The coefficient of correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence

3. Third hypothesis

    H_o (Null hypothesis)   : $\rho_{y12} = 0$

    H_a (Alternative hypothesis)   : $\rho_{y12} > 0$

    ρ_{y12} :   The coefficient of correlation between learning motivation, vocabulary mastery and reading competence

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a correlational study which studies the correlation between three variables, namely learning motivation, vocabulary mastery, and reading competence.

The Technique of Collecting the Data

The questionnaire of learning motivation was used to collect the data about students' learning motivation. The questionnaire consisted of 50 statements with four alternatives of answer: (a) very agree, (b) agree, (c) disagree, and (d) very disagree. The score ranges from 1 to 4.

The test of vocabulary mastery is objective test in the form of multiple-choice type. There are four alternatives answers in each item, consisting one correct answer and three destructors. There are 75 items will be used to measure students' vocabulary mastery. The scoring system for the test is dividing the

correct answer by 75 and then multiplying it by 100. So, the highest score is 100 and the lowest one is 0.

The test of reading competence is objective test in the form of multiple-choice type. There are four alternatives answers in each item, consisting one correct answer and three destructors. There are 75 items will be used to measure students' reading competence. The scoring system for the test is dividing the correct answer by 75 and then multiplying it by 100. So, the highest score is 100 and the lowest one is 0.

The Technique of Analyzing the Data

The data gained from questionnaire and reading test was then being analyzed using simple correlation and multiple linear regression. The first which saying that there is positive and significant correlation between learning motivation and reading competence and the second hypothesis which was saying that there is positive and significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence were tested using simple correlation or Pearson Product Moment Formula as follow.

$$r_{XY} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2](N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2)}}$$

(Soegiyono, 2008: 255)

The result of the computation can be interpreted to find out the degree to which the variables are related.

Furthermore, to test the third hypothesis which saying that there is a positive and significant correlation between learning motivation, vocabulary

mastery simultaneously and reading competence, the researcher used the formula of multiple linear regression. The formula is as the following.

$$Y = a_0 + a_1X_1 + a_2 X_2$$

where :

a_0 = Constanta

Y = Reading competence

X_1 = Learning motivation

X_2 = Vocabulary mastery

a_1, a_2 = coefficient of predictor 1 and 2

The test was conducted with the help of SPSS program for Windows. The coefficient of correlation or R is significant if the value of F observation is greater than the value of F table. F test is used to find out the significance correlation between two independent variables simultaneously toward dependent variable.

The test of R^2 is used to find out the intensity of correlation between the two independent variables toward dependent variable. The value of R^2 can be seen in the summary output table in the result of *SPSS 16.0 For Windows*.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The result of simple correlation analysis between variables shows that learning motivation and vocabulary mastery have positive correlation to the reading competence. A positive correlation means that the increase of learning motivation is followed by the increase of reading competence. This result is coincidence with the result of research conducted by Fazal ur Rahman, Nabi Bux Jumani, and Abdul Basit (2010) about motivating and de-motivating factors

among learners. The results of this study revealed a significant correlation between the motivation and academic achievement of the students especially on the English subject. The increase of learning motivation will be followed by the increase of reading competence. Meanwhile, the decrease of learning motivation mastery will be followed by the decrease of reading competence.

Slavin (2009: 297) stated that motivation is important not only in getting students to engage in academic activities but also in determining how much students will learn from the activities they perform or from information to which they exposed. Motivation can be known from their effort and their willing in doing the activities of studying or learning. It implies that high motivated student differ from the low motivated one. One will be easily known as high motivated or low motivated students from their effort and their willing in doing the activities.

According to Rost (2006) motivation provides a source of energy that is responsible for why learners decide to make an effort, how long they are willing to sustain an activity, how hard they are going to pursue it, and how connected they feel to the activity. Thus, motivated students will have more energy to learn, to read more books, to ask questions to teachers or other resources, and will have an exact and big goal to be reached. They love to read printed texts. They read more and try to understand more. Their reading skill will be improved during their activity of reading. In the contrary, unmotivated students do not have enough energy to study, unwilling to make an effort to read English books, and do not have an exact purpose of reading or studying. They rarely read English books and rarely try to understand English text. Their reading skills will not be improved.

Thus, the high motivation will be followed by the high of reading competence and the low of motivation will be followed by the low of reading competence.

The result of simple correlation analysis also shows that vocabulary mastery have positive correlation to the reading competence. A positive correlation means that the increase of vocabulary mastery is followed by the increase of reading competence. The result of this research is in line with the result of the research conducted by Kuang Yu Chen (2011) about The Impact of EFL Students' Vocabulary Breadth of Knowledge on Literal Reading comprehension. The quantitative results of Kuang Yu Chen's research indicated that vocabulary breadth of knowledge was correlated to literal reading comprehension.

The correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence is strong enough. It means that the improvement of vocabulary mastery will be followed by the improvement of reading competence. There is an undeniable premise that the ability to understand the language greatly depends on one's knowledge of vocabulary besides the other knowledge of language itself. It has to be realized that the students' ability to read, to write, to listen, and to speak is conditioned by their vocabulary. In relation with reading, it is not possible to achieve comprehension without understanding the vocabulary in the reading text. The result of the research is in line with McCarty statement (2000 quoted by Kuang Yu Chen, 2011: 32) that the stronger the vocabulary knowledge the EFL student has, the better reading comprehension the reader will achieve.

People need to understand vocabulary before they can understand the meaning of the text. Limited vocabulary mastery will halt them in understanding the meaning of such an English text. On the contrary, one's vocabulary mastery will be increased by more reading. It means that reading more books or more English text will add more vocabulary to one's vocabulary mastery.

Based on the above explanation, it can be said that the result of the research is suitable to the theoretical discussion as explained in chapter II of this thesis. Learning motivation and vocabulary mastery simultaneously support reading competence. Therefore, reading competence can be explained and predicted from these two parameters.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the result of the study, it can be concluded as follow.

1. There is significant positive correlation between learning motivation and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta in the academic year 2011-2012 ($r_{y1} = 0.735 >$ r table $= 0.206$). It means that reading competence will follow the increase or the decrease of learning motivation.

2. There is significant positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading competence of the second grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta in the academic year 2011-2012 ($0.710 > 0.206$). It means that reading competence will follow the increase or the decrease of vocabulary mastery.

3. There is significant positive correlation between learning motivation and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and reading competence of the second

grade students of SMP Negeri 4 Surakarta in the academic year 2011-2012 (F observation = 91.931 > F table = 3.11). It means that reading competence will simultaneously follow the increase and decrease of learning motivation and vocabulary mastery.

Suggestion

Based on the result of the study and implication above, the writer proposes that students' learning motivation should be maintained and elevated using intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, for example by giving reward, by appreciating students for doing the homework, by creating an enjoy full process of teaching, etc. The writer also proposes that the students' vocabulary mastery should be increased. This can be realized by encouraging students to read more and more texts. Reading will add students' vocabulary mastery. Students should therefore be provided with opportunities to read interesting texts. The teacher should also give opportunities for students to practice their new learned vocabularies in writing or reading. This will make students' vocabulary mastery increased.

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