

THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH READING HABIT ON THE STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN LITERARY RELATED SUBJECTS: A RESEARCH REPORT¹

Henry Hartono², Marini Pauli³ and Antonius Suratno⁴

*Abstract: This article is a research report about the influence of English reading habit on the students' achievement in literary related subjects: Prose 1, Prose 2, Drama 1, Drama 2, and Poetry Analysis. There are two variables in this research: the English reading habit as independent variable and students' achievement as dependent variable. The data are obtained through questionnaire, documentation, and interview. Furthermore, it is analyzed using Product-Moment Correlation. The result of Product-Moment Correlation shows that there is a correlation between English reading habit and students' achievement in those subjects. The result shows that the score of correlation Product-Moment is higher than score of *r*-table, that is $0,401455 > 0,339$. It is found that determinant coefficient is $0,161167$, which means the influence of English reading habit on the students' achievement is $16,12\%$. It indicates that English reading habit is not the most dominant factor which influences students' achievement in those subjects. In other words, the increase of students' achievement is not only determined by their reading habit, but also influenced by other factors, such as intelligence, aptitude, motivation, school and family environment, teachers, and facilities including books and libraries.*

Key words: influence, English reading habit, students' achievement

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- ¹ This article is a development of an S1 thesis that was defended in 2005.
 - ² **Henry Hartono, S.S., MPd.** is a lecturer at Faculty of Letters, Soegijapranata Catholic University, Semarang.
 - ³ **Marini Pauli, S.S.** is an alumnae of the Faculty of Letters, Soegijapranata Catholic University, Semarang.
 - ⁴ **Drs. Antonius Suratno, M.A.** is a lecturer at Faculty of Letters, Soegijapranata Catholic University, Semarang.

BACKGROUND

As stated by Brown (2000:1), learning a second language is a long and complex undertaking. Every person has different reasons and purposes in learning a second language but mainly he or she wants to be proficient in it. Apart from individual different purposes, during the second language learning process, each learner must be exposed to both the spoken and written forms of the target language. It means in certain level, each learner will not only deal with oral verbal activity but he or she will also deal a lot with reading activity.

Grabe and Stoller (2002:2) state that many people in multilingual settings need to read in a second language at reasonably high levels of proficiency, especially to achieve personal, occupational, and professional goals. Meanwhile, there are several reasons why reading activity itself is important for second language learners. More specifically, for students of Faculty of Letters who regard English as a foreign language, reading in English is important for some reasons. Mikulecky (1998:iv) writes about the reasons why reading is important for students:

- Reading in English helps students learn to think in English.
- Reading in English helps students build your English vocabulary.
- Reading in English makes students more comfortable with writing in English.
- Reading in English can help if students plan to study in an English speaking country.

Overall, reading in English is one way to get exposure to English because Indonesian students live in a country where English is regarded as a foreign language. Within a foreign language setting, exposure to English is quite limited. Students will only have opportunities to deal with English when they are in class. To get more exposure towards the target language, students need to do self-study, which can be done through reading. Therefore, reading is assumed to be one factor, which may influence the students' proficiency.

Based on the facts presented above, the writers are encouraged to conduct a research on students' reading habit. The writers are interested in investigating how English reading habit influence students' achievement in English classes. The classes observed are literary related subject classes in English Department, Faculty of Letters, Soegijapranata catholic University which include drama, prose, and poetry analysis classes. Those classes are chosen since those literary related subjects involve a lot of reading activities.

READING HABIT AND THE ADVANTAGES OF READING THROUGH READING HABIT

According Hornby (1995:968) "Reading means action of person who reads." whereas habit is a thing that a person does often and almost without thinking, especially something that is hard to stop doing." Based on the definition which has been given by Hornby. Reading habit can be defined as the frequency of how often the person does an activity to read books including literature books, stories, magazines, newspapers etc.

Reading through reading habit brings some advantages for us. First, good habit is assumed to be able to improve individual's characteristic as a better person. As stated by Gie (1984) university students need to have and build good habits in order to be able to finish their study with the highest score and to face a new life. Moreover, Subyakto (1993:113) says, "Reading is one way for language learning, to increase our knowledge and to increase our ability in using the language and to increase the students' mastery of vocabularies." It means that someone who wants to read well needs to build a strong vocabulary. Meanwhile, to build a strong vocabulary, he or she needs to read well.

