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THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' READING HABIT AND READING COMPREHENSION IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
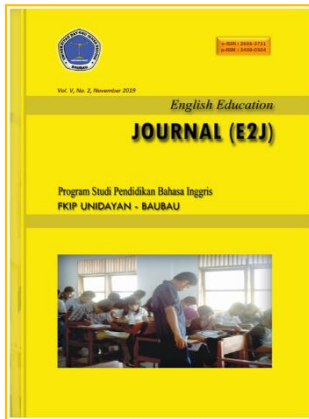
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Abstract
The problem statement of this research was whether there was a correlation between reading habits and students' reading comprehension skills in learning English as a foreign language. The method of the research used a quantitative approach by using a correlational design. Based on R-value (0.588), the correlation between reading habits and students' reading comprehension skills was moderate, and the linear regression model was Y = -6.758 + 0.605X. Based on the model, it is stated that there was a positive correlation between reading habits and reading comprehension skills in learning English. It was concluded that reading habits and reading comprehension skills had a proportional relationship.

Keywords*:* English Learning, Reading Comprehension, Reading Habit.

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English as one of the foreign languages is an everyday activity that should be done to English language learners now. In profounding their knowledge, there are some problems that the learners have. Suleiman (1983) et al. in Akbari [1] explained that the general deficiency of English language learners has been due to various factors: lack of knowledge when they entered the university, school and English department curricula, teaching methods, lack of the target

language environment and the motivation of the learners. In this research, it focuses on lack of the target language environment of the learners that cause they do not have any enough skill to master English because one of the essential factors that influence the learners to learn a foreign language, such as reading habit. So that, the learners can learn effectively and improve the learners' skills, especially in reading skills as the core skill in a foreign language. Krashen [2] believed that the input hypothesis related to the significance of comprehension by hearing and reading in the learning of language in his Second Language Acquisition Theory. It was in line with the students who had a habit of reading an English text; they kept reading; they would affect their skills in reading comprehension. Besides, Artieda [3] said that reading habits were the only factors affecting L2 outcomes linked to literacy. Also, Akbari [4] noted in her research that most students considered that they needed to learn English in technical journals to read textbooks and documents, read texts on the internet .... From this situation, it can be seen that the learner must be able to master the skills; one of the skills can read in English. Mikulecky [5] stated reading was the fundamental guide for all areas of language learning. This case suggests that the habit of reading would make students be good learners of languages. Nevertheless, the researcher found a unique situation in the education field, the students felt interested in Reading course, while they had low achievement in reading achievement. This situation contrasts with the theory. So, in this paper, we examined to find out the correlation between reading habits and students' reading comprehension skills in learning English as a foreign language.

1.1. Reading Habit for Learning Language

The reading habit of students is one of the things students do to read texts or written materials regularly. This practice can be a valuable activity for the students, as it allows students to improve their language skills independently. As Kirmizi *et al.* [6] said in their research of Teacher Candidates' Attitudes Towards Reading Habit (Case of

Dokuz Eylul and Pamukkale Universities), reading habit was a fundamental skill that should be established at an early age. Besides, reading habits make the students be good readers to support themselves in their lifelong learning, especially in language learning. Leedy (1985) in Hamra [7] purposed three elements that affected reading habits, namely, 1) reading techniques, it referred to skimming, scanning, and SQ3R procedure; 2) visual factors, it referred to the sensory process; and 3) emotional factors, it referred to the effect of the readers' emotion in reading. As Erdem [8], in his research, he said that the individual's reading practice was the central component of learning. Also, research by Owusu-Acheaw [9] in Koforidua Polytechnic's students in the Eastern Region of Ghana, it was found that the majority of students recognized the importance of reading. The research showed that reading habits affected academic performance, and the relationship between reading habits and academic achievement was identified.

Therefore, EFL students are much in need of reading habits to improve their language skills, particularly in the reading comprehension aspect.

1.2. Reading Comprehension to EFL Students

Reading activity is closely related to reading comprehension skills. The simple view of reading activity consisted of two elements, they were decoding and linguistic comprehension [11]. In learning English, those elements were crucial factors to be mastered by the students, especially in reading comprehension skills because the primary purpose of reading is comprehension. The students must be able to decode single words and have linguistic comprehension to comprehend spoken language, particularly in an L2 text. Without having those skills, they cannot get the meaning of the text.

