



Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery, Reading Habits, and English Reading Comprehension Achievements in Students of State Elementary School Gunungsari 01 Pati

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Abstract. This study uses a one group pretest posttest design model. posttest on the correlation between vocabulary mastery, reading habits, while pretest with conventional learning, then both groups were measured with the same measuring instrument. To test whether the two data (variables) are the same or different, a t-test was conducted. The t-test obtained a t count of 2.082 with $\alpha = 0.05$ and t table = 1.725. The testing criteria in the one-tailed test are H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted if t count > t table. The hypothesis can be accepted because t count > t table, namely $2.082 > 1.725$. The results of student learning completeness show a significant percentage, namely the pretest gets 10 (50%) students who have not completed and 10 (50%) students who have completed after being carried out on the correlation between vocabulary mastery, reading habits get completeness posttest learning results 18 (88.89%) students who have completed and 2 (11.11%) students who have not completed. It was concluded that through the correlation between vocabulary mastery, students' reading habits can achieve learning completeness because it is one indicator of the effectiveness of this research. The conclusion is that the correlation between vocabulary mastery, reading habits is effective in achieving English reading comprehension for fifth grade students of Gunungsari 01 Pati State Elementary School. Based on the results of this study, the suggestion obtained is that the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading habits be used as an alternative for teachers to teach English in class.

Keywords: Elementary School Students; English; Reading Comprehension Achievement; Reading Habits; Vocabulary Mastery.

I. BACKGROUND

English, as an international language, has become a vital part of education in Indonesia. It is taught formally in schools from elementary school to university (Budiyanto et al., 2023). Introducing English from elementary school is considered crucial because it provides the foundation for communication with people from various countries, emphasizing the global importance of English proficiency (Saputri & Prasetyarini, 2024). Since English was introduced as a subject in 1994, nearly all elementary schools, both public and private, have competed to implement English language learning (Rorintulus & Wuntu, 2023). The primary focus of English teaching in elementary schools is vocabulary mastery, as mastering a large vocabulary allows students to easily master other language skills.

Vocabulary is the most fundamental and crucial language component that must be mastered by students, especially English as a foreign language (EFL) learners (Setiawan et al., 2022). Adequate vocabulary mastery is crucial because it supports all other language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Octaberlina & Anggarini, 2020). Without an extensive vocabulary, students will not be able to use the language structures and functions

they have learned for understandable communication. A rich vocabulary will help students master English and its four vital skills.

However, many students in Indonesia still face limitations in English vocabulary mastery. A significant number of students experience difficulties in speaking, writing, listening, and reading in English due to limited vocabulary. Low vocabulary mastery is a major problem faced by EFL learners (Suhendra, 2023). Students with a broader vocabulary knowledge can utilize specific lexical inference strategies more effectively than weaker students, while students with slower vocabulary development are less able to comprehend texts at their grade level (Siahpoosh & Bagherin, 2023). In the Indonesian context, the importance of vocabulary mastery has not yet sufficiently stimulated English language teaching practices to place greater emphasis on vocabulary teaching and learning (Hezam et al., 2022).

Vocabulary acquisition in early childhood is crucial for language learning and academic success, and early exposure to English vocabulary enhances their proficiency in the language (Ningsih, 2023). As children age, vocabulary development impacts their ability to read effectively and perform well in school, so it is crucial to begin vocabulary learning early to build an understanding of word meaning (Syahria & Azzaria, 2023).

Reading habits are a crucial factor in developing language skills, including English. Reading serves as a supporting activity in improving English skills and is fundamental to expanding students' vocabulary, facilitating their speaking and writing skills (Ismiyani, 2021). However, reading culture or literacy habits in Indonesia are very low compared to other countries. According to a UNESCO report, Indonesia ranks 69th out of 127 countries in reading competence, with only 1 in 1,000 Indonesians enjoying reading (Yohana & Ismail, 2024).

