

## ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT ON READING COMPREHENSION

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### Abstrak

This study aims at looking for the correlation between reading comprehension and academic self-concept. This is a quantitative correlational design. The data of this study was gathered through questionnaire and test. The questionnaire was used to get the data of the students' academic self-concept and the test to get the students reading comprehension. The Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to find out the significance relation between students' academic self-concept and reading comprehension. Based on the data analysis, it is found that there is significant correlation between students' academic self-concept and students reading comprehension since  $r$  count (0,49) was higher than  $r$  table (0, 413). Then, the coefficient determination was 0,24. In other words, the academic self-concept of the students helps students to comprehend the reading text well.

**Key words:** *Academic Self-Concept, Reading Comprehension*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is defined as a process of constructing meaning of a text. In the process of constructing the meaning, a dynamic interaction among reader's existing knowledge, the information suggested by the text being read and the context of reading situation are highly important. Klingner (2007:2) states that reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning by coordinating a number of complex processes including word reading, word and world knowledge, and fluency. In other words, in comprehending the text, the ability in interpreting the words, understanding the meaning and the relationship between ideas conveyed in a text are needed because it is a complex cognitive process involving the intentional interaction between reader and text to extract meaning.

In line with the explanation above, in the process of reading, the reader needs to interact with the text being read. The interaction of reader with text brings him/her to be able to construct the meaning of it. The meaning or ideas constructed depend on the reader's interpretation about the text. In interpreting the meaning of a text, reader's knowledge about the language and the topics of the text are highly needed. It is supported by Wooley (2011: 15) who mentions that the background knowledge of the reader is important in comprehending the written text. Moreover, Meneghetti, Carretti & De Beni, (2006: 291) state that reading comprehension requires the capacity to integrate the information with the knowledge of the reader and results in the elaboration of mental representation. Briefly, by integrating the text with the reader's knowledge, the reader will be easy to construct the meaning of the text.

Oakhill, Cain & Elbro (2007: 42) asserts that since reading comprehension known as a dynamic and interactive process, as readers process

each new part of a text, they must be able to access several sources of information. These include the memory-based representation of its meaning constructed so far, readers' semantic knowledge about words, and general knowledge and relevant topic-specific knowledge. Readers also need to access the situation model stored in long-term memory in order to perform many assessments of comprehension such as question answering, recall, and summarization. Furthermore, Woolley (2011:17) states that comprehension is more effective when readers use what they already know about the text theme to conceptualize the gist of the present text. This process allows the reader to construct a more appropriate situational model of the text. In conclusion, the interaction of reader's background knowledge, the information inferred by the written text and the reading situation context enable the readers to interpret the meaning of the text.

Thus, reading comprehension is a very complex activity that much more than the ability to read individual words and know what those words mean. To comprehend what one reads is to understand the meaningful message sent by the author. The process of comprehending the written text involves decoding the writer's words and then using background knowledge to construct an approximate understanding of the writer's message. In other words, the reader uses knowledge, skills and strategies to determine what meaning is.

Since reading comprehension is realized as complex process, it is considered that self-concept of the readers needed. Self-concept refers to one's deeper understanding about him/herself. According to Werf (1990: 13), self-concept is the product of a process of self-conceiving. In this process, the individual attempts to acquire a clear and true image of himself, in order to meet his cognitive need of such a picture. Furthermore, self-concept

refers not only to what one believes about oneself and one's abilities in a certain domain in cognitive terms but also to how one evaluates these beliefs and consequently how one feels about oneself in evaluative, affective terms in the domain. It means that an individual tries to build his/her self-concept through a thorough evaluation of him/herself, so that he/she gets a full understanding of the capability he/she has.

