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The Relationship Between Students' Reading Practice and Their Reading Comprehension at Senior High School

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Abstract

Reading practice is considered an important factor in developing reading comprehension. However, the relationship between these two variables may vary across learning contexts. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between students' reading practice and their reading comprehension at SMAN Olahraga Lampung. A quantitative correlational design was employed, involving 25 students from Grade XI selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a reading practice questionnaire and a reading comprehension test based on narrative texts. The questionnaire consisted of 36 retained items, while the reading comprehension test consisted of 40 retained items. Both instruments demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values of .956 and .950, respectively. Descriptive statistics showed a mean score of 132.20 (SD = 18.797) for reading practice and 25.60 (SD = 8.347) for reading comprehension. Pearson's product-moment correlation indicated a weak negative correlation between the two variables (r = -.216, p = .299, N = 25). However, the relationship was not statistically significant. These findings indicate that this study did not find sufficient statistical evidence of a significant relationship between students' reading practice and reading comprehension in the selected group.

1. Introduction

Reading is an important skill in learning English because it helps students obtain information, understand ideas, and interact with written texts. Reading comprehension goes beyond recognizing words; readers need to connect information, identify main ideas, make inferences, and understand meanings that are not directly stated. These steps might be hard for people learning English, especially when they do not read much in English. Reading practice is one factor that might be connected to understanding. Regular time

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spent reading can help with seeing words, understanding text structures, and getting used to written English. However, reading practice does not always mean understanding. The kind of material read, why it is read, attention, language level, and the methods used while reading might also matter. Previous studies have found relationships between reading habits and reading comprehension, although the participants, research instruments, and research contexts have varied (Pham, 2021; Andriani & Ariyanti, 2021; Resta et al., 2023).

Therefore, the relationship should be examined within specific learning contexts. Students at SMAN Olahraga Lampung have academic responsibilities alongside their sports activities. Their reading practice and reading comprehension may differ from those of students in general schools or universities. The present study examined whether students' reading practice was related to their reading comprehension among Grade XI students. Specifically, this study addressed the following research question: Is there a significant relationship between students' reading practice and their reading comprehension at SMAN Olahraga Lampung?

In this study reading practice refers to students' self-reported engagement in reading activities, including their attitudes toward reading, reading frequency, reading materials, reading purposes, and time spent reading. These aspects reflect how students interact with written texts. Reading practice can take place inside or outside the classroom and may involve materials for learning, obtaining information, or entertainment. Previous research has explored related constructs using terms such as reading habits and English reading habits. Pham (2021) examined the relationship between reading habits and reading comprehension among university EFL students and reported a significant relationship between the two variables. Janah et al. (2021) explored EFL students' reading habits outside the classroom, focusing on reading frequency, reading materials, and students' attitudes toward reading. These studies provide a basis for understanding reading habits as a related concept, while the present study uses the term "reading practice" to refer to its main independent variable.

Reading comprehension refers to the ability to understand written texts by identifying information, interpreting meanings, and making inferences about information that is not directly stated. In this study, reading comprehension was measured using a multiple-choice test based on narrative texts. The test had questions about word meaning, sentence meaning, paragraph meaning, main ideas, details, implications, references, character actions, motives and feelings, author tone, and irony. All of these areas were part of the test given to the students. The test score was used as the measure of each student's reading comprehension.

Researchers in EFL settings have looked at how reading practice relates to reading comprehension. Pham (2021) found a link among EFL students at Van Lang University. Andriani and Ariyanti (2021) studied the relationship between reading habits and English reading comprehension among EFL students. Resta et al. (2023) looked at Grade XI students in Palembang. They found a statistically significant connection. Ayiz and Taniguchi (2025) also studied reading habits and comprehension among Grade XI students in a high school. Other studies have looked at factors such as reading interest and achievement motivation (Lustyantie & Kasan 2021) and reading strategies (Sunggingwati & Ungau 2023; Manurung et al. 2023). Aditya et al. (2023) Reading motivation together with reading habits.

Although these studies show results from places they cannot be applied automatically to every school or every group of students. The current study offers a look at 25 Grade XI students at SMAN Olahraga Lampung. The present study focuses on reading practice as the independent variable and uses a narrative-text-based reading comprehension test. The study asks if a significant connection exists in this group of students.

2. Method

This study employed a quantitative correlational design to examine the relationship between students' reading practice and reading comprehension. This design was appropriate because the study aimed to identify the direction and statistical significance of the relationship between the two variables without manipulating either variable or establishing a cause-and-effect relationship.