This low reading interest poses a serious challenge in English language learning. Research shows that the majority of students do not have good reading habits, especially in English (Amanda & Suryaman, 2022). Most students stated that they dislike reading books or other sources in English, and according to them, vocabulary is the biggest obstacle to enjoying reading material in this foreign language (Budianto et al., 2024). Lack of reading motivation is one of the challenges faced by Indonesian students in learning English (Utami, 2022).

Extensive reading has been shown to provide significant benefits for EFL learners. Research shows that extensive reading improves reading comprehension, vocabulary comprehension, and writing skills (Lindawati, 2022). Extensive reading significantly impacts vocabulary acquisition, reading speed, and reading comprehension (Maharani, 2023). The more students read, the more vocabulary they acquire, and this leads to better English comprehension (Maharani, 2023). However, barriers to implementing extensive reading habits

include students' lack of interest in reading, lack of vocabulary mastery, and conflicting views about reading.

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill in language learning and is crucial for EFL students to develop strong reading skills (Safitri, 2024). However, many EFL students face significant difficulties in this area, including limited vocabulary, poor comprehension, difficulty understanding cultural nuances, and unfamiliarity with text structure (Hartono & Prima, 2021). Despite years of English study, Indonesian students still face challenges with reading comprehension (Masrul & Wicaksono, 2023).

One of the main factors influencing reading comprehension is vocabulary knowledge. Its role is so critical that vocabulary is considered to be at the heart of communicative competence and language acquisition (Wahyuningsih & Izzah, 2023). Research shows a strong and significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension at various levels (Fitriana, 2022). Low vocabulary knowledge has the potential to hinder reading comprehension and learning. Vocabulary mastery affects students' ability to comprehend English text content (Perkasa et al., 2022). Students find it difficult to remember word meanings, which is partly due to their lack of desire to learn English.

In the elementary school context, fourth-grade students experience difficulty reading English due to internal factors such as a lack of motivation to learn English in class and a limited vocabulary (Wahyuningsih & Izzah, 2023). Regarding external factors, school libraries lack English reading reference books. Unfamiliar vocabulary has been identified as a source of reading anxiety in a foreign language, where unfamiliar terminology can decrease student comprehension and cause challenges that lead to anxiety. Vocabulary is one of the biggest challenges when trying to understand the meaning and general idea of a text (Batista et al., 2021).

In addition to vocabulary, vocabulary learning strategies also correlate with reading comprehension. Research has found a significant correlation between vocabulary learning strategies and reading comprehension, although the contribution varies. Explicit vocabulary instruction also facilitates reading comprehension, as vocabulary is key to reading comprehension and should be a focus for every teacher (Arun et al., n.d.).

Challenges for students in other regions of Indonesia include low English proficiency, lack of self-confidence, and limited vocabulary. In Public Elementary Schools Gunungsari 01 Pati, as a public elementary school in the Pati region, is expected to face similar challenges in learning English. Given that low vocabulary mastery, minimal reading habits, and poor reading comprehension are common problems among elementary school students in Indonesia, it is

important to investigate the relationship between these three variables specifically in this school context (Damayanti, 2023).

Based on the above description, there are several issues that require further study. First, vocabulary mastery is the main foundation in English learning that affects all language skills, yet many elementary school students still have low vocabulary mastery (Suroso, 2021). Second, reading habits in Indonesia are still very low, even though reading is a fundamental activity for improving vocabulary and other language skills. Third, English reading comprehension remains a major challenge for Indonesian students, and vocabulary and reading habits are thought to have a significant correlation with reading comprehension achievement (Zaenal et al., 2021).

Although numerous studies have examined the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension at the university and secondary school levels, research specifically investigating the correlation between vocabulary mastery, reading habits, and English reading comprehension achievement at the elementary school level, particularly at Gunungsari 01 State Elementary School, Pati, is still very limited (Syaurdin et al., 2022). Therefore, this study is needed to provide an empirical overview of the relationship between these three variables, thereby contributing to the development of more effective English language learning strategies at the elementary school level.