Because reading comprehension is one of the receptive skills in learning language, the students have to involve their cognitive and linguistic ability to understand the text. As Joh & Plakans [12] said in their research of

working memory in L2 reading comprehension: the influence of prior knowledge, a certain degree of expertise in the target language, and on the subject may be needed for L2 readers to use their working memory ability efficiently. Based on that, it can be said that cognitive and linguistic competence is closely related to improving our skills in learning English, especially reading comprehension.

2. METHODS

2.1. Type of Research

This research used a quantitative approach by using a correlational design.

2.2. Participants

This research used 48 students of the university in the English Department of Universitas Dayanu Ikhsanuddin as the sample by using random sampling.

2.3. Method of Collecting Data

Data was collected by distributing a reading habit questionnaire to the students to find out how their reading habit was. Then, they were given a reading comprehension test by using TOEFL in the reading comprehension section to find out their achievements in reading comprehension skills.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed quantitatively by using simple linear regression with Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 22 IBM for Windows.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

Based on the data, it was found that the students' reading habit was at a moderate level or 60.42%. It was followed by a good level or 25%, then 10.42% for the students at the poor level and the last, very good level only got 4.17%. The questionnaire result can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Questionnaire on Students' Reading Habit

Achievement Level	Freq	Percentage (%)
Very Good	2	4.17
Good	12	25.00
Moderate	29	60.42
Poor	5	10.42
Very Poor	0	0.00
Total	**48**	**100.00**

Meanwhile, the students' level of reading comprehension skill was at a moderate level because the mean score of their test results was 41.42 from the score range 0 – 100. It can be displayed in the table below as follows:

Table 2. The Frequency and Percentage of Students' Score on Reading Comprehension section in TOEFL

Classification	Score Range	Freq	Percentage (%)
Very Good	81 – 100	0	0.00
Good	61 – 80	3	6.25
Moderate	41 – 60	17	35.42
Poor	21 – 40	28	58.33
Very Poor	0 – 20	0	0.00
Total		*48*	*100*

According to Sugiyono [13], the interpretation of the correlation coefficient is classified as follows:

0.00 – 0.199	= very weak
0.20 – 0.399	= weak
0.40 – 0.599	= moderate
0.60 – 0.799	= strong
0.80 – 1.00	= very strong

The regression analysis result was gained:

Table 3. The Result of R

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,588a	,346	,332	9,376
a. Predictors: (Constant), Reading_Habit				

At the table above, R was Pearson correlation coefficient that showed the level of correlation between the variable of

Reading Habit and Reading Comprehension was moderate (0.588).

Table 4. The Result of ANOVA

ANOVAa					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2260,777	1	2260,777	24,327	,000b
Residual	4274,890	46	92,932		
Total	6535,667	47			
a. Dependent Variable: Reading_Comprehension					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Reading_Habit					

The table of ANOVA above displayed the linearity test. The hypothesis:

H0 = there was no linear correlation between the variable of reading habit and reading comprehension.

H1 = there was a linear correlation between the variable of reading habit and reading comprehension.

It can be seen at the table, sig (0.000) < α (0.05), so H0 was rejected and H1 was accepted. It meant that there was a linear correlation between the variable of reading habit and reading comprehension.

Table 5. The Result of Regression Analysis

Coefficientsa					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-6,758	9,866		-,685	,497
Reading_Habit	,605	,123	,588	4,932	,000
a. Dependent Variable: Reading_Comprehension					

The regression coefficient used was Unstandardized Coefficient. The linear regression model was obtained as follows:

Y = -6.758 + 0.605X

Y = Reading Comprehension (constant)
X = Reading Habit

Based on the model above, the constant was -6.758; it meant that if the value of reading habit (X) was 0, the value of Reading Comprehension (Y) was negative for -6.758.

The regression coefficient of Reading Habit variable (X) was 0.605; it meant that if Reading Habit (X) increased for 1, Reading Comprehension (Y) would increase for 0.605. The coefficient was positive; it meant that there was a positive correlation between Reading Habit and Reading Comprehension. The higher the reading habit, the more reading comprehension increased.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the findings above, the students' reading habit got a moderate level in this research. According to Leedy (1985) in Hamra [7], three factors determined the students' reading habits, namely, 1) reading techniques, 2) emotional factors, and 3) visual factors.

