

READING HABIT AMONG STUDENTS AND ITS EFFECT ON RECOUNT WRITING SKILL

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ABSTRACT

This research is aimed at knowing the reading habit among students and its effect on the recount writing skill. This research employs a survey method with 42 students as samples that are randomly chosen from four different eleventh grade students of SMKN in Serang. The data is acquired by distributing questionnaires and writing tests. The data is analyzed by adopting regression and correlation analysis. The research result shows that reading habit among students produces a significant effect on the recount writing skill, as shown by the value of $sig\ 0.017 < 0.05$ and $t_0\ 2.483$. In conclusion, reading habit has an effect on student's recount writing skill.

Key words: reading habit, recount writing skill, recount

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kebiasaan membaca siswa dan pengaruhnya terhadap kemampuan menulis teks recount. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode survei, dengan 42 siswa sebagai sampel yang dipilih secara acak dari empat kelas XI yang berbeda di SMKN Serang. Data diperoleh melalui penyebaran kuesioner dan tes tertulis. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis regresi dan korelasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kebiasaan membaca memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kemampuan menulis recount, seperti terlihat pada nilai $sig\ 0.017 < 0.05$ and $t_0\ 2.483$. Kesimpulannya, kebiasaan membaca memiliki pengaruh terhadap kemampuan menulis recount siswa.

Kata kunci: kebiasaan membaca, kemampuan menulis recount, recount

INTRODUCTION

Communication is an activity of transferring information through the exchange of ideas or messages in the forms of utterance, picture, sign, writing or behavior. To establish communication, we need a communication system called language. It is a medium of enormous importance for human's system of communication because with language used in our day-to-day life, we can easily communicate with other people. In other words, we can refer to a language as the most effective means of communication offered by society.

As the time goes by, communication in our community does not only develop locally, but also spreads internationally. This condition receives tremendous support from the globalization era, in which communication is playing an increasingly prominent role in fostering relations with more distant countries for numerous reasons. This is the fact that finally encouraging us to adopt a system of communication agreed by many countries as an international language, that is, English.

As an international language, English serves as an irreplaceable medium of communication among the global communities. It has even become a language that is most commonly spoken in international events and is used in the process of facilitating the flows of information in various fields, such as education, communication, commerce, diplomacy, society, scientific research and many others, making English an international language standard used to compete in many issues. For that reason, it comes as no surprise to find out that people from different countries across the world want to study and to be proficient in English, with

many of them using this highly popular language as their national or second language.

In order to meet up with the proliferating use of English, most countries, including Indonesia, have done some efforts to improve their people's English skill. One of the efforts made by our country is making English as one of the compulsory subjects that Indonesian students have to learn at schools, requiring them to attain proficiency in this foreign language. The proficiency includes four components, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four language skills are taught to Indonesian students based on their level, starting from primary until university level. The teaching of these proficiencies is provided for the purpose of producing high-quality graduates who have not only the ability to use English, but also intelligence to compete with students from other countries.

However, considering that English is not Indonesian students' mother tongue, it is always a big problem for them to deal with these four components of skills, especially writing. As a productive skill, writing requires students to be active in producing text with correct idea and language structure. It is then true situation that makes writing a frustrating issue for students every time they are assigned to produce an English written text.

When it comes to writing, there is at all times a great difficulty our students have to get into. The difficulty of writing embraces many variables. Bell and Burnaby point out that writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity which requires the writer to demonstrate control of several variables at once. At the sentence level, these include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling and letter formation. Beyond the sentence,

the writer must be able to structure and to integrate information into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts (cited in Nunan, 1991). This explanation gives us a clear definition that to possess good writing skill in English, students must have ability to use these variables. The most effective way to acquire this ability is by cultivating reading habit. Developing this habit as our regular activity is very important because we often need various information and knowledge from many kinds of books written in English, such as scientific books, novels, magazines, newspapers, and so forth.

Further, reading habit is considered to be very helpful for enhancing students' writing skill due to the fact that writing is basically a product of reading. It is even impossible for student or any person to write if he never reads. It gives us definite indication that students who develop good reading habit will have better skill at creating a written text than those who do not cultivate a reading habit as part of their daily activities. Next, with this positive habit, students can learn much about variables which are important in writing, in particular of vocabulary. Vocabulary is one of the language elements that many people consider necessary for achieving language mastery. Students' vocabularies will result in an increase in line with the regularity of their reading habit.