Identified research gaps: the proposed research addresses these gaps by conducting a correlational study at Gunungsari 01 Public Elementary School, Pati, examining how vocabulary mastery and reading habits individually and jointly correlate with English reading comprehension achievement. This is significant because: (1) elementary school is the foundational stage where "literacy in the early grades plays an important role in determining students' learning success" (Apriliana et al., 2022); (2) vocabulary instruction at the elementary level is crucial yet often inadequate, with teachers still relying on traditional methods (Santosa et al., 2021); (3) reading habits established early determine long-term literacy outcomes (Hamzah et al., 2023); and (4) the rural Javanese context of Pati presents unique sociolinguistic conditions that may differ from previously studied populations (Dapa, 2020).

The novelty of this study resides in its (1) integrated tripartite correlational analysis of vocabulary mastery, reading habits, and English reading comprehension achievement; (2) focus on young EFL learners at the elementary school level in a rural Indonesian context; (3) investigation of the interrelationship between reading habits and vocabulary as joint predictors of comprehension; (4) attention to a unique sociolinguistic and educational setting where English is a foreign language with minimal extramural exposure; and (5) generation of context-

specific pedagogical implications. This study thus fills a significant gap in the literature by bridging well-established theoretical relationships with empirical evidence from an underrepresented population, contributing both to the theoretical understanding of EFL reading development in young learners and to practical educational improvements in Indonesian elementary schools (He & Deocampo, 2023).

The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze the correlation between vocabulary mastery, reading habits, and English reading comprehension achievement in students of Gunungsari 01 Elementary School, Pati. This study is based on the findings that vocabulary mastery and reading habits are important factors influencing students' reading comprehension abilities. A rich vocabulary helps students master English and its four core skills, including reading, while good reading habits contribute significantly to reading comprehension achievement (Putri et al., 2021).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The approach used in this research is a quantitative approach or statistical data analysis. A quantitative approach is defined as research that emphasizes the presentation of numerical or quantitative data, scored using statistics. The quantitative approach emphasizes variables as research objects, and these variables must be defined in terms of their respective operationalizations.

Reliability and validity are essential requirements for this research, as these two elements determine the quality of the research results, the ability to replicate, and the generalizability of similar research models. Furthermore, quantitative research requires a hypothesis and its testing, which then determine subsequent stages, such as determining the analysis techniques and statistical formulas to be used.

This research uses an *ex post facto* method. The research method used by the authors in this study, considering existing considerations, is the *ex post facto* research method. Sukardi explains about *Ex Post Facto* that "Ex post Facto research is research in which a series of independent variables has occurred, when the researcher begins to observe the dependent variable".

The main characteristic of *ex post facto* research is that there is no control over the variables. The variables are seen as they are. In this research, the researcher does not start the process from scratch but directly obtains the results. The treatment in *ex post facto* research has already occurred before the researcher conducted it. The researcher does not exercise control over this treatment. In this case, the researcher only collects data regarding the effect

of the independent variable on the variables being studied.

Ex post facto research is research conducted after differences in the independent variables have occurred due to the natural development of an event. Ex post facto research is research in which the independent variables have already occurred. The treatment is not administered during the research, so this research is usually separated from experimental research. Researchers want to trace, if possible, the factors that caused something to occur. Researchers in ex post facto research cannot manipulate or treat the independent variables, indicating that changes in the variables have already occurred.

Research is designed to determine the relationship between the variables being studied, therefore this research is called Correlational research. This research aims to determine the extent to which variables in one variable are related to variations in other factors. Correlational research aims to determine whether a relationship exists and, if so, how close the relationship is, and whether it is significant. This research also has an influence, which aims to compare measurement results between two different variables to determine the level of relationship between the variables. Therefore, this type of research is correlational.

This determination is designed to determine the magnitude of the influence of the independent variable (vocabulary mastery, reading habits) on the dependent variable (English reading comprehension).