The participants were 25 students from Grade XI.2 at SMAN Olahraga Lampung. The participant selection followed a convenience based recruitment approach aligned with purposive sampling criteria, based on class accessibility during the researchers teaching practice period. Grade XI.2 consisted of a a total class size of 25 students, all of whom were eligible and invited to participate. With no exclusions or missing responses, the participation rate was 100%, meaning the 25 students constituted the whole class. While this sample size was planned based on immediate accessibility and classroom availability during the fixed internship period, it is acknowledged that this restricted size limits statistical sensitivity and the generalizability of the findings to a broader population, which are restricted strictly to this specific group. The findings were therefore limited to the selected participants and were not intended to represent all students at the school.

Two instruments were used to collect the data. The first instrument was a reading practice questionnaire adapted from Pham (2021), covering five aspects: reading attitude, reading frequency, reading materials, reading purposes, and time spent reading.

The instructions within the instrument were explicitly specified to measure students' actual English reading activities (specifically focusing on narrative or story texts) with a recall period constrained to the past one month. The initial questionnaire consisted of 40 items, of which 36 were retained after the item validity analysis. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5), with Neutral (3) as the midpoint. Negatively worded items were reverse-scored before the total scores were calculated.

The second instrument was a reading comprehension test consisting of multiple-choice questions with five answer options (A–E) based on narrative texts. To ensure alignment with the claimed outcome, the test specifically focused on inferential comprehension, adapted from Warnidah et al. (2016). The final 40 items were systematically mapped across four indicators: making inferences about characters (10 items), motives and feelings (10 items), the author's attitude (10 items), and irony (10 items), thereby focusing exclusively on inferential rather than literal comprehension. Originally, the try-out version consisted of 60 items.

Following the item analysis, 20 items were eliminated because they exhibited low discrimination power or inappropriate difficulty indices, leaving 40 highly valid items for the final test. Each correct answer was scored 1, and incorrect answers were scored 0, with no penalty for guessing. The resulting total score represents a specific measure of

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students' inferential narrative comprehension capability, rather than a broad, general reading ability. The test used narrative texts and was developed based on the indicators of inferential comprehension adapted from Warnidah et al. (2016). These indicators included making inferences about characters, motives and feelings, the author's attitude, and irony. The initial test consisted of 60 items, of which 40 were retained after the item validity analysis. The final test included items adapted from existing test materials and items developed by the researcher based on the selected indicators

Before the main data collection, both instruments were pilot-tested on 26 Grade XII students who shared similar curriculum backgrounds and language proficiency levels, making them a suitable proxy to evaluate the instruments' clarity and structural functionality before deployment to the Grade XI sample. Item validity was systematically examined using the Corrected Item-Total Correlation in SPSS with a strict cutoff value of $r \geq 0.361$ based on the r-table for N=26 at a 0.05 significance level. Consequently, 4 questionnaire items and 20 reading test items fell below this threshold and were discarded. Reliability analyses were performed on the retained items using Cronbach's Alpha.

Crucially, negatively worded items were reverse-scored prior to running the reliability algorithm to prevent artificial alpha inflation. The analysis yielded a high reliability coefficient of 0.956 for the 36-item reading practice questionnaire and 0.950 for the 40-item reading comprehension test. While these high coefficients provide strong evidence of internal consistency for the pilot group, it is acknowledged that small, homogeneous sample sizes (N=26) can yield naturally compressed score variance, which may produce potentially optimistic reliability estimates. Nonetheless, the high internal consistency confirms the basic structural safety and content validity of the final items. These results indicated high internal consistency for both instruments

After the validity and reliability analyses, the retained items were administered to the 25 selected Grade XI.2 students. The questionnaire responses and reading comprehension test results were recorded and scored separately. The resulting scores were then used to examine the relationship between students' reading practice and reading comprehension.

To justify this approach, the five domains of the questionnaire (attitude, frequency, materials, purposes, and time spent) were treated as a broad composite score representing the multi-dimensional nature of reading practice, rather than isolated physical behaviors. Prior to this, an item to domain map was established, and a try-out analysis was conducted on non sample students. Out of 40 initial items, 4 items (items 2, 4, 23, and 35) were found invalid due to lack of specificity and conditional bias, and were subsequently eliminated. This left 36 valid items for the final analysis. The remaining valid items within each domain were then aggregated into a single composite score.

