Influence of Task Commitment, Learning Styles, and Learning Strategies on the Reading Comprehension of English Literature among Psychology Students at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of task commitment, learning strategies, and learning styles on the reading comprehension of English literature among psychology students at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The study involved 200 participants (41 males and 159 females). The data collection instrument used was a Likert-scale questionnaire comprising four measurement scales: Reading Comprehension, Task Commitment, Learning Strategies, and Learning Styles. Instrument testing was conducted using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with SPSS 20. Data analysis employed multiple linear regression using SPSS 20 for Windows. The results revealed that task commitment, learning strategies, and learning styles significantly influence students' reading comprehension of English literature. Specifically, task commitment, cognitive learning strategies, and metacognitive strategies had a significant effect on reading comprehension, while learning styles did not demonstrate a significant impact.

Keywords: Task Commitment, Learning Styles, Learning Strategies, Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

The ability to comprehend English literature is a crucial academic skill, particularly for university students who are frequently required to engage with international journals and academic texts. Proficiency in reading comprehension not only facilitates the absorption of knowledge from scholarly works but also fosters critical and analytical thinking skills essential for academic and professional success. However, many students struggle with reading comprehension, encountering difficulties in identifying main ideas, interpreting information, and drawing conclusions from English texts.

Several factors contribute to the low levels of English reading comprehension among students, including limited task commitment, ineffective learning strategies, low motivation, and a lack of diverse learning styles (Syahriani, Irfan, & Syawaluddin, 2024). In fact, developing critical reading skills requires students to engage in active conceptualization, synthesis, and evaluation of information gained through observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication (Zivcovic, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

Comprehension is defined as the process of constructing meaning from texts, emphasizing understanding beyond word or sentence recognition (Kintsch, 1998; Pourhosen et al.; Young, 1982). Reading comprehension is a fundamental component of learning (Ahmadi, 2017), involving complex processes such as linguistic skills, vocabulary knowledge, and fluency (Cain et al.; Paris, 2005; Kintsch & Rawson, 2005).

Prior studies reveal that university students, especially first-year students, often exhibit low reading comprehension levels (Brown, 2000; Hadley, 2003; Nuttal, 1996; Oxford, 1999; Khosravi & Askari, 2012). Students who struggle with reading tend to avoid the activity, further hindering their comprehension (Bohn-Gettler & Rapp, 2011; Katzir et al., 2009; Mehrpour et al., 2011). Preliminary interviews conducted by the researchers with psychology undergraduates indicated that limited vocabulary

knowledge, reliance on translation tools such as dictionaries or Google Translate, and declining motivation contributed to poor reading comprehension.

Task commitment plays a central role in improving reading comprehension. It refers to an individual's self-motivation and persistence in completing academic tasks (Renzulli, 2002). Students with high task commitment are more likely to invest effort in understanding academic texts, which facilitates task completion (Schunk & Rice, 1991; Hans & Hans, 2015). Conversely, low task commitment often leads to superficial engagement with academic readings. Prior research also confirms the significant influence of task commitment on learning outcomes (Tayibu, 2016).

Learning styles also affect reading comprehension. Learning styles represent individual preferences for acquiring and processing information (Santrock, 2010). They can create enjoyable learning environments, foster motivation, and reduce learning-related conflicts (Wahyudin, 2016). Research suggests that understanding one's learning style enables students to absorb information more effectively, even when reading in a foreign language (Hamzah, 2010; Fuad, 2015; Sukardi, 2008).

Learning strategies are another determinant of comprehension. Effective strategies help students approach reading tasks more systematically (Eliasa, 2011). Repeated exposure to English texts, combined with metacognitive strategies, has been shown to enhance reading comprehension significantly (Zare & Othman, 2013; Rowan, 1990; Boulware et al., 2007).

Based on these considerations, this study seeks to empirically examine the relationships between task commitment, learning styles, and learning strategies in relation to English literature reading comprehension among psychology students. Unlike prior research that primarily focused on academic achievement, this study emphasizes comprehension as a key factor influencing students' overall academic performance.

METHOD

This study involved 200 participants, consisting of 41 male and 159 female students. The data collection instrument employed a Likert-scale questionnaire consisting of four measurement tools. The choice to utilize a Likert scale is supported by literature indicating its effectiveness in capturing attitudes and perceptions across various disciplines due to its structured response format, which facilitates quantitative analysis (Wollast et al., 2021; (Malik et al., 2021; Prasad et al., 2022). The instrument test was conducted on a set of items from four scales: Reading Comprehension, Task Commitment, Learning Strategies, and Learning Styles. The reliability of these scales was corroborated by previous research demonstrating the robustness of Likert-type questionnaires across educational assessments (Malik et al., 2021; (Rak & Wrześniowski, 2023; Prasad et al., 2022).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with SPSS 20 was employed to validate the measurement model, ensuring that the underlying constructs were adequately represented by the observed variables. Previous studies have successfully utilized CFA to establish the construct validity of educational questionnaires, underscoring its important role in research methodologies within educational contexts (Purwanto et al., 2023; Sim et al., 2021; Jannot et al., 2024). For data analysis, the study applied multiple linear regression using SPSS 20 for Windows, a method well-documented for its effectiveness in examining relationships between variables in social science research (Vionalita & Ismail, 2022; Turanjanin et al., 2024; Åkerlund et al., 2023). This

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analytic approach allows for nuanced insights into the interactions between students' perceptions and academic engagement.

