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**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' READING INTEREST AND READING  
COMPREHENSION OF TRIDINANTI UNIVERSITY PALEMBANG**

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**ABSTRACT:** Reading comprehension is an active thinking process that is depended not only comprehension skill but the students' experience and prior knowledge comprehension involves understanding the vocabulary, seeing the relationship among words and concept making judgment and evaluating. The study was aimed to find the significant correlation and contribution between reading interest and reading comprehension. Fifty four students of Undergraduate EFL students of Tridinanti University Palembang became the sample of the study. The data was gained from students' reading interest questionnaire and their reading comprehension test. In analyzing the data, correlation analysis and regression analysis were used. The result showed that the correlation coefficient level between reading interest and reading comprehension was 0.477 with the sig. value 0.000, it means that there was a significant correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension of undergraduate EFL students Tridinanti University Palembang. Then, reading interest gave contribution to reading comprehension as much as 18.6%.

**Key words:** *reading interest, reaing comprehension.*

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**MINAT BACA DAN PEMAHAMAN MEMBACA  
UNTUK MAHASISWA TRIDINANTI PALEMBANG**

**ABSTRAK:** Pemahaman membaca merupakan proses berpikir aktif yang tidak hanya bergantung pada keterampilan pemahaman tetapi pengalaman dan pemahaman siswa terhadap pengetahuan sebelumnya melibatkan pemahaman kosakata, melihat hubungan antara kata dan konsep, membuat penilaian dan mengevaluasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan dan kontribusi yang signifikan antara minat baca dan pemahaman membaca. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 54 mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Tridinanti Palembang. Data diperoleh dari angket minat baca siswa dan tes pemahaman bacaan siswa. Dalam menganalisis data digunakan analisis korelasi dan analisis regresi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan koefisien korelasi antara minat baca dan pemahaman membaca sebesar 0,477 dengan nilai signifikan 0,000, artinya ada hubungan yang signifikan antara minat baca dengan kemampuan membaca pemahaman mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Tridinanti Palembang. Kemudian minat baca berkontribusi 18,6% terhadap pemahaman membaca mahasiswa

**Kata Kunci:** *minat membaca, pemahaman membaca*

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## INTRODUCTION

English is one of the foreign languages that is considered important to be mastered by the Indonesian Nation because English has a very strategic position, namely as a communication tool as well as a language of association between nations. As one of the four main skills of English, reading plays important role to develop students' English skill. Reading is the process how the reader interpret and understand the message conveyed. Sismiati (2012) assumed that reading is an important activity and becomes more important in this modern world, when the development in every life aspect occurs very quickly. In addition, Vygotsky cited in Sutarsyah (2013, p. 14) defined that reading as the process of thinking and acquiring knowledge involved automatic unconscious acquisition, followed by gradual increase in active conscious control over that knowledge.

Interest is one of the learner's internal factors. It may have a significant influence on the student's reading ability. Iskandarwassid & Sunendar (2008) proposed that reading is determined by interest (p. 246). Reading interest is an activity conducted with full awareness of self and the appropriate continues aims to build the communication pattern with yourself so that the reader can obtain information from the writing as the process of changing the pattern of thinking for develop quality themselves (Swartawan, 2016). In this case, the students can be successful to comprehend in reading English text if their teacher gives an appropriate interest based on students' characteristics.

In addition, Haq (2014) states that reading comprehension is one of the standard skills in English which must be achieved at all levels of education form elementary school up to university level. Through reading skills, students are expected to be able to read and understand the contents of reading text. However, reading comprehension itself is an activity builds understanding of the meaning of a text which could then translate and through its own language.

Based on preliminary study by Septiani (2018) in Tridinanti University Palembang, she did a research about reading. The result showed that the condition of reading comprehension of the most students of English Study Program in Tridinanti University Palembang were; firstly, their reading level was still low. Secondly, they less used to reading articles, and thirdly, they was lack of knowledge about reading comprehension, and last, their reading interest was less. The students also tended to read nonacademic materials which did not influence the improvement of their English skill. Therefore, the writer chose English study program of Tridinanti University as a setting to conduct the research, because it had a program of English Department in the curriculum, the students should take reading course from first semester to fourth semester.

Based on the above fact, the writers were interested in conducting the research which discussed about the influence of reading interest toward reading comprehension.

### 1. Reading Comprehension

According to Grabe (2009), reading is a process when readers learn something from what they read and involve it in an academic context as a part of education. Reading is one of the essential language skills. Therefore, it becomes one of the subjects studied by many scholars. In addition, Hedgcock and Ferris (2009, p. 49) assert that

reading is defined as a complex activity in which cognitive processes, strategies used by the reader, and various types of information in the text interact.

In addition, reading comprehension is an active thinking process that is depended not only comprehension skill but the students' experience and prior knowledge comprehension involves understanding the vocabulary, seeing the relationship among words and concept making judgment and evaluating (Snow, 2002). So, reading comprehension is a process in which reader construct meaning by interacting with text through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience, information in the text, and the stance the reader takes in relationship to text and also an active thinking process that is depended not only comprehension skill but the students' experience and prior knowledge comprehension involves understanding the vocabulary, seeing the relationship among words and concept making judgment and evaluating.