The data collection procedure followed strict administrative and ethical guidelines. Institutional permission from the school authorities at SMAN Olahraga Lampung was secured, and formal student-assent arrangements were approved prior to administration. Data collection was systematically conducted during the researcher's teaching practice period. The instruments were administered sequentially within a single classroom session, starting with the 36-item reading practice questionnaire (allotted 20 minutes) and followed immediately by the 40-item narrative reading comprehension test (allotted 45 minutes).

The session was administered in English under the direct supervision of the researcher to ensure independent completion without external assistance. Participation was entirely voluntary; recruitment occurred transparently during regular school hours, and students were explicitly informed that they could decline to participate or withdraw at any point without any negative consequences to their academic grades or their relationship with the researcher and the school. To maintain strict confidentiality, questionnaire responses and reading test scores were linked using anonymous identification coding rather than students' names, and all individual data records were strictly secured.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation in SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the participants' scores. The Shapiro–Wilk test was conducted to examine data normality, while the deviation from linearity test was used to assess whether the relationship between the two variables was linear. Pearson's correlation coefficient was then used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between students' reading practice and reading comprehension. The significance level was set at 0.05. A p-value below 0.05 indicated a statistically significant relationship, whereas a p-value of 0.05 or higher indicated that the relationship was not statistically significant.

3. Result

The outcomes of this investigation at SMAN Olahraga Lampung demonstrate the relationship between students' reading practice and their reading comprehension. A reading comprehension test and a questionnaire on reading practice were used to collect data from 25 Grade XI students. The reading practice questionnaire was adapted from Pham (2021) and covered five aspects: reading attitude, reading frequency, reading materials, reading purposes, and time spent reading. Of the initial 40 questionnaire items, 36 were retained after the validity analysis. The reading comprehension test consisted of multiple-choice questions based on narrative texts. Of the initial 60 try-out items, 40 were retained after the item validity analysis.

The data were analyzed using SPSS. The study encompassed testing for reliability, calculating basic statistics, testing for normal distribution, checking for linearity, and performing a Pearson Product-Moment correlation. These analyses were conducted to examine the reliability of the instruments, describe students' scores, test the assumptions for correlation analysis, and determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between students' reading practice and reading comprehension.

The reliability test was conducted to see if the questions in the reading practice survey and the reading comprehension test are consistent with each other. Cronbach's Alpha was employed to verify the internal coherence of the items that were retained. Table 1. The reliability test for the Reading Practice Questionnaire found a Cronbach's Alpha of .956 based on 36 items.

Table 1. Reliability test of the reading practice

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.956	36

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As presented in Table 1, the reliability analysis of the reading practice questionnaire produced a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.956 based on 36 retained items. This value exceeded the commonly accepted reliability threshold of 0.70, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the questionnaire items. The result suggests that the items consistently measured the aspects of reading practice included in the questionnaire, namely reading attitude, reading frequency, reading materials, reading purposes, and time spent reading. Furthermore, the high Cronbach's Alpha value indicates that the retained items had a strong degree of consistency in measuring students' reading practice. Therefore, the questionnaire was considered reliable and suitable for collecting data in the main study.

Table 2. Reliability test of the reading comprehension

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.950	40

As presented in Table 2, the reliability analysis of the reading comprehension test produced a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.950 based on 40 retained items. This value was higher than the commonly accepted reliability threshold of 0.70, indicating high internal consistency among the test items. The result suggests that the retained questions consistently measured students' reading comprehension through the narrative texts used in the test. In addition, the high reliability coefficient indicates that the test items demonstrated a strong degree of consistency in assessing the intended reading comprehension construct. Therefore, the reading comprehension test was considered reliable and suitable for use in the main data collection.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to describe students' reading practice and reading comprehension scores in terms of the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Reading Practice and Reading Comprehension

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reading_Comprehension	25	11	39	25.60	8.347
Reading_Practice	25	102	180	132.20	18.797
Valid N (Listwise)	25				

As presented in Table 3, the reading practice scores ranged from 102 to 180, with a mean score of 132.20 and a standard deviation of 18.797. The mean score represents the average reading practice score obtained by the 25 students who participated in this study. The difference between the minimum and maximum scores was 78 points, indicating that students reported different levels of reading practice based on their questionnaire responses. Furthermore, the standard deviation of 18.797 shows that individual scores

varied around the mean score, suggesting that students did not have exactly the same reading practice patterns.

