STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND PERCEPTION IN READING ENGLISH TEXTS

Tessalonika LumbanTobing[1], Melisa Debora Munthe[2], Sintia Romian Br. Aritonang[3], Sarah Asyari[4], Novia Magdalena Hulu[5], Yenita Br Sembiring[6], Ira Maria Frans Lumbanbatu [7]
yenitasembiring@unprimdn.ac.id, ira.lumbanbatu.fs@um.ac.id
[,2,3,4,5,6] Universitas Prima Indonesia
[7] Universitas Negeri Malang

Abstract

This study aims to explore students' motivation and perception in reading English texts. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the research involves 50 high school students from a school in Indonesia as participants. Data were collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to gain an in-depth understanding of the factors influencing students' motivation and perception. The results indicate that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations play significant roles in students' reading interests. Students with intrinsic motivation tend to read for personal enjoyment and language skill improvement, while extrinsic motivation is influenced by factors such as academic grades and curriculum demands. Additionally, students' perceptions of English texts are affected by the difficulty level of the texts, the relevance of the material to their daily lives, and support from teachers and the learning environment. These findings suggest the importance of teaching strategies that can enhance students' intrinsic motivation, such as selecting engaging and relevant reading materials and creating a supportive learning environment. This research provides insights for educators to design more effective programs to improve students' English reading skills.
Key Words: Motivation, preception, reading English Text

___

INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Background of Study

One of the most important aspects of human interaction is language. Every nation has a distinct language, even Indonesia. Each area or province has a foreign language.   In this era of globalization, English has emerged as the language that is most frequently spoken. English is spoken by over a million

individuals worldwide, either as their first language, second language, or foreign language. English is the most widely used language in the world today, according to Gilakjani(2011) hence its significance cannot be downplayed or ignored.

Reading proficiency in English has become an essential skill for students worldwide, given the language's dominance in academia, global communication, and professional environments. However, the motivation to engage with English texts varies significantly among students, influenced by a myriad of factors. Understanding these factors is crucial for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers aiming to enhance reading motivation and, consequently, reading competence (Kasim & Raisha, 2017).

According to data from the Badan Pusat Statistik (BSP), there will be 278,69 million Indonesian citizens in 2023. However, this is somewhat surprising as it contrasts with the number of minutes spent reading. According to UNESCO figures, only 0.001% of Indonesians have a basic knowledge of reading and writing. This means that out of 1000 Indonesians, there is only one person who enjoys and actively reads. In addition, according to a survey conducted in 2019 by the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA), Indonesia's ranking is 62nd out of 70 countries. Put another way, Indonesia is one of the top ten countries with the highest level of literacy among the countries that have been studied.

According to the head of the Otoritas Jasa Keuangan (OJK) Regional 5 Sumatera Bagian Utara (Sumbagut), literacy rates in 2022 will reach 51,69%, especially in the Utara region. This percentage is higher when compared to the 2019 data, which is 37,96%, and the 2016 data, which is 31,30%. Despite this, this is not only a situation that has to be addressed and makes us question the expectations of the head of the department about what will actually happen in the subsequent process.

This research explores the diverse elements that influence students' motivation to read English texts. It delves into both intrinsic and extrinsic

motivators, examining how personal interests, self-efficacy, and goal orientation impact a student's willingness to engage with English reading materials (Ahmadi & Hairul in Ahmadi et al, 2013 . Additionally, it investigates the role of external factors such as instructional strategies, classroom environment, and socio-cultural influences.

The ability to read proficiently in English is increasingly recognized as a fundamental skill in our globalized world. English, being the predominant language of academia, international business, and digital communication, holds a vital position in educational systems worldwide. However, despite its importance, there remains a significant disparity in students' motivation to read English texts. This disparity not only affects their academic performance but also their future career opportunities and overall engagement with the global community (Elachachi, 2015).

In many educational settings, students demonstrate a reluctance or lack of interest in engaging with English reading materials. This disengagement can lead to poor literacy outcomes, limiting students' ability to succeed in various academic disciplines and reducing their competitiveness in the job market. Moreover, without a strong motivation to read, students may miss out on the cognitive, cultural, and intellectual benefits that come from engaging with diverse texts (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Understanding what drives or hinders students' motivation to read English texts is essential for developing effective teaching strategies and educational policies (Arbianty:2011). Teachers often struggle to find the right methods to inspire their students, while policymakers grapple with designing curricula that can cater to diverse motivational needs. Identifying the key factors influencing reading motivation can lead to targeted interventions that make reading more appealing and accessible to students (Pratt, D. & Yongvanit,2007) .