## 2. Reading Interest

Schraw and Lehman (2001) defined interest as liking and willful engagement in a cognitive activity. It plays an important part in learning process since it promotes active engagement and focusing one's attention. Crow and Crow state that there are three factors which influence students' reading interest (Rumainah 2018). They are intrinsic motivation, social motive, and emotion.

Interest is defined as interaction between a person and an object within the environment (Khaled, 2013). In other words, there is something happened which made a person and an object interrelated each other. So, reading interest is one of motivational aspects that cause people to have high attention in reading a text, if the students' high interest usually they would read more and find it useful and enjoyable.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted on the basis of correlation study which was mainly aimed at finding the significant correlation and contribution between reading interest and reading comprehension. The subject of the study was 54 students of English Education Study Program of Tridinanti University in the academic 2019/2020, which were chosen by using total sampling technique.

In collecting the data, the writers used a questionnaire and test. Questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions (or other types of prompts) for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. In obtaining data for students' reading interest, the writers used the ready-made questionnaire consisting of 20 items made by Fajri (2015). Meanwhile, for reading comprehension the writers used reading comprehension test from TOEFL paper-based test by Phillips (2003). The multiple choice consisted of 50 items. The material used were considered valid and reliable and therefore it did not need to be tested for its validity and reliability. According to ETS TOEFL on [www.ets.org/toefl](http://www.ets.org/toefl), the reliability coefficient of TOEFL is 0.95 which is highly reliable across all forms of test and through different administration of test.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Findings

#### 1.1. The Students' Level of Reading Interest

The percentage analysis was used to know the students' level in terms of their reading interest. The summary of the students' levels of reading interest is presented in the following table 1.

*Table 1.* The Summary of Students' Level of Reading Interest

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Reading Interest	High (68 - 100)	24	44.44
	Average (34 - 67)	30	55.56
	Low (0 - 33)	0	0

There were three categories of student reading interest; high, average and low. There were 24 (44.44%) students classified in high category, 30 (55.56%) students were classified in average category and there was none of student classified in low category. In other words, it was assumed that the students of English Education Study Program in Tridinanti University had average level of reading interest.

#### 1.2. Descriptive Analysis of Reading Comprehension

The result of students' reading comprehension shown that the minimum score was 56, whereas their maximum score was 92 the mean score was 75.96 with standard deviation was 8.596. See table 2 below.

*Table 2.* The Descriptive Analysis of Student's Reading Comprehension

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Y	54	56	92	75.96	8.596
Valid N	54				

#### 1.3. The Result of Students' Reading Comprehension

There were three categories of students' reading comprehension; excellent, good, average, poor and very poor. There were 14 (25.93%) students classified in excellent category, 36 (66.67%) students was classified in good category, 4 (7.14%) students were classified in average category and there was none of student classified in poor category and very poor category. It means that the students of English Education Study Program in Tridinanti University had good level of reading comprehension. See following table 3.

Table 3. The Summary of Students' Level of Reading Comprehension

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Excellent (81 - 100)</b>	14	25.93
<b>Good (61 - 80)</b>	36	66.67
<b>Average (41 - 60)</b>	4	7.14
<b>Poor (21 - 40)</b>	0	0
<b>Very Poor (0 - 20)</b>	0	0

#### 1.4. Normality Test of Variance

In this study, the normality test was used to find out whether or not the data of reading interest and reading comprehension. It was done by using Kolmogorov-Smirnov computed by applying SPSS 24. The data were distributed normal, if the probability (p-value) was higher than alpha-value (0.05). The statistical outputs were presented in the following table 4.

Table 4. Test of Normality

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.
<b>Reading Interest</b>	0.105	54	0.200*
<b>Reading Comprehension</b>	0.113	54	0.084

Based on the result of normality test, the data was normal. It can be seen that the data of reading interest was that p-value (0.200) was higher than alpha-value (0.05), it could be assumed that the data of reading interest was normally distributed. Related to the result of normality test, the data of reading comprehension was found that p-value (0.084) was higher than alpha-value (0.05), or  $p > 0.05$ . It could be assumed that both data were normally distributed.

#### 1.6. Correlation Analysis

In order to find out whether there was significant correlation between students reading interest and reading comprehension. The writers used Pearson Product Moment Correlation, It was shown in table 5.

Table 5. Correlation Analysis

Variables	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>Reading Interest</b>	0.477	0.000
<b>Reading Comprehension</b>		

It was found that correlation between students reading interest and reading comprehension was 0.477 (medium or sufficient correlation) at the significance level of 0.000. It means students reading interest and reading comprehension was significantly correlated since the p-value (0.000) was higher than 0.05.

### 1.8. Regression Analysis

To find out in what extent the reading interest contributes toward students' reading comprehension of undergraduate EFL students of Tridinanti University Palembang, the writers used regression, see table 6.