One kind of self-concept is called as academic self-concept. It refers to one's understanding about his/her capability in academic domain. In academic self-concept, an individual assesses him/herself through a mental process to know more about him/herself academically. This is in line with Mercer (2011: 14) who states that academic self-concept is an individual's self-perception of competence and their related self-evaluative judgments in the academic domain. In addition, Redd, Brooks, & McGarvey (2001: 2) defined academic self-concept as an individual's perception of his or her level of competence or ability within the academic realm. Similarly, Marsh (1990: 623-625) defined academic self-concept as a person's self-evaluation regarding a specific academic domain or ability. Briefly, academic self-concept is the students' awareness about their capability in educational field.

Rider and Colmar (2005: 2) propose three components of academic self-concept. The first one is called as achievement self-concept. This kind of academic self-concept refers to the students' perception on their achievement. The students who have positive perception about their achievement will do great effort to achieve their academic goals. The second component is ability self-concept. It refers to the students' perception about their capabilities. And the last is classroom self-concept. This type of academic self concept refers to the students' perception about their confidence in classroom activities.

Academic self-concept plays a central role in students' achievement. According to Marsh (2000: 2), self-concept is an important mediating factor that facilitates the attainment of other desirable psychological and behavioral outcomes. In education, for example, a high academic self-concept is both a highly desirable goal and a means for facilitating subsequent academic accomplishments. Furthermore, Tabassam and Grainger (2000: 398) state that students with a high self-concept usually are academically successful and socially well adjusted, whereas students who hold low self-perceptions feel inadequate and give up when the task is difficult.

To sum up, academic self-concept is the students' perception about their competence or capability in academic field. This perception is divided into three components. Those are achievement self-concept, ability self-concept and classroom self concept. The three components will

be used as the indicators in measuring the students' academic self-concept.

Academic self-concept is closely related to the reading comprehension. According to Rider and Colmar (2005: 1-4), readers with higher self-concepts generally perform better at reading than those with negative self-concepts. The readers who perceive themselves to be good readers usually read more frequently and more widely, which in turn broadens their reading experience and improves their comprehension skills. Besides, Lange (2011: 5) states that the successful readers generally develop a positive self-perception regarding reading. In other words, the positive self-perception of the readers will influence their successful in reading.

Based on the explanation above, the purpose of this research is to find out whether academic self-concept has significant correlation with students' reading comprehension at semester III of English Department of STKIP Nias Selatan

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

In line with the purpose of this research, that is to find out the relationship between academic self-concept and the students' reading comprehension of the third semester students of English Department of STKIP Nias Selatan, this study utilized a quantitative correlational research design. There were two instruments used to gather the data of this research, namely questionnaire and reading comprehension test. The questionnaire was used to measure the students' academic self-concept on reading comprehension which consisted of 30 statements related to academic self-concept and developed based on the indicators of academic self-concept proposed by Rider and Colmar (2005), they were Achievement self-concept, Ability self-concept, and Classroom self-concept.

The second was reading comprehension test. A multiple choice test was used to find out the students reading comprehension. The test was made based on the indicators of reading comprehension, namely, finding factual information, finding main idea, indentifying writer's purpose, identifying reference, understanding words in context, and making inference. Then, the Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to find out the significant relation between students' academic self-concept (Y) and students' reading comprehension (Y).

## 3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The relation between students' academic self-concept and students' reading comprehension was gathered by testing hypothesis saying:

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant correlation between academic self-concept and reading comprehension of the third semester students of English Department of STKIP Nias Selatan.

H<sub>a</sub>: There is significant correlation between academic self-concept and reading comprehension of the third semester students of English Department of STKIP Nias Selatan.

