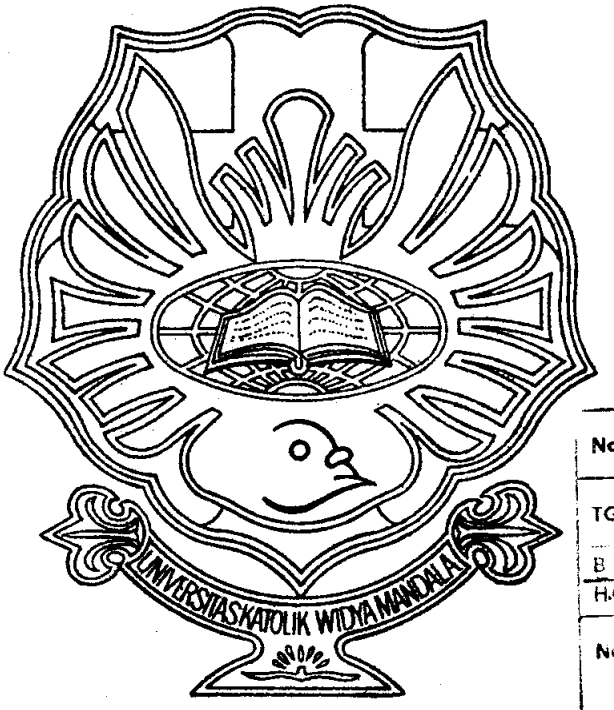
THE VARIABLES THAT ACCOUNT FOR COMPREHENDING A READING TEXT : A STUDY ON THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF SMA STELLA MARIS

A THESIS

In partial Fulfilment of the requirements for
the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree in
English Language Teaching



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ABSTRACT

Reading Comprehension involves both lexical and grammatical aspects. I believe that in order to comprehend a reading passage well, one should have a wide range of vocabulary (=lexical aspect) and good knowledge of structure (=grammatical aspect), also a adequate general knowledge.

Interested in finding out whether there is a positive correlation between the students' structure, vocabulary and general knowledge achievements and their reading comprehension achievement, I decided to make a study on structure, vocabulary, general knowledge, and reading comprehension achievements of the first year students of SMA Stella Maris to see whether they really correspond to each other.

The study in this paper makes use of one part of the statistical methodology of research that is the Correlation Analysis, which anlyses the data to find out the degree of the relationship between the structure achievement and the reading comprehension achievement, between the vocabulary achievement and the reading comprehension achievement, and between the general knowledge and the reading comprehension achievement.

To obtain the data in the form of scores, first I made test items on structure, vocabulary, general knowledge, and reading comprehension. The total number of the test items is 70 items, which are all in the form of multiple-choice items. After computing the entire tests using Kuder-Richardson Formula 21 (KR 21), I found out that the reliability coefficient of the structure test is 0.71, the reliability coefficient of the vocabulary test is 0.73, the reliability coefficient of the general knowledge test is 0.71, and the reliability coefficient of the reading comprehension test is 0.74. These figures show that all the four test may be regarded satisfactory.

To know the degree of the relationship, I use the Pearson Product Moment Correlation to obtain the correlation coefficient.The correlation coefficient tells us two things: the indication of the magnitude of the relationship, and the direction of the relationship. When two sets of variables are positively related, the increase of one variable is followed by the increase of the other variable. On the other hand, when they are negatively related, the increase of one variable is followed by the decrease of the other

variable. After all scores are computed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Formula, it can be seen that the correlation coefficient of the structure and reading comprehension achievement is 0.81; the correlation coefficient of the vocabulary and reading comprehension achievement is 0.77; and the correlation coefficient of the general knowledge and reading comprehension achievement is 0.79. This means that there is a significant correlation between the structure, the vocabulary, and the general knowledge achievements of the first year students of SMA Stella Maris and their reading comprehension achievement.

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