

The Influence of Reading Interest and English Vocabulary Mastery on the Ability to Read Islamic Texts in the English for Islamic Studies Course

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Abstract

This study investigates the individual and combined effects of reading interest and vocabulary mastery on students' ability to read Islamic texts in the *English for Islamic Studies* course. A quantitative correlational design was employed, involving 26 third-semester students from the Islamic Education Program at STIT Palapa Nusantara, selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using structured questionnaires assessing reading interest, vocabulary mastery, and Islamic text reading ability, and were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression via SPSS. The results revealed a significant positive correlation between reading interest and Islamic text reading ability ($r = 0.574, p < 0.01$), with an even stronger correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading ability ($r = 0.639, p < 0.01$). Descriptive statistics indicated high mean scores across variables, with reading ability ($M = 83.7$) ranking highest, followed by vocabulary mastery ($M = 81.5$) and reading interest ($M = 78.3$). Key performance indicators included interpreting Qur'anic texts ($M = 84.2$), summarizing Islamic readings ($M = 83.1$), and understanding basic Islamic concepts ($M = 81.6$). Multiple regression analysis confirmed that both reading interest ($\beta = 0.401$) and vocabulary mastery ($\beta = 0.489$) significantly predicted reading ability ($p < 0.01$), collectively accounting for 53.2% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.532$). The findings suggest that enhancing students' vocabulary and fostering reading interest are effective strategies to improve their comprehension of Islamic texts in English.

Keywords: Reading; Interest; Vocabulary; Islamic Texts; English for Islamic Studies

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, reading comprehension has been widely acknowledged as a cornerstone of language learning, especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Islamic higher education contexts. Globally and nationally, the ability to comprehend academic texts, particularly religious ones, remains a challenge for students. Indonesian students, as EFL learners, are required to master reading skills not only for academic success but also to access religious content written in English, such as Qur'anic commentaries, Islamic scholarly works, and contemporary Islamic thought. Reading, in this context, becomes not just a skill but a gateway to linguistic, academic, and spiritual development (Tama et al., 2024). Despite English being taught from junior high school through university in Indonesia, many students struggle to comprehend Islamic texts due to low reading interest and insufficient vocabulary mastery (Lisana et al., 2022; Waluyojati et al., 2021).

Reading interest and vocabulary mastery are two pivotal factors in enhancing reading comprehension. Vocabulary is not only a foundation for word recognition and decoding but also enables learners to derive meaning from texts, especially when dealing with abstract or religious content (Kharisma Kamal et al., 2023; Kusumaningrum & Lapasau, 2021). Vocabulary and reading cannot be separated, because both of them relate each other. By having and mastering vocabulary, we will know the meaning of vocabulary in the context. It can also help to avoid making mistake in understanding. As the students learn to read more advanced texts, they must learn the meaning of new words that are not the part of their oral vocabulary (Ramadani, S, Saiful, Azis, 2021). Nation (2021) emphasized that repeated exposure to vocabulary in context facilitates incidental learning, while Schmitt and Schmitt (2021) pointed out the incremental nature of vocabulary acquisition. Grabe and Stoller (2019) supported this by explaining that vocabulary and fluency develop simultaneously, which is essential for comprehending texts like those used in the English for Islamic Studies Course.

Furthermore, religious reading materials have been found to promote deeper engagement and moral development. Roslaini et al., (2023) suggested that Islamic-based texts improve not only comprehension but also influence students'attitudes and character.

Nur'Aini & Wahidah, (2023) demonstrated that students exposed to Islamic literature-based reading materials showed a significant appreciation and engagement. Similarly, Wulan et al., (2023) found that a combination of reading interest and vocabulary mastery positively influenced students' reading comprehension, though the effect size was modest among primary-level learners.