USING LITERATURE TO BUILD READING HABIT

Literature is used in ESL and EFL classes because the literary texts of literature can contribute and help the students in language learning, especially in reading. Having literature in ESL and EFL classes will give some benefits in motivating students to achieve successful reading program. Yop and Yop (1991:132 as cited in Day and Bamford, 1998:96) state "Providing students with motivating materials and involving them in a variety of interesting activities are critical to a successful reading program." Basically, the main purpose of using literature in the reading program is to encourage and develop skills of literary analysis and language. Literature is useful for the language enrichment. Collie and Slater (1987:4) says, "Language enrichment is one benefit often sought through literature." It means that using literature will help the students to be able to broaden and enrich their own writing skills. It is because literature provides a rich context where lexical or syntactical items are made more memorable.

ACHIEVEMENT

Hornby (1995:10) says that achievement is a thing done successfully, especially with effort and skill. English reading habit is one of many factors that can help us to the increase of achievement. As it has been widely known, books are the source of everything. It is the source of information, knowledge, inspiration, and many more. As stated by Salam (2004: 48, 49, 52):

membaca buku merupakan kebiasaan yang baik yang berguna untuk menambah pengetahuan, menunjang kemampuan berpikir kritis, menumbuhkan saraf-saraf baru di otak dan dapat menyenangkan hati.

(Translation: reading books is a good habit to enrich knowledge, critical thinking and fun)

Moreover, English reading habit makes us directly or indirectly increase our vocabulary. It can be seen that someone who reads encyclopedia will get a lot of general knowledge, whereas those who read novels, short stories, poetry and other sources related to literature will get a lot of knowledge in literature, especially in building new words.

Day and Bamford (1998:4) state that getting achievement, however, is also supported by high motivation. In this case, the motivation will make the students read more and more. Murcia (2001:199) says, "There is, however, a significant body of research that argues that motivation has an important impact on reading development." She also says that motivation makes a real difference in student's reading development. Moreover, Vernon (1971:106 as cited in Downing and Leong 1982:251) states that "It is generally considered that reading achievement is increased by strong achievement motivation." Since there is a motivation to increase the knowledge in order to get a good mark in class, there must be a will to develop and build the reading habit.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENGLISH READING HABIT AND STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

According to Jassin (1983:4) "*karya sastra akan selalu menarik perhatian karena mengungkapkan penghayatan manusia yang paling dalam, yaitu perjalanan hidupnya di segala tempat di dunia ini*" (Translation: literary works will always be interesting because it reveals man's

understanding of his life journey all over the place in the world). Based on the fact that through literature (stories) we can also explore this life, it can be said that the more readers read, the more they get from it. It increases their knowledge that finally brings them to the increase of intelligence. Furthermore, the higher the increase of intelligence, the higher the achievement they get.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study is conducted to achieve the following goals:

1. To find out whether there is or there is not any relationship between English reading habit and students' achievement in literary related subjects (prose analysis 1, prose analysis 2, drama analysis 1, drama analysis 2, and poetry analysis).
2. To see how far the English reading habit influence students' achievement in those subjects.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The instruments used in this study are: questionnaire, documentation (students' transcript), and interview. The participants of this research are S1 students of Faculty of Letters Soegijapranata Catholic University Semarang from academic year 2001. There are 34 students involved in this study. The questionnaire is used to gain data about students' reading habits while the interview is used to support the results of the questionnaire. Whereas documentation is a tool to obtain data about students' marks in literature related subjects.

The data from the questionnaire and students' marks are processed using the Product-Moment correlation to see the correlation between the variables. The formula is presented below:

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

Meaning of symbols:

r_{xy} = coefficient of correlation between English reading habit and students achievement.

$\sum XY$ = sum of scores of X (reading habit) times Y (student's' achievement)

$\sum X$ = sum of scores of reading habit

- ΣY = sum of scores of student's achievement
 ΣX^2 = sum of squares of English reading habit
 ΣY^2 = sum of squares of student's achievement
 N = number of subjects that is observed

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A. Result of Questionnaire

St.answ	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 5	Q 6	Q 7	Q 8	Q 9	Q 10	Q 11
V.often	1	1	0	0	3	3	2	1	2	7	5
Often	7	7	3	8	11	9	10	16	10	11	9
Q.often	16	7	5	9	10	11	13	9	11	8	10
seldom	7	14	14	14	8	8	7	7	8	5	7
A.never	3	5	12	3	2	3	2	1	3	3	3

Table 1:
Overall result

Question 1

The data shows that the students have enough interest in reading short stories even though they do not do the activity frequently or very frequently.