Reading techniques consisted of skimming, scanning, and SQ3R procedure. Brown [14] stated that skimming was one of the techniques to get main ideas, supporting details, and prediction of a text purpose by using a reader's eyes across a whole text quickly. Nevertheless, the students had less skill to skim while reading because they sometimes noticed the purpose of reading text and the main idea of an English text. Moreover, they did not often concern to the grammatical structure of the sentences and the punctuation marks in the text. It could be seen in the result of the questionnaire that most of the students sometimes noticed the grammatical structure of sentences in the text (41.67%), sometimes noticed the punctuation marks to get the meaning of the text (45.83%), sometimes noticed the purpose of the text (29.17%), sometimes noticed the main idea and supporting detail the text (43.75%). Therefore, the students' skill to skim a reading text should be improved.

Besides skimming, scanning is also a valuable technique to support the students in establishing their reading habits. Scanning is related to a strategy for looking at the specific information from a text. According to Brown [14], readers should not read the whole text while scanning; however, the students could not know yet how to do scanning appropriately. Based on the result of the questionnaire, the students usually did not

skip words or lines while reading and sometimes read groups of words at a glance. It was predicted they did it because they read for words, not for ideas. Therefore, it could make them slow to read or find specific information in a text.

Brown [14] provided five steps of SQ3R procedure, namely, Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review. First, students were asked to *survey* a text to get the main ideas and purposes of the text by skimming the text to know the general topic of the text. This research found that most students read the table of content at times and never read the book's preface before reading. However, when reading an English book they rarely noticed the description, graphs, maps, or illustration. Consequently, they had less readiness to read so that they could not get an excellent summary of the text details and intent of the text. Second, *question*, when reading, the students raised questions. Third, *read*, it interacted with the students involved in a reading activity and seeking answers through reading to previous questions. In those steps, the students sometimes paused to summarize after a paragraph heading when reading a problematic English text, the students seldom noticed the writer's writing style, the types of paragraph structures while reading an English paragraph, and the outline and the structure of the writer's thought while reading a long English text. Fourth, *recite*, this activity asked the students to repeat the key memory text points over the oral or written language aloud. So, sometimes the students used their own words to sum up the main concept when reading an English text. Fifth, *review*, this step allowed students to remember important things in order to enhance the capacity of the text's memory. Sometimes, however, they were easy to keep their minds on the reading material and had difficulty remembering what they had read, which meant the students still had some trouble in revising the text. Furthermore, the students were not comfortable with using reading techniques when reading so that developing a good reading habit became an obstacle for the students.

Visual factors became the determinant of the habit of reading too. Hamra [7] claimed that the sensory cycle was the first step in the practice of reading, so it meant that reading activity was linked to visual items in which readers can read from what they see. The eye readers' contact with text influenced the readers to read. Due to the visual factors, the students usually paid attention to the clear printed page to make reading easy, typically stopped reading for a few minutes and rested their eyes after reading for a while by looking at some distant objects and rarely read for a long time without feeling eye fatigue. However, when reading, they sometimes paid attention to distance from 38-50 cm between eyes and text.

This emotional factor also had an essential role as the last factor to influence reader behavior. Hamra [7] claimed that if the students had deep confidence in their ability, a good sense of doing something, and a strong desire to finish something, they could do something well. Looking at the fact, this research found that students assumed that reading activities could improve their ability to understand reading. Still, sometimes they felt comfortable and enjoyed reading an English text. This showed that the students believed in what activity to do to enhance their language learning skills, especially reading activities for understanding the language.

Nonetheless, the skills they possessed, such as how to read or their reading technique, were not yet entirely sufficient to do to influence their joy at reading practice. Then, in Uusen & Muursepp's research [10], their research suggested that it was prudent to encourage students to choose their reading materials wherever possible and to provide them with a wide variety of texts. By giving the students various texts, it is hoped to make them happy, and they feel interested in reading.

The students had two factors related to reading comprehension skills, which caused difficulty in reading comprehension. They decode complexity and linguistic comprehension [15]. Decoding difficulty was related to the students who were unable to understand the meaning of words, and linguistic awareness was related to the lack of language comprehension, whether its forms,

syntax, etc. Such factors should be addressed to establish good reading habits for the students, because the students could not achieve good linguistic understanding without having decoding skills.

Related to the reading comprehension test result, this research found that the students' skill was at a moderate level. Most students got lower scores in the part of directly and indirectly answered questions and higher scores in the part of vocabulary questions. It implied that the students also needed improvement to the degree of literal comprehension in which they stressed understanding of the main idea and mentioned facts in the text and inferential comprehension that indirectly included understanding context in the texts.