Prior studies have consistently validated the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading ability. Kadri, Krismayani, (2022) found a very high correlation between the two variables, while Wati & Maula, (2021) noted that richer vocabulary significantly predicted better reading outcomes. Fahrani et al. (2023) focused on Islamic high school students, affirming the central role of vocabulary in reading educational success. Similarly, Dilo, (2024) emphasized that the method of teaching Islamic English texts, combined with students' cognitive style, strongly influenced reading comprehension. Meanwhile, Bani et al., (2023) confirmed the reliability and validity of Islamic English reading comprehension tests, which further emphasizes the need for effective instructional strategies.

However, these studies tend to focus on general vocabulary development, cognitive styles, or reading strategies, without a direct emphasis on how reading interest interacts with vocabulary mastery to influence the ability to read Islamic texts. For instance, Panjaitan et al., (2024) explored vocabulary mastery and reading strategy without considering the spiritual or religious context of the texts. Thus, a gap remains in understanding how the intersection of affective (reading interest) and cognitive (vocabulary mastery) variables contributes to students' performance in reading Islamic texts specifically.

To address this gap, the current study investigates how reading interest and English vocabulary mastery jointly influence students' ability to read Islamic texts in the English for Islamic Studies Course. Drawing upon theories of incidental vocabulary learning (Nation, 2021), academic vocabulary acquisition (Coxhead, 2021), and integrated reading-skills development (McKeown & Beck, 2022; Brown et al., 2020), this study offers a novel perspective by focusing on a religiously contextualized academic reading task. The integration of religious content and EFL pedagogy aims to enrich both cognitive skills and spiritual engagement, contributing to a more holistic educational model. Ultimately, this study seeks to answer how students' interest in reading and their mastery of English vocabulary influence their ability to understand Islamic texts, which has implications for curriculum design in Islamic higher education.

The research questions of this study are: 1) Is there a significant relationship between students' reading interest and their ability to read Islamic texts?; 2) Is there a significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and students' ability to read Islamic texts?; and 3) Do reading interest and vocabulary mastery simultaneously influence students' ability to read Islamic texts?.

This study aims to investigate the extent to which students' reading interest and vocabulary mastery influence their ability to read Islamic texts, specifically within the context of the English for Islamic Studies Course. First, it seeks to examine whether there is a significant relationship between students' reading interest and their ability to comprehend and interpret Islamic texts written in English. Secondly, the research explores the correlation between students' mastery of English vocabulary and their reading ability in Islamic contexts. Finally, it analyzes whether both variables—reading interest and vocabulary mastery—jointly contribute to the development of students' reading competence in understanding Islamic literature.

The significance of this study lies in its potential contribution to the field of English language education in Islamic higher institutions, particularly in courses that emphasize religious literacy through a second language. By identifying the role of affective (interest) and linguistic (vocabulary) factors in enhancing comprehension of Islamic texts, this study offers valuable insights for curriculum developers, lecturers, and policymakers aiming to improve instructional strategies in English for Islamic purposes. The findings are expected to help educators design more engaging and linguistically supportive reading materials, thereby enhancing students' critical engagement with Islamic content while also fostering their language skills.

METHODS

1. Research Type

This study adopted a quantitative approach aimed at measuring the relationship between variables through the use of structured data collection and statistical analysis. As emphasized by Ary et al. (2022), quantitative research is designed to examine causal relationships using objective, numerical data. It is particularly suitable when the research seeks to test hypotheses and identify patterns of influence among variables. In this context, the method was selected to explore the influence of reading interest and English vocabulary

mastery on students' ability to read Islamic texts in English. Additionally, Haryono (2020) supports that quantitative methods are effective for analyzing the influence between independent and dependent variables in educational research contexts.

2. Research Design

This research employed a correlational survey design, which enables the researcher to observe and measure the degree of relationship between two or more variables without manipulating them. Correlational research is considered appropriate for examining the strength and direction of relationships among variables as they naturally occur, especially in educational and social contexts, since it does not involve experimental manipulation (Selviana et al., 2024). The survey method allowed for the efficient collection of standardized responses concerning students' reading habits, vocabulary knowledge, and text comprehension.