The data collection process involved rigorous methodological steps designed to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings. Each of the measurement tools was assessed for psychometric properties, including internal consistency measures such as Cronbach's alpha, ensuring that the scales used in the study met necessary standards for reliable self-report measurements (Rak & Wrześniowski, 2023; Jihad et al., 2023; Medriati et al., 2023). The combination of a well-structured questionnaire and robust analytical techniques positions this study to contribute significant insights into the educational experiences and preferences of the student population examined.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents descriptive data on the research subjects, including gender and academic semester. The population of the study comprised 868 undergraduate students of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. From this population, a sample of 200 students (59 males and 141 females) was selected, representing those enrolled from the 2nd to the 8th semester in the 2018–2019 academic year. The sample size aligns with Crocker and Algina's (1986) recommendation, which states that a minimum of 200 respondents is required to ensure the stability of research findings.

The demographic distribution of the sample indicates a higher proportion of female students compared to male students, which reflects the general gender composition of psychology students at the university. This distribution is important to consider when analyzing the effects of task commitment, learning strategies, and learning styles on reading comprehension, as gender-related factors may indirectly influence learning behaviors and academic engagement.

Table 1. General Description of Research Subjects

Research Respondents	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	59	29.5%
Female	141	70.5%
Semester		
Semester 2	27	13.5%
Semester 4	104	52%
Semester 6	49	24.5%
Semester 8	20	10%
Total	200	100%

Based on the table above, the distribution of research subjects by gender indicates that female students outnumber male students. The findings of this study further demonstrate that reading comprehension among the respondents falls into the high category. Reading comprehension of English literature plays an essential role for psychology students at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Kintsch (1983) explains that higher levels of English reading comprehension facilitate students' ability to understand texts holistically, thereby broadening their knowledge, supporting their academic writing, assisting in the completion of assignments, and ultimately contributing to the successful completion of their studies.

The task commitment variable emerged as one of the internal factors influencing reading comprehension. The results indicate that task commitment has a significant effect on reading comprehension, consistent with Hidi (2001), who emphasized its importance. However, three dimensions of task commitment—independence, clarity of goals, and academic achievement orientation—did not show a significant effect in this study.

Another internal factor examined was learning strategies, which represent methods employed by students to achieve comprehension of English literature. Both dimensions of learning strategies—cognitive and metacognitive—were found to have a significant impact on reading comprehension. This finding aligns with Kuhn (2000), who asserted that the higher the cognitive and metacognitive strategies adopted by students, the better their reading comprehension outcomes.

The third variable, learning styles, was analyzed across four dimensions: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The results showed that learning styles did not significantly influence reading comprehension. Hazrah (2018) reported that learning styles could affect reading comprehension when measured through visual, auditory, and kinesthetic dimensions. However, in this study, no direct significant effect was found across the dimensions employed.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the influence of task commitment, learning strategies, and learning styles on the reading comprehension of English literature among psychology students at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The findings demonstrate that task commitment and learning strategies jointly exert a significant influence on reading comprehension, whereas learning styles do not have a significant direct effect. The non-significant result for learning styles may suggest the presence of indirect effects, requiring moderators or mediators for the variable to exert influence.

Recognizing the limitations of this study, the researchers propose both theoretical and practical recommendations:

Theoretical Recommendations
1. As task commitment and learning strategies were found to significantly affect reading comprehension, future research is encouraged to explore other internal factors, such as self-efficacy, which may also play a crucial role.
2. Future studies should further examine learning styles by including additional dimensions and considering self-efficacy as a mediating or moderating variable in the relationship with reading comprehension.

Practical Recommendations
1. Given the significant influence of task commitment, it is recommended that students strengthen their commitment to academic tasks by fostering self-motivation, independence, perseverance, and determination in improving their English reading comprehension. This may be achieved by systematically expanding English vocabulary and participating in relevant training programs.
2. Since learning strategies also significantly affect reading comprehension, students are advised to develop more effective strategies for accomplishing academic tasks. For instance, creating structured outlines prior to working on assignments can help streamline the learning process and enhance comprehension.

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