At the finding above, it had been stated that there was a positive correlation between reading habits and reading comprehension in this research. It implied that if the students had a good reading habit, their skills in reading comprehension would increase. In this case showed that the students' reading habit had an influence on the students' reading comprehension skills in English text. This research was consistent with the Owusu-Acheaw [9] research that found a direct relationship between the reading habits of students and their academic performance in the Eastern Region of Ghana's Koforidua Polytechnic because they were engaged in reading for passing the exam.

Reading habit was seen as an input for the students to gain comprehension of reading skills. This case was linked to Krashen's theory, namely, input hypothesis relating to how people understand language by listening and reading the text. The students, in this case, gained comprehension of English reading skills through reading activity. Pehlivan *et al.* [16] in their research suggested the lecturers to give at least two essays to the students in every semester to read for establishing their reading habits. This assignment implies the students are asked to keep reading so that they have knowledge of vocabulary and meaning in the texts to reach the comprehension.

Also, it was linked to one of Harmer's [17] reading concepts that said the students who learn more would get better language skill achievement. This meant that they absorbed and learned the language as they read so that they could improve their comprehension of English text. Because the students who had moderate reading habits would also have moderate level reading comprehension skills, their reading habits and reading comprehension skills were affected. It was also supported by the research that was conducted by Ilgar & Ilgar [18] about An Investigation of the Relationship between the Teacher Candidates' Internet Usage and their Habits of Reading; it was reading habit leaded to skill growth, such as reading comprehension, problem solving and critical thinking. Hence, the input hypothesis that Krashen suggested was in line with the outcome of this research.

4. CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings of this research found that the students' reading habit was at a moderate level and the students' reading comprehension skill was also at a moderate level. Moreover, there was a positive correlation between reading habits and reading comprehension, and the correlation was moderate, too. The findings from the present research hopefully enhance our knowledge of reading habits and reading comprehension, especially in an EFL environment. Besides, it is hope that this research can inspire further research involving L2 learners from a variety of backgrounds towards a better understanding of the interwoven relationships between the variables that allow us to understand L2 texts. For the language educators, the students should be taught intensively how to read well so that they felt motivated to improve their skills in learning English.

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APPENDIX

Reading Habit Questionnaire (Developed by Leedy (1985) in Hamra (2003))

Direction: Read the following statements silently, then put an X in the box under the letter that shows your reading habits as they actually are:

N = Never

R = Rarely

S = Sometimes

U = Usually

A = Always

No.	Statements	N	R	S	U	A
1.	I hold the printed page from 38 – 50 cm from my eye when I read.					
2.	While reading English, I notice the grammatical structure of the sentences in the text.					
3.	While reading, I notice the punctuation marks that help me get the meaning.					
4.	While reading, I do not lose my place or skip words or lines.					
5.	When I read an English text, I notice the writing style of the writer.					
6.	When I read an English text, I notice the tone, purpose, or course of the reading selections.					
7.	In reading an English paragraph, I notice the main idea and details that support it.					
8.	In reading an English paragraph, I notice the types of paragraphs structures, such as the descriptive paragraph.					
9.	In reading an English selection, I try to keep a certain reading purpose in my mind during reading.					
10.	When I read, I make sure that printed page is adequately clear.					
11.	When I read an English article, I get easy to keep my mind on the reading material.					
12.	When I read an English text or article, I think of using reading strategies.					
13.	In reading a long English selection, such as a chapter, I notice the outline and the structure of the writer's thought.					
14.	In reading a difficult English text, I pause to summarize after a paragraph heading or section.					
15.	If it is required, I am able to sum up the main idea in my own words.					
16.	I am sure that reading practices can improve my reading comprehension skills.					
17.	I am able to read for a long time without a feeling of eye tiredness.					
18.	I read the table of content of a book before I read.					
19.	I read groups of words at one glance.					
20.	I have no difficulty in recalling what I read.					
21.	I feel comfortable while reading an English text.					
22.	I enjoy reading English selection.					
23.	Before reading an English book, I notice the summary, graphs, charts or illustration if any.					
24.	Before I read an English book, I read the preface of the book.					
25.	After reading for a while, I stop reading for a few minutes and rest my eyes by looking at some distant objects.					

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