3. Population and Sample

This study was conducted from November 2024 to January 2025, involving third-semester students of the Islamic Education Study Program at Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Palapa Nusantara, located in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. The total population consisted of 124 students, while the sample comprised 26 students, who were currently enrolled in the English for Islamic Studies Course. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the study. As stated by Denieffe, (2020) argues that purposive sampling facilitates information-rich case selection, enabling researchers to gather deep insights from those best suited to address complex phenomena.

4. Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising three major sections: (1) reading interest, (2) English vocabulary mastery, and (3) the ability to read Islamic texts. Items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The questionnaire was validated using Pearson Product-Moment correlation to assess construct validity, and Cronbach's Alpha to examine internal consistency, in accordance with procedures outlined by Taherdoost, (2019). These steps ensured that the research instrument was both valid and reliable prior to distribution.

5. Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics, particularly multiple linear regression analysis, to evaluate the influence of the independent variables—reading interest and vocabulary mastery—on the dependent variable, which is reading ability in Islamic texts. The statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS version 25, and a significance threshold of $p < 0.05$ was used, as recommended in empirical educational research by Hair et al. (2020). This significance level was chosen to maintain the rigor and generalizability of the findings.

RESULTS

1. Descriptive Analysis of Each Variable

Descriptive statistics were computed to measure the central tendency and variability of each variable: reading interest, vocabulary mastery, and the ability to read Islamic texts in English. The results are displayed in following figure of graph 1, and table 1:

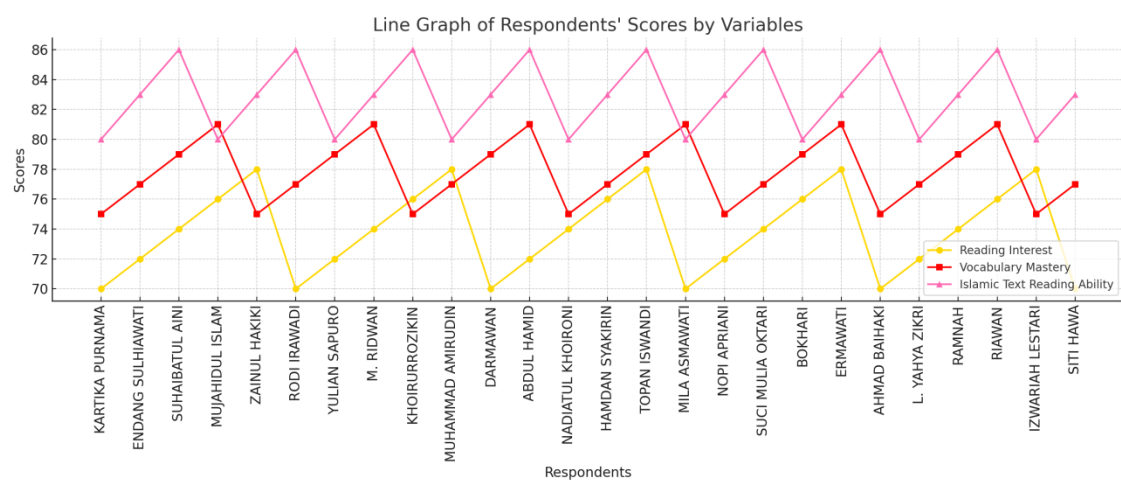


Figure 1: Comparative Scores of 26 Respondents on Reading Interest, Vocabulary Mastery, and Islamic Text Reading Ability