The result of statistical analysis correlation between students' academic self-concept and students' reading comprehension by using Pearson Product Moment formula for the hypothesis as follows:

**Table 1. Correlation coefficient between Students' Academic Self-Concept and Reading Comprehension**

Respondent	X	Y	X <sup>2</sup>	Y <sup>2</sup>	XY
1	103	91,43	10609	8359,18	9417,14
2	94	80,00	8836	6400,00	7520,00
3	90	80,00	8100	6400,00	7200,00
4	92	88,57	8464	7844,90	8148,57
5	86	82,86	7396	6865,31	7125,71
6	98	82,86	9604	6865,31	8120,00
7	105	91,43	11025	8359,18	9600,00
8	94	91,43	8836	8359,18	8594,29
9	82	82,86	6724	6865,31	6794,29
10	77	65,71	5929	4318,37	5060,00
11	85	74,29	7225	5518,37	6314,29
12	82	60,00	6724	3600,00	4920,00
13	84	82,86	7056	6865,31	6960,00
14	105	91,43	11025	8359,18	9600,00
15	97	68,57	9409	4702,04	6651,43
16	80	82,86	6400	6865,31	6628,57
17	94	71,43	8836	5102,04	6714,29
18	81	54,29	6561	2946,94	4397,14
19	76	74,29	5776	5518,37	5645,71
20	86	74,29	7396	5518,37	6388,57
21	93	62,86	8649	3951,02	5845,71
22	87	74,29	7569	5518,37	6462,86
23	84	88,57	7056	7844,90	7440,00
24	87	77,14	7569	5951,02	6711,43
25	87	68,57	7569	4702,04	5965,71
Σ	2229	1942,86	200343	153600	174225,71

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \cdot \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \cdot \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N \cdot \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Σ<sub>x</sub> = Total score of item X

Σ<sub>y</sub> = Total score of item Y

Σ<sub>xy</sub> = Total score of item XY

N = Total respondents

$$r_{xy} = \frac{25 \times 174225,71 - (2229)(1942,86)}{\sqrt{[25 \times 200343 - (2229)^2][25 \times 153600 - (1942,86)^2]}}$$

$$= \frac{4355642,86 - 4330628,57}{\sqrt{[5008575 - 4968441][3840000 - 3774693,88]}}$$

$$= \frac{25014,29}{\sqrt{[40134][65306,12]}} = \frac{25014,29}{\sqrt{2620995918,37}} = \frac{25014,29}{51195,66} = 0,49$$

The result of the calculation above showed that the students' academic self-concept has fair correlation with students' academic reading comprehension since *r* count (0,49) was higher than *r* table (0, 413). The level of probably (*p*) significance was (0.5%). The category of coefficient correlation was interpreted based on the criteria below:

**Table 2. Correlation Coefficient**

Interval Coefficient	Level of Coefficient
0.20 – 0.35	Weak
0.35 – 0.65	Fair
0.65 – 0.85	Strong
More than 0.85	Very strong

Furthermore, this result was used to find out the contribution of the students' academic self-concept on the students reading comprehension by using coefficient determination as follows:

$$KD = r^2 \times 100\%$$

Where:

*r* = correlation coefficient

$$KD = (0,49)^2 \times 100\% = 0,24$$

The result of the calculation showed that the coefficient determination was 0,24 means students' academic self-concept gave significant impact in the level of 24% on reading comprehension, and 76% was unexplained factor value.

Based on the hypothesis testing of this study, it was found that there is significant correlation between students' academic self-concept and students' reading comprehension. The students with high academic self-concept had effort to comprehend the reading text given to them. They had high desire to master the whole text and tended to be active in the class than those who have low academic self-concept. Those students with high academic self-concept commonly perform better at reading than those with the low one. This finding supports the statement of Rider and Colmar (2005: 1-4) saying that readers with higher self-concepts generally perform better at reading than those with lower self-concepts. The readers who perceive themselves to be good readers usually read more frequently and more widely, which in turn broadens their reading experience and improves their comprehension skills. In addition, Lange (2011: 5) states that the successful readers generally develop a positive self-perception regarding reading.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research finding, it is concluded that academic self-concept has close relationship with reading comprehension. In other word, academic self-concept is one of the factors

that affect reading comprehension. Since academic self-concept refers to someone's perception on their competence in educational field, the self-concept of readers helps them to comprehend the reading text well.

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