Unfortunately, in spite of its great effectivity as a way of enriching students' vocabularies, reading habit still has not received serious attention from many Indonesian students. They do not realize that by not cultivating reading habit can lead to limited vocabularies that later prevent them from learning and mastering other components of English language skill. Most of them get down to reading activity only for certain

occasions, like when studying English during the class, doing school assignment or preparing themselves for a school examination. Even worse, it is especially rare for us to find students who deliberately read English books or texts with the purpose of expanding their vocabulary, leading to their inability to write in English well. This fact reveals the importance of reading habit to stimulate the development of students' writing skill. In line with the explanations above, the researcher has an interest in conducting a research into reading habit among students and its effect on writing an English text.

The text chosen by the researcher for this research is recount text. Besides being one kind of texts that can be used to measure students' English language competence, recount text is also learnt at Indonesian schools as mandated in the national curriculum. The result of this research will be then used to know and to prove whether or not there is an effect of reading habit on students' recount writing skill.

Feez and Joyce claim that writing is a skill to make written texts (1998). According to Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), writing is the production of the written word that results in a text but the text must be read and comprehended in order for communication to take place. The writer, in other words, communicates his or her ideas in the form of a written text from which a known reader will eventually extract the ideas and their meanings. From the two above explanations, it can be concluded that writing is a form of communication established by producing written texts. Yet, writing is not as simple as creating written texts since to acquire this skill we must regularly learn and practice. Patel and Jain (2008) state that writing is a skill which must be taught and practiced. In other words, learning to write takes

time and a lot of practice. Hence, it means that there will be more problems to deal with in writing than in reading, speaking or listening.

One of the writing genres which is taught to Indonesian students is recount. Derewianka (1990:14) defines "Recount text as a text telling an event or an experience that has already happened in the past". Depdiknas (2004:46) states that "Recount is a piece of text that retells past events, which is usually told in order in which they happened". This definition is further explained by Nafisah and Kurniawan (2007:65), say that "In a recount text, the students must retell the sequence of events or experiences which they have ever got in the past". From the definitions above, we can conclude that recount text is a text which is used by someone to tell others about past events or experiences.

Derewianka (1990:38) states that "Recount is written to retell events with the purpose of either informing or entertaining their audience or both". Then, there are two kinds of purpose of recount as defined by experts. The first is social purpose. According to Hyland (2002:99), the social purpose of recount is "tell what happened". It means that the social function of recount is to retell past experience by retelling events in original sequence. The second one is called communicative purpose. Hammond et. al (1992:90) says that "Communicative purpose of recount is to record events for the purpose of information".

Hyland (2004) states there are three generic structures of recount, namely: 1) orientation, this provides the setting and produces participants. It provides information about "who", "where", and "when"; 2) record of events: this tells what happened and past event in temporal sequence. It is usually recounted in chronological order. Personal comments and/or evaluative

remarks are interspersed throughout the record of events; and 3) re-orientation: this is an optional-closure of events and "rounds off" the sequence of events.

Moreover, Hyland (2004) then describes the common grammatical features of recount text, they are 1) the use of nouns and pronouns to identify people, animals, and things involved; 2) the use of action verbs to refer to events; 3) the use of past tense to locate events in relation to speaker's or writer's time; 4) the use of conjunctions and time connectives to sequence of events; 5) the use of adverb and adverbial phrase to indicate place and time; and 6) the use of adjective to describe nouns.

Derewianka (1990) states that there are three types of recount, they are 1) personal recount, 2) factual recount and 3) imaginative recount. First, personal recount is a recount that retells an activity that the writer or speaker has been personally involved in (e.g. oral anecdote, diary entry). There are several language features of personal recount, namely: the use of first pronoun (I, we); personal responses to the events that can be included, particularly at the end; and details that are often chosen to add interest or humor.