This figure 1 of line graph displays the scores of 26 respondents across three variables: reading interest, vocabulary mastery, and the ability to read Islamic texts in English. The x-axis lists the names of individual respondents (from Kartika Purnama to Siti Hawa), while the y-axis represents scores ranging from 60 to 100. Visually, the Islamic text reading

ability shows the highest scores overall, followed by vocabulary mastery, and lastly reading interest. Although fluctuations appear, the trends across the three variables follow a similar upward pattern. This suggests a positive correlation—students with higher reading interest and stronger vocabulary tend to perform better in understanding Islamic texts. The graph reinforces the statistical analysis, highlighting that reading interest and vocabulary mastery significantly contribute to reading comprehension.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Reading Interest	78.3	5.4	68	88
Vocabulary Mastery	81.5	4.8	70	90
Reading Islamic Text Ability	83.7	5.2	72	92

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the three main variables. The average score for Reading Interest was 78.3, with a standard deviation of 5.4, indicating moderate variability among students, with scores ranging from 68 to 88. Vocabulary Mastery had a higher mean of 81.5 and a lower standard deviation (4.8), suggesting students generally performed well and consistently in this area, with scores between 70 and 90. Reading Islamic Text Ability had the highest mean score of 83.7, with a standard deviation of 5.2 and a score range from 72 to 92, reflecting strong overall reading ability among the students.

2. Response Distribution per Indicator

To provide a more nuanced understanding, mean scores of selected indicators for each variable were examined and are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean Scores per Indicator

Variable	Indicator Description	Mean
Reading Interest	Students feel motivated to read often	79.1
	Students enjoy reading Islamic content	77.5
Vocabulary Mastery	Students understand academic English words	82.7
Reading Ability	Students know translation of religious terms	80.4
	Able to interpret the meaning of Qur'anic texts	84.2
	Can summarize Islamic readings in English	83.1
	Can comprehend texts about the basic concepts of Islam (e.g., <i>tawhīd</i> , <i>ibadab</i>)	81.6

Table 2 presents the average scores for selected indicators across three variables. For Reading Interest, students reported high motivation to read (mean = 79.1) and a strong

enjoyment of Islamic content (mean = 77.5). Regarding Vocabulary Mastery, students showed strong understanding of academic English words (mean = 82.7) and good knowledge of religious term translations (mean = 80.4). For Reading Ability, students scored highest in interpreting Qur'anic meanings (mean = 84.2), followed by their ability to summarize Islamic texts in English (mean = 83.1), and comprehend basic Islamic concepts such as *tawhīd* and *'ibādah* (mean = 81.6). These results indicate a consistently strong performance across all indicators.

3. Answers to Each Research Question

- a. Research Question 1 (RQ1): *Is there a significant relationship between students' reading interest and their ability to read Islamic texts?*

The output results using SPSS are presented in the following table:

Table 3 of RQ1: The correlation between Reading Interest and Reading Islamic Text Ability

	Reading Interest Islamic Text Ability	
Reading Interest	1.000	.574 (**)
Islamic Text Ability	.574 (**)	1.000

This table 3 of RQ1 shows the pearson correlation results between students' reading interest and their ability to read islamic texts. The correlation coefficient (r) is 0.574, which indicates a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. The double asterisks (**) signify that the correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$). This suggests that students with higher interest in reading, particularly Islamic texts, tend to better comprehend, summarize, and interpret key religious content including themes of *tawhīd*, *'ibādah*, and *akhlāq*.

- b. Research Question 2 (RQ2): *Is there a significant relationship between vocabulary mastery and students' ability to read Islamic texts?*

The output results using SPSS are presented in the following table:

Table 4 of RQ2: The correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Reading Islamic Text Ability

	Vocabulary Mastery Islamic Text Ability	
Vocabulary Mastery	1.000	.639 (**)
Islamic Text Ability	.639 (**)	1.000

This table 4 presents the pearson correlation results between vocabulary mastery and reading islamic text ability. The correlation coefficient (r) is 0.639, indicating a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The double asterisks (**) indicate that the result is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$). This suggests that students with higher vocabulary mastery—especially in academic and religious terms—tend to perform better in reading and understanding Islamic texts in English.

