

The Correlation between Reading Habit and Students' Writing Ability

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Abstract: *This research concerned with the correlation between reading habit and students' writing ability. The method used was correlational design. The population and samples were 36 students. Questionnaire of reading habit and writing test were used to collect the data. The researcher used Pearson Product Moment Correlation to analyze the data. The results showed that r-obtained was 0.203 compared to r-value interpretation of 0.200 to 0.400 which means there was a low correlation. Yet, r-table of 36 students was 0.329 while r-obtained was 0.203 which means that there was no significant correlation.*

Keywords: Reading Habit, Writing Ability

1. Introduction

In Indonesian curriculum, the four English skills are the focus of English teaching. All of those skills should be learned and mastered by the students as the basis of communication. However, writing skill is considered as a difficult skill by the students. Rao (2012:100) states that students find composing in English is difficult because writing process demands many cognitive and linguistic strategies which they are uncertain. Many students complain that they lack of ideas and cannot think of anything interesting to write and lack of grammar awareness. In addition, Choudhury (2013:27) states that, from the four language skills, writing is obviously the most difficult skill for second and foreign language learners to master.

There are some factors considered as the influence factor in teaching and learning writing skill. One of the factors that can affect students in the teaching and learning process especially in writing is students' reading habit. Reading habit is the activity of reading that is done regularly. Reading habit gives contribution towards students' academic performance. Chettri and Rout (2013:14) reveal that reading habit will lead to the improvement in learning ability. It means that by having a routine reading, students get information and knowledge through the texts and it can influence their learning because they have new ideas, fact, information, knowledge, and experience from reading activity.

There are some studies about reading habit. The types of studies already have done by Oriogue, et al (2017), Kartal (2017), and Hasanah (2017) are correlational, experimental and case study research in Junior High School, Senior High School, and University level. The studies revealed that reading habit has significant effect on academic performance of the students. Then, there is a significant relationship between students' reading habit and their writing ability.

In many studies, reading habit is used to find out its effect and relation toward students' academic performance and students' writing ability. For academic performance, all types of subjects including English can be used to see the effect and

relation with students' reading habit. Further, it also can be used to see the effect or relation toward students' writing ability. Here, the study is intended to investigate the correlation between students' reading habit and their writing ability.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Reading Habit

The activity of reading is regarded as a habit when it is repeatedly carried out. Reading habit is often considered in terms of the amount of materials being read, the frequency of reading as well as the average time spent on reading (Wagner,2002) and this habit can be cultivated (Wijesuriya, 1995). Furthermore, Druckman (2016:130) states that reading habits are the manner in which an individual organizes his reading and it is acquired at an early. Based on the statement above, the researcher agrees with Wagner's definition, he has a clear definition that reading is a long-term habit starting with the very early ages, is the prominent gateway to the knowledge room.

Reading habits do not appear suddenly, the habit should be conditioned. According to Parlette in Druckman (2016:130), reading habits is a gradual process of learning letters, words, sentences, paragraphs, and complete texts. In addition, to become a habit, reading must be encouraged. In practice, reading accompanies a child throughout her life, with the understanding that reading is a means for personal growth; it shapes the imagination and plays a critical role that allows the individual to control language and play a role in society.

Reading habit gives contribution to formal education or at school and for long life learning. In the academic field, reading habit gives contribution towards students' academic performance. Chettri and Rout (2013:14), Oriogue, et al. (2017) reveal that reading habit will lead to the improvement in learning ability. Furthermore, researchers found the relationship between students' reading habits and their demographic profiles, academic performance, and

professional growth (Owusu-Acheaw, 2014). They also found several additional variables that affect reading habits. They are reading efficiency and high reading efficiency is consistent with more positive feelings about reading ability. Furthermore, the researchers also found that low reading habit caused reading anxiety and does not motivate them to study. Therefore, it is important to grow and develop students' reading habit in order to increase the quality of students' knowledge. Thus, reading habit can influence students' academic performance.