According to Cambria and Guthrie (2010), motives include confidence, interest, and dedication. A motivated student reads because he thinks it's important; an enthusiastic student reads because he enjoys it; and a self-assured student reads because he knows he can do it. Motivation was defined by Wigfield,

Metsala, and Cox (1999) as personal traits including objectives, beliefs about one's own competence, and needs that affect one's actions and accomplishments. They maintained that pupils' motivation and desire to read are the reasons why they wish to read.

Furthermore, the current global educational landscape is rapidly evolving, with increasing emphasis on online learning and digital resources. This shift necessitates a deeper understanding of how these new environments affect students' reading motivation. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of self-motivated learning, as students are often required to engage with texts independently in remote settings. Addressing motivational issues is, therefore, more pressing than ever.

In summary, the urgency of this thesis lies in its potential to bridge the gap between students' current reading behaviors and the optimal engagement required for their academic and personal growth. By uncovering and addressing the factors that influence students' motivation to read English texts, this research aims to contribute to more effective educational practices, better literacy outcomes, and ultimately, more empowered and capable individuals ready to thrive in a globalized world.

The researcher postulated that students' lack of enthusiasm to read scholarly articles could be attributed to a number of factors. First of all, students are unaware of the advantages of reading scholarly papers. Second, the pupils read the articles out of laziness. Additionally, there are a number of reasons why students may not be motivated to read in an academic setting: (1) Too much time is spent on social media and virtual life, which results in reduced attention spans among students. (2). Students feel satisfied right away. (3). Students' limited vocabulary causes them to comprehend nothing of the articles.The reaseon s are in line with Salikin, Tahir, Kusumaningputri & Yuliandri (2017), Muliati (2017), Siregar (2019) and Marsela (2017).

The study is grounded in various motivational theories, including Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Expectancy-Value Theory, and the socio-cognitive model of motivation. These theoretical frameworks provide a comprehensive

understanding of how different motivational factors interact and affect reading behavior.

The findings of this study aim to inform educational practices and interventions that can effectively foster a love for reading in English among students. By identifying key motivational drivers and barriers, this research seeks to contribute to the development of strategies that enhance reading engagement, thereby improving overall literacy outcomes.

1.2.   Problems of Study

Based on the the background of the study above, the probelems of the study are formulated below:

1. What intrinsic factors influence students' motivation to read English texts?
2. What extrinsic factors influence students' motivation to read English texts?
3. What differences exist in reading motivation among students of different demographic backgrounds?
4. How does motivation to read English texts vary across different age groups, gender, and socio-economic status?

1.3.   Objectives of Study

In relation to the problems of the study above, the objectives of this study are atated below:

1. To find out what intrinsic factors influence students' motivation to read English texts
2. To find out the extrinsic factors influence students' motivation to read English texts.
3. To find out the differences exist in reading motivation among students of different demographic backgrounds
4. To find out how motivation to read English texts varies across different age groups, gender, and socio-economic status.

1.4.   Scope of Study

In order to limit the discussion of the topic, the resercher will only focus the research on the students' motivation in reading English texts.

1.5.   Significances of Study

a. Theoretically

1. By identifying and analyzing both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, this research offers a comprehensive framework that integrates various elements affecting students' motivation. This framework can serve as a basis for future studies aiming to explore similar phenomena in different contexts or with different student populations.

2. The study broadens the theoretical understanding of how socio-cultural factors impact motivation. It provides empirical evidence on the role of cultural attitudes, societal expectations, and community influences, thereby enriching the existing literature with new dimensions of motivational theory.

b. Practically

1. For Students:

   By uncovering the factors that motivate students to read English texts, the study provides insights that can help students understand their own motivational drivers. This self-awareness can lead to increased engagement and enjoyment in reading, fostering better academic performance and personal growth.

2. For Teachers:

   The findings can help teachers design and implement instructional strategies that are more effective in motivating students to read. By knowing what motivates their students, teachers can create lesson plans and activities that are more engaging and relevant to their interests.

3. Professional Development

   The research can inform teacher training and professional development programs by highlighting the importance of motivational strategies in teaching reading. Educators can learn new techniques and approaches to boost students' motivation, thereby improving their teaching effectiveness.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the factors influencing students' motivation in reading English texts. Qualitative methods are chosen to provide a deep, nuanced understanding of students' experiences, attitudes, and perceptions, which quantitative methods alone may not capture. Descriptive qualitative research methodology was employed in this study. Descriptive research, according to Arikunto (2013), is any type of study in which circumstances, conditions, events, and/or activities are described with the intention of displaying the findings in a research report. Qualitative research typically looks beyond the what, where, and when of a study to understand the motivations behind behavior.

Participants

The participants in this study will include a diverse group of students from SMK Telkom 2 Medan. Purposeful sampling will be used to select participants who can provide rich and relevant data. Criteria for selection will include variations in age, gender, socio-economic background, and academic performance in English.