- c. Research Question 3 (RQ3): *Do reading interest and vocabulary mastery simultaneously influence students' ability to read Islamic texts?*. To address this, multiple linear regression was conducted. Results are presented in the following Tables, and figures:

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error	Sig.
Reading Interest & Vocabulary Mastery	0.729	0.532	0.503	3.648	0.000

Table 5 presents the results of the multiple linear regression analysis, demonstrating a strong and statistically significant relationship between the independent variables—reading interest and vocabulary mastery—and the dependent variable, students' ability to read Islamic texts. The correlation coefficient (R) is 0.729, indicating a strong association. The coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.532, which means that 53.2% of the variation in reading ability can be explained by students' reading interest and vocabulary mastery. The adjusted R² value of 0.503 confirms the robustness of the model after adjusting for the number of predictors. The standard error of 3.648 reflects the average distance between the observed and predicted values. The significance value ($p = 0.000$) indicates that the model is highly significant, providing strong evidence that both reading interest and vocabulary mastery contribute meaningfully to students' reading performance in Islamic texts.

Table 6. Coefficients of Predictors

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	21.487	2.961	—	7.254	0.000
Reading Interest	0.325	0.084	0.401	3.869	0.000
Vocabulary Mastery	0.452	0.077	0.489	5.870	0.000

Table 6 shows the coefficients of the predictors from the multiple linear regression analysis. Both reading interest and vocabulary mastery significantly contributed to students' reading ability. The unstandardized coefficient (B) for reading interest is 0.325 ($p <$

0.001), indicating that for each one-point increase in reading interest, reading ability increases by 0.325 points. For vocabulary mastery, the coefficient is higher at 0.452 ($p < 0.001$), showing a stronger effect. The standardized beta (β) values also confirm this, with vocabulary mastery ($\beta = 0.489$) having a greater influence than reading interest ($\beta = 0.401$). The constant value of 21.487 represents the predicted reading ability when both predictors are zero. All predictors are statistically significant, as indicated by their p-values (Sig. = 0.000).

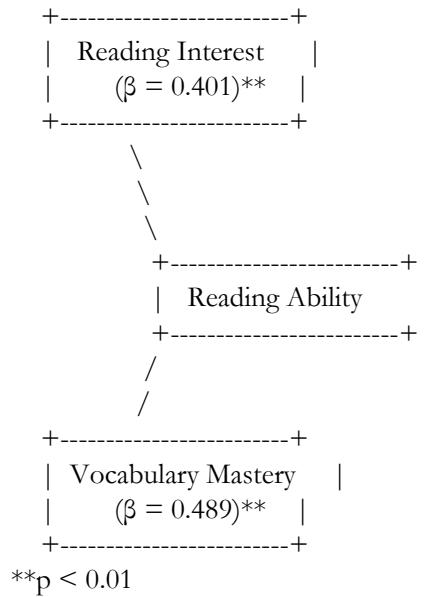


Figure 2. Multiple Regression Model of Predictors of Reading Ability

Figure 2 illustrates the multiple regression model showing the influence of two predictors—reading interest and vocabulary mastery—on students’ reading ability. Vocabulary mastery has a stronger standardized effect ($\beta = 0.489$) compared to reading interest ($\beta = 0.401$), although both are statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This model highlights that both factors contribute positively to students’ ability to read and understand Islamic texts, with vocabulary mastery playing a slightly more dominant role.