Secondly, factual recount, is a recount that records the particulars of an accident (e.g. report of a science experiment, police report, news report, historical recount). Some language features of factual recount are: the use of third person pronouns (he, she, it, they); details that are usually selected to help the reader reconstruct the activity or accident accurately; the ending that describes the outcome of the activity (e.g. in a science experiment); the use of personal feelings in probably not appropriate; details of time, place and manner that may be needed to be precisely stated (e.g. at 2.35 pm, between John st, and Park rd, the man drove at 80

kbp); descriptive details that may also be required to provide precise information (e.g. a man with red shirt, brown shoes and long his, weighing 75 kilos and approximately 189 cm tall); the use of passive voice that may be used (e.g. the breaker was filled with water); and explanations and satisfactions. Moreover, the third type is imaginative recount. It is a recount that takes on an imaginary role and gives details of events (e.g. a day in the life of a Roman Slave; how I invited...).

In 'reading habit', we get two words 'reading' and 'habit'. Reading is an action of a person who reads, whereas habit is a product of this action or learning. Like all other habits, the habit or reading in individual develops during the course of time (Thanuskodi, 2011). Therefore, to develop reading habit, someone must like reading and doing it so often. This statement is supported by Sangkaeo cited in Annamalai (2013:33), mentioning that "reading habit" refers to the behavior which expresses the likeness of reading and tastes of reading. Similarly, Shen identifies reading habits, as how often, how much, and what the readers read (cited in Annamalai, 2013). From the explanations above, it can be concluded that reading habit is behavior which shows how often a person does reading, how much his likeness of reading and what he reads.

METHOD

The method used in this research is a survey. The data of the survey result is analyzed by applying multiple linear regression model. The data is then used to show the result of the research.

The population of this research is students of the eleventh grade of SMKN 3 in Serang, Banten, West Java. The sample of this research is 42 students from four classes of the eleventh grade students taken by applying a simple-

random-sampling.

The technique used for collecting the data of the research is by giving students some instruments. Besides, to get the factual data, the researcher also provides students with a test. For the first independent variable (i.e., reading habit), the instrument used is questionnaire consisting of 30 statements that the sample must give the response to. It is made based on the attitude's scale, in which the response is assessed according to the positive and negative statements. For the dependent variable (i.e., students' recount writing skill), the researcher gives students a test, in which they are instructed to write recount text by choosing one of the given themes. The test is used to determine the correlation of the dependent variable to the two independent variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The description of the data is conducted to specifically explain statistical descriptions of variables measured in the research. Those variables are categorized into two groups of variables. It is independent variable and dependent variable. The former is 'Reading Habit', while the latter is 'Recout Writing Skill'. To get the accurate statistical descriptions of existing variables, the collected data is processed by using *SPSS 20.0*. The statistical descriptions of each measured variable can be seen in the following analysis.

Table 1
Statistical Description of Reading Habit

Recount Writing Skill Variable

Statistics

| | | Reading Habit |
|------------------------|---------|---------------|
| N | Valid | 42 |
| | Missing | 0 |
| Mean | | 55.48 |
| Median | | 55.00 |
| Mode | | 60 |
| Std. Deviation | | 11.097 |
| Skewness | | .864 |
| Std. Error of Skewness | | .365 |
| Kurtosis | | .591 |
| Std. Error of Kurtosis | | .717 |
| Range | | 45 |
| Minimum | | 41 |
| Maximum | | 86 |

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

As seen in the table above, the mean of Reading Habit is 55.48, while its median is 55.00. The latter indicates that 50 percent of respondents have the score lower than 55.00. However, the slight difference between mean (55.48) and median (55.00) means the data of Reading Habit variable is reasonably representative. Then, based on the score of mode, it can be known that the score of majority of respondents for Reading Habit is 60. As to the data dispersion level, it can be known by seeing the value of standard deviation. The above shows the standard deviation of Reading Habit is 11.097 or 20% of mean.

Next, the table above also shows that the maximum score of Reading Habit is 86, while the minimum one is 41, meaning that the maximum and minimum difference value (range) for Reading Habit is 45.

Table 2
Statistical Description of

Statistics

| | | Recount Writing Skill |
|------------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| N | Valid | 42 |
| | Missing | 0 |
| Mean | | 70.88 |
| Median | | 70.50 |
| Mode | | 70 |
| Std. Deviation | | 10.572 |
| Skewness | | -.017 |
| Std. Error of Skewness | | .365 |
| Kurtosis | | -.122 |
| Std. Error of Kurtosis | | .717 |
| Range | | 42 |
| Minimum | | 50 |
| Maximum | | 92 |

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

As seen in table 2, the mean of Recount Writing Skill is 70.88, while its median is 70.50. The latter indicates that 50 percent of respondents have the score lower than 70.50. However, the slight difference between mean (70.88) and median (70.50) means the data of Recount Writing Skill variable is reasonably representative. Then, based on the score of mode, it can be said that the score of majority of respondents for Recount Writing Skill is 70. As to the data dispersion level, it can be known by seeing the value of standard deviation. Table 2 above shows the standard deviation of Recount Writing Skill is 10.572 or 14.9 % of mean.