To determine the nature of the relationship, regression analysis is used. Regression analysis is used to examine the relationship between two or more variables, especially to explore relationship patterns whose models are not yet fully understood. Simple regression aims to study the relationship between two variables. The simple regression model is " $\hat{y} = a + bx$, where \hat{y} is the dependent variable and X is the independent variable, a is the estimator for the intercept (α), b is the estimator for the regression coefficient (β), and α and β are parameters whose values are unknown and therefore estimated using sample statistics."

A multiple linear regression model is used because there is more than one independent variable. This model is intended to predict the ability of the independent variables to explain the dependent variable.

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e \dots\dots\dots (i)$$

Information:

- Y = English Reading Comprehension
- X1 = Vocabulary Mastery
- X2 = Reading Habits
- a = Constant

$b_1 \dots b_2$ = Coefficient of Independent Variable $X_1 \dots X_2$

e = error

To test the validity of the hypothesis, the t-statistic is calculated as follows:

$$t_{\text{hitung}} = \frac{b}{Sb} \dots\dots\dots (ii)$$

Information:

b = Regression coefficient

Sb = Standard deviation (standard error) of the coefficient b .

The significance level is determined by $\alpha = 5\%$. It should be noted that the values often used in non-exact research to determine the significance level are 1%, 5%, and 10%. To determine the validity of the hypothesis, the following test conditions are used:

- a. H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted if $t_{\text{count}} > t_{\text{table}}$ or if $t_{\text{sig}} < \alpha$. H_0 is rejected, meaning the independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable being studied.
- b. H_0 is accepted, meaning the independent variable has no significant effect on the dependent variable being studied.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data description in this section will present the research findings obtained by the researcher. This data was obtained from a study of fifth-grade students at Gunungsari 01 Public Elementary School, Pati. This study was conducted in fifth-grade students at Gunungsari 01 Public Elementary School, Pati, using different treatments. The researcher employed a comparative study, providing treatment with conventional learning (pretest) and vocabulary mastery and reading habits (posttest).

This comparative study with conventional learning and vocabulary mastery and reading habits was conducted to determine the achievement of English reading comprehension and mastery of fifth-grade elementary school students at Gunungsari 01 Public Elementary School, Pati. The data obtained can be seen in Table 1:

Table 1. Research Data Results on Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Habits.

Instuction	(pretest)	(posttest)
Highest Score	82	88
Lowest Score	64	68
Average	73	78

Data source: 2026 research.

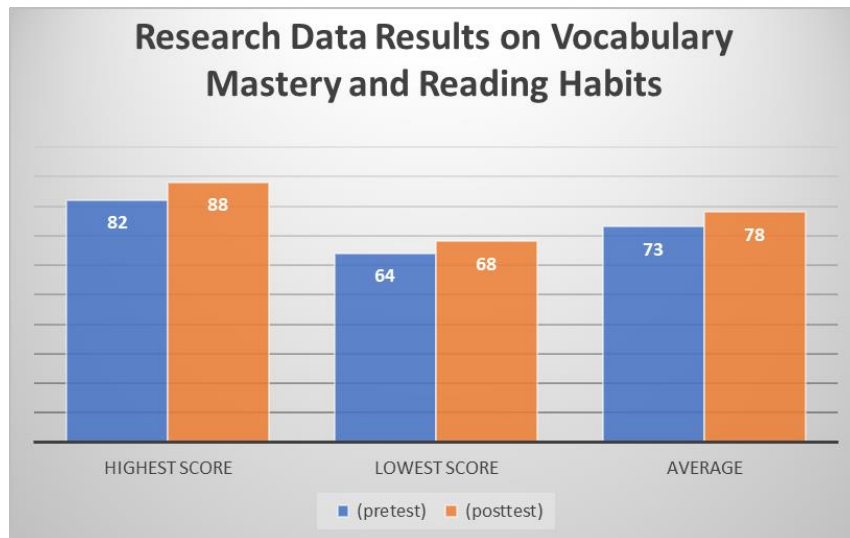


Figure 1. Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Habits Scores.