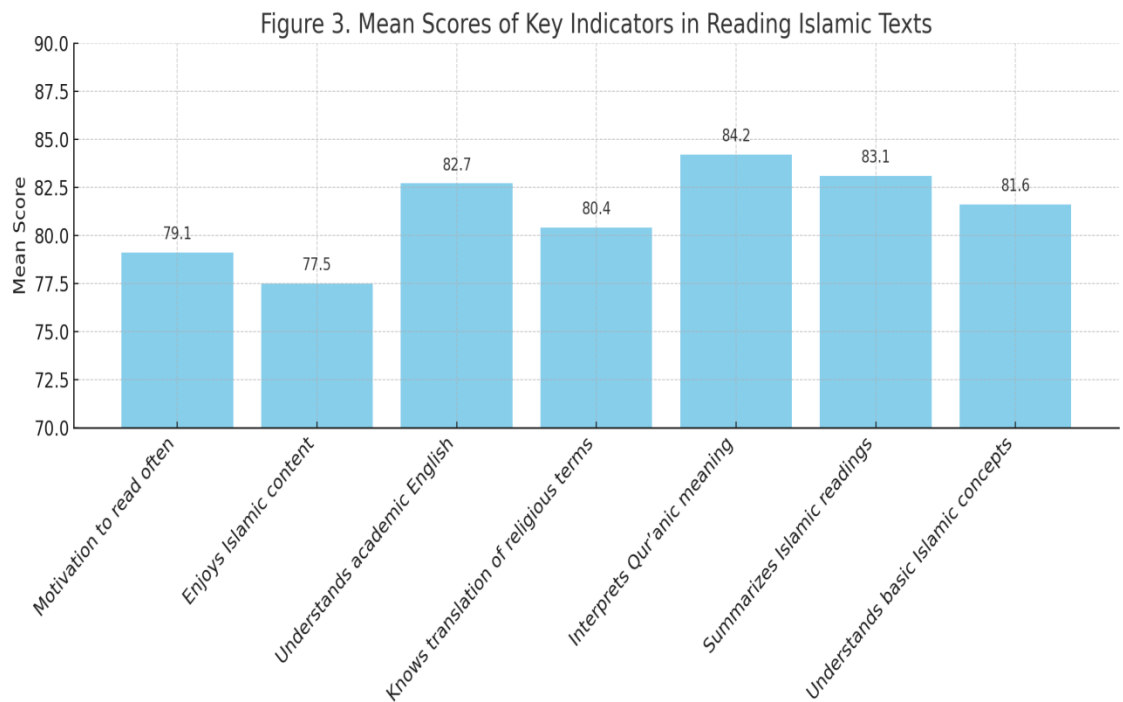


Figure 3: Bar Chart of Mean Scores of Key Indicators in Reading Islamic Texts

This figure 3 of bar chart compares the average scores of several key indicators related to students' reading abilities. Among them, the highest mean score was recorded for the indicator "Interprets Qur'anic texts," with a value of 84.2, highlighting students' strong capability in understanding scriptural content. An additional indicator, "Understands basic Islamic concepts," also showed a high average score of 81.6, reflecting students' solid comprehension of foundational Islamic teachings such as *tawḥīd* and *'ibādah*.

DISCUSSION

1. Interpretation of Results

a. The Relationship Between Reading Interest and the Ability to Read Islamic Texts

With regard to Research Question 1, the findings demonstrated a moderate yet statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.574$, $p < 0.01$) between students' reading interest and their ability to comprehend Islamic texts. This indicates that students who express a stronger interest in reading—particularly in religiously themed texts—tend to achieve higher levels of comprehension when engaging with Islamic content written in

English. This aligns with Roslaini et al., (2023), who asserted that Islamic-based texts promote not only reading comprehension but also students' moral and spiritual engagement. Furthermore, Nur'Aini & Wahidah, (2023) found that exposure to Islamic literature enhances student appreciation and engagement, emphasizing how affective variables, such as motivation and personal relevance, influence reading outcomes.