Question 2

It means that most students are not interested in reading simplified novels.

Question 3

Similar with question number 2, the result of this questionnaire indicates that the students rarely read complete novels.

Question 4

Most students choose the option *seldom*. It means that they also rarely read English poetry.

Question 5

Based on the table, we can see that the students have good English reading habit. The text they read are English stories in newspaper, magazine, bulletin, etc.

Question 6

The highest number of students' answer is *quite often*. This result leads us to the conclusion that the students have quite good reading habit. In this case to read synopsis on the internet.

Question 7

More than half of the students choose the option *often* and *quite often*. It proves that the habit of students in reading English literature is good enough.

Question 8

Through the question number 8, the students admit that they usually read literature from English sources when they get assignment from their teachers/ lecturers.

Question 9

The response of the students through this question indicates that the difficulties in English reading do not make them give up continuing their reading, even they still continue their reading.

Question 10

The result shows that most of the students read literature based on their free will.

Question 11

The differences in options among the respondents '*often* and *quite often*' indicate that half of the students have a good habit in reading literature.

B. The relationship between English reading habit and students' achievement in literary related subjects

In calculating the correlation Product-Moment, X is the total sum of English reading habits, and Y is the total sum of students' achievement. The table of X and Y is presented below:

Nr	X	Y	X ²	Y ²	XY
1	35	11	1225	121	385
2	34	16	1156	256	544
3	35	18	1225	324	630
4	18	12	324	144	216
5	38	11	1444	121	418
6	47	17	2209	289	799

Nr	X	Y	X ²	Y ²	XY
7	37	9	1369	81	333
8	17	7	289	49	119
9	29	10	841	100	290
10	33	12	1089	144	396
11	40	15	1600	225	600
12	24	13	576	169	312
13	38	12	1444	144	456
14	38	12	1444	144	456
15	34	12	1156	144	408
16	32	11	1024	121	352
17	26	19	676	361	494
18	20	7	400	49	140
19	19	11	361	121	209
20	25	9	625	81	225
21	31	13	961	169	403
22	32	9	1024	81	288
23	34	11	1156	121	374
24	29	13,5	841	182,25	391,5
25	37	9	1369	81	333
26	47	12	2209	144	564
27	32	15	1024	225	480
28	29	12	841	144	348
29	44	20	1936	400	880
30	30	10	900	100	300
31	39	12	1521	144	468
32	25	10	625	100	250
33	34	15	1156	225	510
34	32	17	1024	289	544
Sum	1094	422,5	37064	5593,25	13915,5

Table 2:
Preparation calculation on Product Moment

The calculation of Product Moment is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 r &= \frac{N(\Sigma XY) - (\Sigma X)(\Sigma Y)}{\sqrt{\{N\Sigma X^2 - (\Sigma X)^2\}\{N\Sigma Y^2 - (\Sigma Y)^2\}}} \\
 &= \frac{34.13915,5 - 1094.422,5}{\sqrt{\{34.37064 - 1094^2\}\{34.5593,25 - 422,5^2\}}} \\
 &= \frac{473127 - 462215}{\sqrt{\{1260176 - 1196836\}\{190170,5 - 178506,25\}}} \\
 &= \frac{10912}{\sqrt{\{63340.11664,25\}}} \\
 &= \frac{10912}{\sqrt{738813595}} \\
 &= \frac{10912}{27181,126} \\
 &= 0,401455
 \end{aligned}$$

The result of calculation shows that the score of Product-Moment (R) is higher than score of r-table, that is $0,401455 > 0,339$. Furthermore, it is found that determinant coefficient is $0,401455^2 = 0,161167$. It means that the influence of English reading habits on students' achievement is 16,12%, while the other 83,88% is influenced by other factors. WHAT ARE THE FACTORS? EXPLAIN. The result of interview indicates that the other factors come from both internal and external factor such as intelligence, aptitude, motivation, interest, self-study, school environment, family environment, facilities including books, and teachers

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The results of this study show that there is a significant correlation between English reading habit and students' achievement in literary related subjects. The result indicates that English reading habit contributes about 16,12% to the students' achievement, while the rest factors are influenced by intelligence, aptitude, motivation, interest, self-study, environment, facilities

including books, and teachers. Although reading habit is not the most dominant factor that influence students' achievement, it has a significant correlation with it, so English teachers should motivate the students to read as many English books as possible. Moreover, this study can be a reference to English learners to increase English reading habit and for further research it is suggested to involve broader respondents in order to get a more valid correlation.

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