Based on the data in Table 1, the lowest average score was found in the pretest, with an average score of 73. The highest average score was found in the posttest, with an average score of 78. The data obtained in the pretest using conventional learning had the lowest average score compared to the average score in the posttest for vocabulary mastery and reading habits. This indicates an increase in vocabulary mastery and reading habits among fifth-grade students at Gunungsari 01 Elementary School, Pati.

The percentage of student learning completion indicated that learning using the conventional model (pretest) was 10 students who completed the learning (50%), while 10 students who did not complete the learning (50%). Meanwhile, after the treatment, 18 students completed the vocabulary mastery and reading habits (88.89%), and 2 students who did not complete the learning (11.11%). Based on these data, it can be concluded that the learning completion of fifth-grade students at Gunungsari 01 Pati Elementary School is more than 85%. Therefore, learning completion was achieved after being given treatment on vocabulary mastery and reading habits. The calculation can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Student Learning Outcomes.

No.	Learning outcomes	Minimum Level of Completion	Percentage	
			Completed	Not Completed
1.	<i>Pretest</i>	70%	10 (50%)	10 (50%)
2.	<i>Posttest</i>	70%	18 (88,89%)	2 (11,11%)

Data source: 2026 research.

To find out whether there is a difference in the correlation between vocabulary mastery, reading habits and achievement of English reading comprehension in the pretest and posttest of Gunungsari 01 Pati State Elementary School, the one-tailed test calculation obtained the following results in Table 3:

Table 3. One-tailed t-test.

Instruction	Pretest	Posttest
N	20	20
\bar{x}	71.11	75.56
T _{table}	1,725	
t _{count}	2,082	

Data source: 2026 research.

Based on the analysis of pretest and posttest data with t-test, the average pretest value was 71.11 and the average posttest value was 75.56, obtained tcount = 2.082 with df namely $N-1 = 20-1 = 19$ with a significance level of 5% of 1.725 because tcount > ttable then H₀ is rejected and H_a is accepted so it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between pretest and posttest. The results of the calculation above are in accordance with the following calculations in table 4.

Table 4. One-tailed t-test.

	75.55555556	71.11111111
Mean	34.96732026	54.5751634
Variance		20
Observations	0.086029563	
Pearson Correlation		0
Hypothesized Mean Difference		19
Df	2.081984955	
t Stat	0.02638267	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.729606726	
t Critical one-tail	0.05276534	
P(T<=t) two-tail		
t Critical two-tail	2.109815578	

Data source: 2026 research.

Thus, there is a difference in pre-test and post-test scores in the correlation between vocabulary mastery, reading habits, and achievement of English reading comprehension. This indicates that vocabulary mastery and reading habits are effective in achieving English reading comprehension in fifth grade at Gunungsari 01 Pati Public Elementary School.

This research is said to be effective because it is proven by the t-test calculation using data analysis, obtained t count > t table obtained t count > t table, namely $2.082 > 1.725$, then H₀ is rejected and H_a is accepted, so it can be concluded that the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading habits is effective in achieving English reading comprehension in fifth grade at Gunungsari 01 Pati Public Elementary School. Second, it is proven by learning completeness. The completion of learning outcomes can be seen from the individual (individual) and classical (group) from the results of the individual completion scores of class V students of Gunungsari 01 Pati Elementary School, where 18 children have achieved the KKM, which is a minimum of 70, while for classical learning completion, 88.98% of students have achieved it.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the analysis of the research data and the discussion, it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between vocabulary mastery, reading habits, and English reading comprehension achievement. The findings indicate that the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading habits is effective in improving English reading comprehension among fifth-grade students at Gunungsari 01 State Elementary School, Pati. Furthermore, students who learned through the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading habits achieved better learning outcomes than those who were taught using conventional learning methods, as reflected in their higher levels of learning completeness. Overall, the results demonstrate that vocabulary mastery and reading habits are significantly associated with English reading comprehension achievement among fifth-grade students at Gunungsari 01 State Elementary School, Pati.

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