Theoretically, this supports the view that reading interest functions as an affective catalyst for deeper textual engagement. Intrinsically motivated readers are more likely to invest cognitive effort and time, which can lead to enhanced understanding of core Islamic concepts such as *tawḥīd* and *'ibādah*. As Grabe and Stoller (2019) highlighted, motivation and fluency are interrelated factors in reading development, suggesting that fostering enjoyment and relevance in reading can significantly shape academic performance—especially when reading spiritual or theological texts.

b. The Relationship Between Vocabulary Mastery and the Ability to Read Islamic Texts

Addressing Research Question 2, the results indicated a strong and statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.639$, $p < 0.01$) between students' vocabulary mastery and their ability to comprehend Islamic texts. This outcome affirms the widely accepted notion that vocabulary knowledge is foundational to reading comprehension, particularly when dealing with complex academic and religious discourse. As Kharisma Kamal et al., (2023) noted, vocabulary is not merely about word recognition but also central to deriving meaning—especially in contexts with abstract or spiritual language. Similarly, Schmitt and Schmitt (2021) emphasized that vocabulary acquisition is incremental, requiring continuous and contextual exposure. In the context of Islamic texts, this becomes even more crucial, as students must navigate specialized terminology that is both theological and philosophical in nature.

Moreover, Nation (2021) highlighted that incidental vocabulary learning occurs most effectively through repeated exposure in meaningful contexts, which reinforces the need for consistent interaction with Islamic academic texts. Students with a wider lexical repertoire are better equipped to decode theological nuances, understand scriptural argumentation, and appreciate the doctrinal richness embedded in Islamic readings. This finding resonates with Fahrani et al. (2023), who confirmed the central role of vocabulary in students' academic success in Islamic educational settings.

c. **The Combined Influence of Reading Interest and Vocabulary Mastery on the Ability to Read Islamic Texts**

Turning to Research Question 3, the results of the multiple regression analysis revealed a significant combined influence of reading interest and vocabulary mastery on students' ability to read Islamic texts. The multiple correlation coefficient (R) was 0.729, with an R^2 of 0.532, indicating that approximately 53.2% of the variance in students' reading ability could be explained by these two variables working in tandem.

These findings validate the theoretical framework underpinning this study, which draws upon the integrated roles of affective and cognitive factors in language comprehension. While both predictors were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), vocabulary mastery ($\beta = 0.489$) had a slightly greater impact than reading interest ($\beta = 0.401$). This outcome supports the assertion by Grabe and Stoller (2019) that vocabulary knowledge and fluency develop simultaneously and are both crucial for successful reading, especially when learners are exposed to dense academic or religious texts.

Moreover, this reinforces Dilo's, (2024) conclusion that instructional approaches integrating vocabulary and cognitive engagement can significantly enhance students' comprehension of Islamic English materials. It also reflects the perspective of Brown et al. (2020) and McKeown & Beck (2022), who advocate for the development of integrated reading skills that combine decoding, vocabulary, and motivation.

Descriptive statistics further support this conclusion. Students reported high scores across all constructs, with the highest mean found in reading ability ($M = 83.7$), especially in their capacity to interpret Qur'anic passages ($M = 84.2$). Similarly, strong performance was observed in vocabulary mastery, particularly in academic ($M = 82.7$) and religious terminology ($M = 80.4$). These results portray a learner profile that is linguistically competent and affectively engaged—essential traits for navigating Islamic academic discourse in English.

In sum, this study affirms that reading interest and vocabulary mastery function not as isolated factors but as complementary elements, jointly enhancing students' ability to engage with, understand, and internalize Islamic knowledge. The findings underscore the need for instructional strategies in Islamic higher education that integrate affective motivation with robust vocabulary instruction, as emphasized by Coxhead (2021) in her work on academic vocabulary acquisition.

2. Comparison with Previous Studies

These results are in line with previous literature that consistently identifies vocabulary mastery as a critical factor in reading comprehension (Kadri, Krismayani, 2022; Nation, 2021; Schmitt & Schmitt, 2021). The findings reaffirm Nation's (2021) theory that repeated and contextualized exposure to vocabulary enhances incidental learning, which is vital when dealing with texts embedded in abstract or religious language. Similarly, Kharisma Kamal et al., (2023) and Fahrani et al. (2023) emphasize that vocabulary competence directly supports comprehension, especially in Islamic education settings.