Data Collection Methods

In collecting the data, the researchers will use these following instruments of research:

1. Semi-Structured Interviews: Individual interviews will be conducted with students to
   gain detailed insights into their personal motivations and challenges in reading English texts. Semi-structured interviews will allow flexibility to explore emerging themes while maintaining a consistent focus on key topics.
2. Teacher Interviews: Interviews with teachers will be conducted to gather perspectives

on instructional strategies and classroom dynamics that influence student motivation.

3. Focus Groups:

Student Focus Groups: Group discussions will be held with students to understand collective attitudes, peer influences, and social dynamics related to reading motivation. Focus groups will provide a platform for students to express their views in a more interactive setting.

4. Classroom Observations:

Non-Participant Observations: Observations will be conducted in English language classrooms to examine the teaching methods, classroom environment, and student interactions. These observations will help identify contextual factors that impact students' motivation.

Technique of Analyzing Data

The data will be interpreted by using triangulation. Multiple data sources (interviews, focus groups, observations, and documents) will be cross-validated to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. Triangulation will help in confirming the consistency and accuracy of the emerging themes.

DISCUSSION

SMK Telkom 2 students were made up the study's sample. The sample consisted 46 students.The researcher employed two tools in this study: a questionnaire with attitude scales that gauges a person's beliefs, perceptions, or feelings about themselves, other people, activities, institutions, or circumstances. The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ), which was derived from Wigfield and Guthrie's (1997) study, included 50 items covering the two components of reading motivation—intrinsic and extrinsic factors—that are split up into 11 categories**.**

No.	Factors Affect Students' Motivation in Reading	Dimension of Reading Motivation	Number of question	Total
1.		Reading Efficacy	1, 2, 3, 4	4

No.		Dimension	Items	Total
2.		Reading Challenge	5, 6, 7, 8	4
3.	Intrinsic	Reading Curiosity	9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	6
4.		Reading Involvement	15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20	6
5.		Importance of Reading	21, 22, 23, 24, 25	5
6.	Extrinsic	Compliance	26, 27, 28, 29	4
7.		Recognition for Reading	30, 31, 32, 33	4
8.		Reading for Grades	34, 35, 36, 37	4
9.		Social Reasons for Reading	38, 39, 40, 41, 42	5
10		Competition in Reading	43, 44, 45, 46	4
11		Reading Work Avoidance	47, 48, 49, 50	4
Total of Questions: 50				

The reading motivation of students when reading English texts and the elements influencing the students' reading motivation served as the research's data. Students completed the 60-minute questionnaire via the Google Form website. 46 students provided their reaction to the research's MRQ.

The students were asked to answer fifty questions regarding the reasons behind their choice to read English texts. The 11 dimensions indicated on the Reading Motivation theory based on Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) led to the division of this questionnaire into 11 sections. Every question was graded by the students on a 1-4 scale, with Strongly Disagree being the highest possible response.

The researcher totaled the scores of the fifty items in the questionnaire after determining the scores for each item. The mean, calculated using the Likert scale, represents each student's reading motivation score. An examination of the motivation of English department students to read English materials yielded the first finding.

Students' Reading Motivation Level and Percentage

No.	Range	Classification	Students	Percentage
1	1,00 - 1,75	Very Low	-	0%
2	1,76 - 2,50	Low	4 students	
3	2,51 - 3,25	High	31 students	
4	3,26 - 4,00	Very High	11 students	

FINDINGS

Based on the analysis of the data, it was found some factors influenced students' motivation and perception in reading English texts as stated below:

1. Motivational Factors

   a. Intrinsic Motivation: Many students are driven by intrinsic factors such as personal interest in the content, enjoyment of reading, and the desire to improve language proficiency

   b. Extrinsic Motivation: Extrinsic factors include grades, teacher encouragement, and the practical benefits of mastering English for future career opportunities.

   c. Social Influences: Peer influence and support from family members play a significant role in motivating students to engage in reading English texts.

2. Perceptions of Reading English Texts

   a. Difficulty Level: Students often perceive reading English texts as challenging due to vocabulary complexity, unfamiliar grammatical structures, and cultural references.

   b. Relevance and Engagement: Texts that are relevant to students' interests and experiences are perceived more positively. Engaging content that relates to real-life scenarios increases their willingness to read.

   c. Self-Efficacy: Students' confidence in their ability to read and understand English texts affects their perception. Higher self-efficacy is linked to more positive attitudes towards reading.

CONCLUSION

The research highlights that students' motivation and perception in reading English texts are influenced by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, educational environment, and personal attitudes towards reading. By understanding these factors, educators can implement strategies to enhance motivation and foster positive perceptions, ultimately improving students' reading skills and their overall learning experience.