In the classroom activities, students' who have high reading habit tend to be active in the class. Diem (2007) states that high reading habits can help someone to improve his/her understanding of the development, writing organization, the choice of words, spelling, and grammar. Furthermore, Tarigan (2008) states that high reading habits made the students share their ideas and background knowledge with their friends in group. In addition, it can broaden the mind, make their ideas overflow, make the brain and mind active, stimulate the formation of new information that can be used in writing, and make someone able to analyze the text. In addition to this case, Tampubolon (1993) states that reading habits and writing are closely interrelated with each other because reading is the foundation of writing skills. In short, reading habit can improve students in the classroom especially in writing activities, it can make they are easier to write because they have background knowledge about a topic and some information needed in writing a text.

Rosidi (2006: 76) proposes six ways to measure a person's reading habits. The first way is looking at to the intensity, it is the amount of time that the reader spent to read. Second is the time the reader has to read. People who like to read will choose to read books in their spare time. Third is reading materials, in choosing reading material, the reader should know kinds of books that will give benefit to the reader. Fourth is attitude; the love (happiness) to the reading materials. Fifth is motivation: the reason why someone read (external and internal). Internal factor, include IQ, interest, etc. External factor, like environment, teacher, parent, and background of their economies. The last is reading techniques; the techniques/strategy that is used by someone before, whilst, and after reading.

2.2 The Concept of Writing

Writing has been defined by the experts as a purposeful activity. The definition of writing has been proposed by many experts. Hamp-Lyons and Kroll in Weigle (2002:89) state that "writing is an activity that takes place within context to accomplish special purpose and appropriately shaped for its intended audience". Thus, the writer has to consider some aspects before writing. They are the readers, the reason behind her writing and in what context and situation. Then, Nunan (2003:88) states that writing is physical and mental activity. Writing is called physical activity because it is an activity of collecting the words in some medium. Furthermore, writing is called mental activity because it is a work of inventing the ideas, thinking about how to express and organize ideas into statement and paragraphs that will impress the readers. In

addition, Nunan (2003:92) emphasizes that since writing is in part of physical activity, it requires more practices because it is like other physical activity.

Lindsay and Knight (2006:85) define writing as an activity of combining letters into words, phrases, clauses, and sentences to construct a coherent text. Therefore, the writer can write a variety of things because they are doing the activity of putting letters into words until it becomes a sentence or paragraph, the result can be postcards, diaries, memos, reports, etc.

Based on the definitions above, it can be said that writing is an act of communication that involves mental and physical activity based on the purpose, audience, and context. In order to produce writing, a writer needs to do some effort to think of ideas to be written, how to organize the ideas to make them in a good paragraph and become a coherence and cohesion text. In addition, to make a good writing, a writer needs a lot of practice.

People write for many reasons. According to Lindsay and knight (2006:85), people write because of three reasons. The first reason is for communication purpose, such as texting or emailing. The text for communication purpose is usually short and simple text. In addition, it can be quite interactive and relatively immediate. The second reason is for academic purpose, students write a longer text because it is a part of their study that will be tested later on. The third reason is for business purpose. People write to make a report or formal letter or to fill an application form. From the explanation before, the researcher can say that every writing is different on form, generic structure, style, language features and other consideration based on what types of text and the purpose of writing the text.

Furthermore, Gebhard (2000:221) states that "the usual things associated with writing are word choice, use of appropriate grammar, syntax, mechanics, and organization". It means that in using appropriate grammar, the writer should consider with the agreement of subject and verb, tense, and article use. Syntax here means that the writer should write a text in a good word order. In mechanics, the writer has to focus in using punctuation, spelling, and handwriting. The last aspect of writing is organization. Here, the writer has to organize ideas into a coherence and cohesive form. According to Oshima and Hogue, there are four steps of the writing process (2007:15-18). The first step is called Pre-writing. Pre-writing is a way to get the ideas; the writer chooses a topic and collects ideas to explain the topic. The second step in the writing process is organizing; the writer organizes the ideas into a simple outline. The third step is writing; the writer writes a rough draft by using outline as a guide. The last step is called polishing; the writer revises what they have written.