Moreover, this study also supports the conclusions of Wulan et al., (2023) and Nur'Aini & Wahidah, (2023) who emphasized the role of reading interest in promoting deeper engagement and comprehension. However, while those studies often focus on general or secular reading materials, the current research adds a novel contribution by contextualizing both vocabulary and reading motivation within a religious and linguistic framework—specifically, the ability to understand Islamic texts written in English. Unlike Panjaitan et al., (2024) who studied vocabulary in general academic settings without religious specificity, this study addresses the unique interaction between spiritual motivation and language acquisition, filling a notable gap in the literature.

3. Implications of Findings

The findings have several important theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing body of research on English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly English for Islamic Purposes, by demonstrating that affective and cognitive variables interact in meaningful ways to shape academic reading performance. The data support an integrated model of reading that blends vocabulary acquisition, motivation theory, and spiritual engagement—reinforcing the importance of holistic education models in Islamic higher institutions.

Practically, the study offers valuable insights for curriculum designers and educators in Islamic universities. Courses such as English for Islamic Studies should emphasize vocabulary enrichment, especially religious and academic terms, while also promoting student engagement through the use of inspiring, contextually relevant Islamic materials. The role of interest as a motivational driver suggests the need for pedagogical strategies that not only inform but also inspire students—such as reflective reading, discussion of spiritual themes, and culturally familiar content.

These findings also suggest that reading instruction in Islamic institutions should not be limited to rote memorization or translation exercises. Instead, a balanced approach that enhances vocabulary depth and cultivates intrinsic motivation can lead to greater reading fluency and deeper comprehension of spiritual texts.

4. Research Limitations

While the study presents significant findings, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the sample size of 26 respondents may not provide a broad enough representation to generalize findings across diverse Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia or other contexts. Future research should consider a larger and more varied sample to improve external validity.

Second, although the study successfully measures reading interest and vocabulary mastery, it does not account for other possible influencing variables, such as prior exposure to Islamic texts, students' religious background, reading strategies, or cognitive styles, which may also affect reading performance. Moreover, the use of self-report questionnaires for measuring interest may be subject to social desirability bias.

Lastly, the study's cross-sectional design limits its ability to explore causal relationships or long-term development in vocabulary and reading skills. A longitudinal study would provide deeper insight into how sustained vocabulary growth and evolving reading interest impact Islamic text comprehension over time.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to analyze the individual and joint effects of reading interest and vocabulary mastery on students' ability to read Islamic Texts in the English for Islamic Studies Course. The findings demonstrated that both reading interest and vocabulary mastery are positively and significantly correlated with reading ability. Vocabulary mastery showed a stronger influence ($r = 0.639$, $\beta = 0.489$) than reading interest ($r = 0.574$, $\beta = 0.401$), although both were significant predictors. Descriptive analysis further supported these findings, with reading Islamic texts showing the highest mean score ($M = 83.7$), suggesting students generally have strong comprehension skills, particularly in interpreting Qur'anic meanings ($M = 84.2$) and summarizing religious content ($M = 83.1$). The regression model explained

53.2% of the variance in reading ability ($R^2 = 0.532$), indicating that both variables meaningfully contribute to students' performance.

However, the study acknowledges certain limitations. The sample was limited to 26 students from a single context, which may restrict the generalizability of the results. Additionally, the use of self-report measures and standardized test scores may not capture all dimensions of reading behavior or vocabulary depth. Future studies should consider larger, more diverse populations and include qualitative methods such as interviews or reading journals to explore deeper cognitive and affective dimensions of reading Islamic texts. Expanding research into how digital media or religious instruction environments influence reading development may also yield valuable insights. This study underscores the crucial role of both affective (interest) and cognitive (vocabulary) factors in enhancing religious literacy among learners in multilingual Islamic education contexts.

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