Regarding reading comprehension, the scores ranged from 11 to 39, with a mean score of 25.60 and a standard deviation of 8.347. The difference between the minimum and maximum scores was 28 points, indicating variation in students' performance on the reading comprehension test. The mean score represents the average reading comprehension performance of the participants, while the standard deviation indicates how far individual scores were distributed around the mean. These results show that students obtained different scores on the reading comprehension test.

Overall, the descriptive statistics provide an overview of the distribution and variation of both research variables. The results indicate that the participants showed differences in their reading practice questionnaire scores as well as their reading comprehension test scores. However, descriptive statistics alone cannot determine whether students with higher reading practice scores also obtained higher reading comprehension scores. Therefore, further statistical analysis using Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between the two variables.

Normality Test

The normality test was conducted to determine whether the reading practice and reading comprehension scores followed a normal distribution. Since the sample consisted of 25 students, the Shapiro–Wilk test was used. The results are presented in Table 4

Table 4. Shapiro–Wilk Test of Normality

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Reading_Comprehension	.161	25	.094	.939	25	.137
Reading_Practice	.145	25	.185	.950	25	.252

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

As presented in Table 4, the normality test was conducted using the Shapiro-Wilk test because the study involved 25 participants. The significance value for reading practice was 0.252, while the significance value for reading comprehension was 0.137. Both significance values were greater than the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that there was insufficient evidence to conclude that either variable deviated significantly from a normal distribution. Therefore, the normality assumption was considered satisfied for both variables

Linearity Test

The linearity test was conducted to determine whether there was a linear relationship between students' reading practice and reading comprehension. The results are presented in Table 5.

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Table 5. Test of Linearity

ANOVA Table

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	(Combined)	1448.333	19	76.228	1.704	.290
	Linearity	78.136	1	78.136	1.747	.244
	Deviation from Linearity	1370.197	18	76.122	1.702	.291
Within Groups		223.667	5	44.733		
Total		1672.000	24			

As presented in Table 5, the linearity test was conducted to examine whether the relationship between students' reading practice and reading comprehension followed a linear pattern. The significance value in the Deviation from Linearity row was 0.291, which was greater than the 0.05 significance level. This result indicates that there was no statistically significant deviation from linearity between the two variables.

The deviation from linearity value indicates whether the relationship departs significantly from a linear pattern. While the non-significant deviation value (p = 0.291) satisfies the basic prerequisite for Pearson correlation, it provides limited evidence about the exact shape of the relationship due to the limited sample size (N=25) and the constrained within-group degrees of freedom (df=5). Given that marginal non-significant diagnostic tests in small samples do not definitively prove assumption compliance, a scatterplot was visually inspected to confirm the absence of severe non-linear patterns or highly influential outliers.

Pearson's r was retained as the primary analysis since the data exhibited a balanced interval structure without extreme anomalies. To address potential statistical sensitivity issues and handle tied ranks appropriately in this small cohort, a Spearman's rank correlation was conducted as a sensitivity analysis. The Spearman analysis revealed a weak negative and statistically non-significant correlation (\(r_{s}\) = -0.198, p = 0.344), which strongly mirrors the primary Pearson results (r = -0.216, p = 0.299). This consistency confirms that the non-significant inverse relationship remains robust regardless of the parametric assumption assumptions applied. However, this result does not necessarily indicate that a significant linear relationship existed between the two variables; the strength and significance of the relationship were examined separately through the correlation analysis.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation

Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between students' reading practice and their reading comprehension. The analysis involved 25 students. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation between Reading Practice and Reading Comprehension

Correlations

		Reading Comprehension	Reading Practice
Reading Comprehension	Pearson Correlation	1	-.216
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		.299
	N	25	25
Reading Practice	Pearson Correlation	-.216	1
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.299	
	N	25	25

As presented in Table 6, the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between students' reading practice and reading comprehension. The analysis involved 25 students and produced a Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of -0.216. The negative sign indicates that the correlation between the two variables was in an inverse direction. In other words, within this sample, higher reading practice scores tended to be associated with lower reading comprehension scores. However, the correlation coefficient of -0.216 indicates that the relationship was weak.

Furthermore, the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) was 0.299, which was greater than the 0.05 significance level. To report the uncertainty around this primary effect, an approximate Fisher-z 95% confidence interval was computed, yielding a broad interval of [-0.56, 0.20]. This wide interval demonstrates that the study's precision limits are constrained by the small sample size (N=25). Because the interval encompasses both substantial negative associations and weak positive associations, the failure to reject the null hypothesis must be interpreted cautiously as an absence of sufficient statistical evidence to confirm an effect, rather than definitive proof of equivalence or the absolute absence of a relationship. Consequently, non-causal and non-directional interpretations remain highly compatible with the current baseline data, indicating that meaningful associations cannot be entirely ruled out in a larger, more statistically sensitive sample..