From the explanation above, writing has several aspects to be fulfilled in compose a text such as grammar, mechanics, and organization. In addition, there are some steps in the writing process. It starts with pre-writing, where a writer generates ideas, the next step is organizing the ideas into a draft. After that, a writer writes a full text based on the outline, and the last

is polishing or revising various aspects such as spelling, tenses, choice of words or others.

3. Method

The correlational research design was employed in this research. It was employed to find out and measure the relationship between two variables covering an independent variable (reading habit) and a dependent variable (writing ability).

The population of this research was five classes of the grade XI Science at SMAN 12 Padang enrolled on 2018/2019 academic year. The total of the students is 172 students. The samples of this research were selected by using cluster random technique. The researcher selected one group randomly. In this case, XI IPA 3 randomly selected by using lottery system.

In this research, questionnaire of reading habit and writing test of analytical exposition text were the instruments. Questionnaire was used to measure the students' reading habit. The students asked to answer based on their condition with 5 scale options. In the questionnaire sheet, there were instruction and example to answer the statements. The questionnaire was designed based on the indicators that are proposed by Rosidi (1983).

Writing test was aimed to collect the data of students' writing ability. The test material was consisted of certain materials that have been studied by the students especially about analytical exposition text. The writing test consisted of an instruction where the students would be instructed to write an analytical exposition text based on the topics given. There were four topics given to the students: why exercise is important, social medias are bad for teenagers, the danger of using drugs and why learning English is important. The topics were given to both of classes, experimental and control class. The students wrote the test about three paragraphs or more. In 90 minutes based on the available time for one meeting. Finally, the average score taken as the fixed score for writing test. After the data of reading habit and writing have been collected, the scores of the two tests are analyzed to determine whether or not there is correlation between two variables covered in this study. To find out the correlation between two variables, Pearson Product Moment correlation was employed.

4. Finding

There were 36 students filled the reading habit questionnaires. The total score of students' reading habits is 2222 and the mean score is 61.7. Then, the maximum score is 83 and minimum score is 49. The table can be seen below:

Table 1: Reading habit score

| Students' Score | Sum | Max | Min | SD | Mean |
|-----------------|------|-----|-----|------|------|
| | 2222 | 83 | 49 | 9.76 | 61.7 |

Then, the tabulation of students' writing ability of analytical exposition text shows that the total score of students' writing test is 2572 and the mean score is 71.4. Then, maximum

score is 79 and minimum score is 61. The table can be seen below:

Table 2: Writing score

| Writing Score | Sum | Max | Min | SD | Mean |
|---------------|------|-----|-----|-----|------|
| | 2572 | 79 | 61 | 3.8 | 71.4 |

Pearson Product Moment was used to find out the correlation coefficient between two variables. The final score of variables X and Y are presented below:

Table 3: Scores of reading habit and writing

| N | Reading Habit (X) | Writing Ability (Y) | X ² | Y ² | XY |
|------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|--------|
| 36 | 2222 | 2572 | 140484 | 184265,5 | 159015 |
| r obtained | | | 0,203 | | |
| r table | | | 0,329 | | |

The table above shows that the obtained coefficient (r-obtained) is 0.203 at 0.05 of significant level stated in the category of (r-value interpretation of 0.200 to 0.400) which means that there is a low correlation. Yet, on regarding of (r-table) 0.329 of 36 samples, got from (df=n-2). It shows that the obtained coefficient (r-obtained) is 0.203 in two tailed testing at 0.05 of significant level which means that there is no significant correlation between reading habit and reading comprehension achievements. Since the value of r-obtained is lower than r-table, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected and null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted.

5. Conclusion

The result of the correlation analysis shows that the obtained coefficient is in the category of (r-value interpretation of 0.200 to 0.400) which means that there is a low correlation. Furthermore, based on the hypothesis testing, (Ho) is accepted and it can be said that there is no significant correlation between reading habit and students' writing ability.

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