Table 6. Regression Analysis

Aspect	R	R Square	Sig.
Reading Interest	.431	.186	.001

Based on the above analysis, it was found that the significance value ( $\rho$ ) was 0.001. It was lower than alpha value ( $\alpha$ ) 0.05, it indicated that students' reading interest positively contributed toward their reading comprehension and the value of R Square was 0.186. in other words, students' reading interest contributed as much 18.6 % toward their reading comprehension.

## 2. Discussion

It was found that in reading in reading interest; the mean score was 66.00, minimum score was 52, maximum score was 79 and the standard deviation was 6.402. There were three categories of students' reading interest; high, average and low. There were 24 (44.44%) students classified in high category, 30 (55.56%) students were classified in average category and there was non of student classified in low category. In other words, it was assumed that the students of English Education Study Program in Tridinanti University had average level of reading interest. The last was reading comprehension; the mean score was 75.96, minimum score was 56, maximum score was 92 and the standard deviation was 8.596. There were three categories of students' reading comprehension; excellent, good, average, poor and very poor. There were 14 (25.93%) students classified in excellent category, 36 (66.67%) students were classified in good category, 4 (7.41%) students were classified in average category and there was none of student classified in poor category and very poor category. It means that the students of English Education Study Program in Tridinanti University had good level of reading comprehension.

The result of correlation analysis that the correlation coefficient between students reading interest and reading comprehension was 0.477 (medium or sufficient correlation) at the significance level of 0.000. It means that students' reading interest and reading comprehension were significantly correlated since the *p-value* (0.000) was higher than 0.05.

In this study, most of the students had moderate reading interest. It means that they loved reading even though in moderate level. They also enjoyed their reading class, and excited to reading. However, most of them loved reading for pleasure, especially reading the type of books that they liked. They reported that they were interested only in certain books. In addition, they felt happy when they read book although sometimes they got bored in doing this activity. It could happen due to some reasons. Based on the analysis of the questionnaire, only few of them read at least one book in a day. The reason could be due to the development of technology nowadays. They were surrounded by much more interesting stuffs such as social media on internet, video games, movies, television and some others. It was in accordance with Hritcu and Schipor's study

(2014) they stated that reading had lost ground in a society dominated by mass media. It was also proved by the finding that only some of them preferred reading to playing games in their spare time.

Next, for reading comprehension, the data distribution showed there was the good amount of percentage of the students who were in good level as the students who were in average level of achievement. It could happen since they had already completed their reading courses, so they have enough knowledge and skills in reading comprehension questions. It also showed a big percentage was in good reading achievement level. However, some students in a medium level of reading comprehension. This might happen due to some factors involved in reading comprehension. It could be caused by the fact that they did not focus in doing the reading comprehension test because the research was done after they had taken subjects at college. Some of them were also doing the test by chatting with their friends. As stated by Lenz (2014), reading comprehension was affected by the reader's knowledge of the topic, knowledge of language structures, knowledge of text structures and genres, knowledge of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, their reasoning abilities, their motivation, and their level of engagement. It might be that the students were not engaged fully during the test, or they had low motivation to do the test.

From the hypothesis testing, it was found that there was correlation between reading interest (X) and reading comprehension (Y). Since X and Y has medium correlation, that was 0.477 and the significant level was 0.001 (shown in table 11). It means that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected. It can be said that students' reading interest correlated significantly to their reading comprehension. The result of correlation coefficient between reading interest (X) and reading comprehension (Y) was there was positive contribution and there was significant correlation between reading interest (X) and reading comprehension (Y) of undergraduate EFL students of Tridinanti University Palembang. Thus, it did not matter whether the reading interest of the students were high or low, even more, it did not mean anything if the students were affected by attention, time use, motivation, emotion, and effort toward their reading comprehension achievement, because the difference among their aspects of reading interest did not give any differences in their reading comprehension achievement score.

The result of regression analysis indicated that students' reading interest positively contributed toward their reading comprehension and the value of R Square was 0.186. It means that students' reading interest contributed as much 18.6 % toward their reading comprehension. Since there was contribution of reading interest to reading comprehension. It could be used to help students diligent to read something.

Reading interest is one of the learner's internal factors. This factor cannot be ignored in teaching reading comprehension. It may have a significant influence on the student's reading skill. Al-Shorman and Batanieh (2005) investigated the top reading interest of upper basic stage students in their native language, the potential effects of gender, class level, school type and the potential relationship between their perceptions of the importance of reading and those of their parents, siblings, teachers and peers.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion of the study, it could be summarized that both of the problem of the study were answered. The writer drew conclusion that is it was found that correlation between students reading interest and reading comprehension was 0.477 (medium or sufficient correlation) at the significance level of 0.000. It means students reading interest and reading comprehension was significance correlated since the p-value (0.000) was higher than 0.05.

Regression analysis indicated that students' reading interest positively contributed toward their reading comprehension and the value of R Square was 0.186. It means that students' reading interest contributed as much 18.6 % toward their reading comprehension. Since there was a positive contribution of reading interest to reading comprehension.

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