Based on these findings, the study did not establish a statistically significant relationship between reading practice and reading comprehension among the 25 Grade XI.2 students at SMAN Olahraga Lampung. Although the correlation coefficient showed a weak negative direction, this finding should not be interpreted as evidence that reading practice reduces reading comprehension. The correlation analysis only describes the direction and strength of the association observed in the sample and does not establish a causal relationship between the variables.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study indicated a weak negative correlation between students' reading practice and reading comprehension at SMAN Olahraga Lampung ($r = -0.216$, $p = 0.299$). Since the significance value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This indicates that there was insufficient statistical evidence to establish a significant relationship between the two variables among the 25 participants.

The findings of this study differ from those of Pham (2021), who reported a significant positive relationship between students' reading habits and reading comprehension among EFL students at Van Lang University. Similarly, Resta et al. (2023)

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found a positive and statistically significant correlation between students' reading habits and reading comprehension among 104 Grade XI students at SMAN 21 Palembang ($r = 0.321$, $p = 0.001$). In contrast, the present study found a weak negative and statistically insignificant correlation.

Direct comparisons with these prior studies must be made with caution due to misalignments in measurement scales and targeted constructs; while this study measured a multidimensional reading practice score focused strictly on narrative text inferential comprehension, prior works often examined generalized reading habits, different target languages, or broader comprehension genres. Furthermore, a non-significant finding in this cohort contrasted with a significant finding in another does not statistically demonstrate that the underlying correlations genuinely differ.

While the distinct environment of SMAN Olahraga Lampung—where students manage rigorous sports training alongside academic loads—is a highly plausible explanation for the weak observed association, these demands were not directly quantified in this study. Consequently, these institutional and contextual factors must be retained purely as qualitative qualifications and presented as tentative hypotheses for future research to investigate systematically.

The descriptive statistics showed that students' reading practice and reading comprehension scores varied across participants. However, differences in the average scores do not necessarily indicate a relationship between the two variables. A correlation analysis is needed to determine whether variations in reading practice are associated with variations in reading comprehension.

The weak negative correlation should be interpreted carefully. The findings do not provide sufficient evidence to conclude that students who engage in more frequent reading practice have lower reading comprehension. Furthermore, the correlation does not imply causation, meaning that the results cannot establish whether reading practice influences students' reading comprehension or vice versa.

Several factors may help explain why the expected relationship was not statistically significant. Reading practice involves more than reading frequency; it also includes reading materials, purposes, attitudes, and the amount of time spent reading. The relationship between these practices and reading comprehension may also be associated with students' vocabulary knowledge, familiarity with reading topics, engagement with texts, and ability to interpret information. In addition, students' academic and sports-related activities may influence the time available for reading. However, these factors were not directly measured or tested in this study and should therefore be considered as possible explanations rather than established findings.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the study involved only 25 students from one class, Grade XI.2 at SMAN Olahraga Lampung. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to students from other grades or schools. Second, the reading practice questionnaire relied on students' self-reported responses, which may not fully reflect their actual reading activities. Third, the reading comprehension test focused on selected narrative texts and may not represent all aspects of students' reading comprehension. Although both instruments demonstrated high reliability, reliability alone does not guarantee that all aspects of the constructs were measured comprehensively.

Future studies should involve larger samples from different classes or schools, use more varied reading materials, and consider additional factors that may be associated with reading comprehension.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of interpreting correlational results carefully, particularly when a study involves a relatively small sample and a specific educational context.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the relationship between students' reading practice and reading comprehension at SMAN Olahraga Lampung was found to be weak and negative ($r = -0.216$). However, the relationship was not statistically significant ($p = 0.299 > 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This indicates that there was insufficient statistical evidence to establish a significant relationship between students' reading practice and reading comprehension among the 25 Grade XI.2 students who participated in this study.

The findings suggest that students' reading practice does not necessarily correspond to their reading comprehension performance. However, this result should not be interpreted as evidence that reading practice negatively affects reading comprehension. Since this study involved a relatively small sample from only one class, further research with larger samples from different classes or schools is recommended to obtain a broader understanding of the relationship between reading practice and reading comprehension.

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