SUGGESTION

Firstly, teachers should focus on incorporating a diverse range of reading materials that are both engaging and relevant to students' lives. This includes selecting contemporary literature, articles on current events, and multimedia resources that align with students' interests and proficiency levels. By doing so, students are more likely to find reading enjoyable and meaningful.

Fostering intrinsic motivation is also crucial. Teachers can develop activities and projects that resonate with students' personal interests, such as book clubs, reading challenges, or creative assignments that allow students to explore and express their understanding of the texts. This approach helps students see reading as a pleasurable and valuable activity rather than a mere academic requirement.

Extrinsic motivation, while secondary to intrinsic motivation, can still play a significant role. Educators should use positive reinforcement, such as praise, recognition, and rewards, to acknowledge students' reading accomplishments. This can help sustain their motivation and encourage continuous engagement with reading.

Creating a supportive learning environment is essential. Teachers should ensure that the classroom atmosphere encourages reading and open discussion. Providing adequate reading time, a comfortable reading space, and personalized support for struggling readers can make a significant difference in students' attitudes towards reading.

Incorporating technology can also enhance the reading experience. Digital tools and platforms, such as e-books, audiobooks, and reading apps, offer interactive and engaging ways to access and enjoy reading materials. These resources can cater to different learning preferences and needs, making reading more accessible and enjoyable.

Making reading materials relevant to students' lives and future aspirations is another important factor. Selecting texts that connect with their interests, career goals, and real-world issues can make reading more meaningful and engaging, helping students see the value in what they are reading. Teachers themselves need continuous professional development to stay updated with new strategies and tools for motivating students and improving their reading skills. Workshops, seminars, and collaborative planning sessions can provide valuable insights and resources for educators.

Parental involvement is also beneficial. Encouraging parents to support their children's reading activities at home can reinforce positive reading habits and motivation. Providing parents with resources and strategies can help them play an active role in their child's reading development. Regular assessment and feedback are crucial for monitoring students' progress and helping them set achievable goals. Constructive feedback can boost students' confidence and motivate them to continue improving their reading skills.

Lastly, promoting peer collaboration through group reading activities and discussions can enhance motivation. Students can learn from each other, share insights, and build a community of readers, making the reading experience more enjoyable and rewarding. By implementing these recommendations, educators can create a more effective and engaging reading environment that motivates students and positively shapes their perception of reading English texts.

REFERENCES

Ahmadi, M. R., Ismail, H. N., & Abdullah, M. K. K. (2013). The relationship between students' reading motivation and reading comprehension.Journal of education and practice,4(18), 8-17.

Arbianti, R. 2011. Teachers' Teaching Style in Nurturing the Motivation of the Second Grade Students at SMA Negeri 3 Makassar in Learning English. Unpublished .Thesis. FBS Universitas Negeri Makassar.

Arikunto, Suharsimi. (2006). Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktik. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.

Cambria,J &Guthrie,J.T. (2010). Motivating and engaging students in reading. The NERA Wigfield, A.,& Guthrie, J. T. (1997). Relations of children's motivation for reading to the amount andbreadth of their reading. Journal of Educational Psychology, 89(3), 420- 432.http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.89.3.420

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior. New York: Plenum Press

Elachachi, H. H. (2015). Exploring cultural barriers in EFL Arab learners' writing.Procedia- Hayuningtyas, E. 2013. The implementation of STAD technique in teaching reading. Unila Journal of English teaching.2(9): 1-13. Nishanthi, R. (2018). The importance of learning English in today world.International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development,3(1), 871-874Social and Behavioral Sciences,199, 129-136

Gilakjani, A. P. (2011). A study on the situation of pronunciation instruction in ESL / EFL classrooms. Journal of Studies in Education.1 (1): E4

Kasim, Usman, and Siti Raisha. "EFL students' reading comprehension problems: Linguistic and Marsela, Seli. (2017). The Correlation between Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension Achievement of the Eleventh Grade Students of MAN 2 Palembang. Thesis. Palembang: Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Patah Palembangnon-linguistic complexities."English Education Journal8.3 (2017): 308-321

M. R. Ahmadi, H. N. Ismail, and M. K. K. Abdullah, "The relationship between students' reading motivation and reading comprehension," J. Educ. Pract., vol. 4, no. 18,pp. 8–17, 2013.

Muliati, C. (2017). The Students' Motivation in Reading and Reading Interest of The Fifth Semester Students of IAIN Palangka Raya (Thesis).

Pratt, D. & Yongvanit, S. (2018). Motivation and challenge: Working for international nongovernmental organizations in Cambodia. Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.kjss.2018.03.001

Siregar, Atikah Indah Ar-Ridha. (2019). An Analysis of Students Reading Motivation in Reading Subject at English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang. Journal of English Language Teaching Volume 8 No. 3