Next, the table above also shows that the maximum score of Recount Writing Skill is 92, while the minimum one is 50, meaning that the maximum and minimum difference value (range) for Recount Writing Skill is 42.

Next, the effect of reading habit on

recount writing skill can be tested by seeing t_{observed} or significance coefficient (*sig*) of reading habit row in Coefficients table. If $t_{\text{observed}} > t_{\text{table}}$ and if $\text{sig} < 0.05$, H_0 is rejected, meaning that the regression coefficient is significant. In other words, there is a significant effect of independent variable on independent variable. The value of t_{observed}/t_0 is the number written in t column of reading habit row in ANOVA table and the value of t_{table}/t_T is the value of distribution t table for level of significance (α) = 5% with reliability ($df = n-2$) = 40, in which n means the number of respondent. While the value of *sig* is the number written in sig column of reading habit row in coefficients table.

Statistics show that $t_0 = 2.483$, while $t_T = 1.68$ and $\text{sig} = 0.017$. Because $t_0 > t_T$ and $\text{sig} < 0.05$, H_0 is rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded there is a significant effect of reading habit on students' recount writing skill.

From the regression analysis result, we can make an equation of regression line as $Y = 35.385 + 0.247 X_1 + 1.307 X_2$. The regression coefficient of 0.247 and 1.307 show that there is a positive effect of variable X on variable Y . This means that every one-point increase in reading habit will result in an increase in students' recount writing skill of 0.247 or 24.7 percent and every one-point increase of vocabulary mastery will lead to an increase in students' recount writing skill of 1.307 or 130.7 percent.

The correlation between reading habit and recount writing skill is 0.336. It shows that they have a strong enough correlation. This number shows a strong correlation between them. In conclusion, this result reveals that the independent variable has a significant effect on dependent variable.

This result is in line with theories.

As mentioned in this chapter, reading is the most important activity in any language learning. One of its importance is to extend our knowledge of language. This knowledge consists of many aspects, including vocabulary. Therefore, cultivating reading habit can be a good method of achieving good vocabulary mastery. Students who have good vocabulary mastery may have good language skill, in this case, writing. When doing writing activity, students need vocabularies to represent ideas or messages. So, it is important for them to have good vocabulary mastery to make their communication through written form easier. In other words, reading habit variable can highly influence recount writing skill.

With good reading habit, students can more significantly increase their vocabulary mastery. Later, they can freely express their opinions in writing because they understand vocabularies representing the message they want to express in English language. A good reading habit will also help students in producing a written text competently because when their reading habit is good, they can use wider vocabularies they get from their reading activity to express their opinions more freely without worrying over running out of certain vocabularies. So, it can be said that reading habit is the strong foundation for developing students' vocabulary mastery in English writing skill. The better the students' reading habit is, the greater vocabulary mastery they acquire. This will lead to their good achievement in writing an English text because vocabulary mastery will be invaluable resource for students to write different topics and types of writing. In conclusion, if supported by good reading habit and vocabulary mastery, students will have bigger opportunity to develop their writing skill.

From the hypothesis test, we can see $sig = 0.017$ and $t_0 = 2.483$, while $t_T = 1.68$. Because $sig < 0.05$ and $t_0 > t_T$, H_0 is rejected, meaning there is a significant effect of independent variable X on dependent variable Y. Further explanation on the effect of variable X can be known by seeing the result of estimation of coefficient of determination. From the result of this estimation, we can see that the effect of reading habit makes an effective contribution of 14.97 percent to students' recount writing skill. This number indicates a big enough contribution of reading habit to students' recount writing skill.

This result is in line with theories, mentioning that enhancing knowledge of language can be conducted by doing reading activity. The knowledge of language can be text organization and linguistic/semantic aspects, e.g that are very important in writing activity. The poor reading habit among students can result in the lack of the knowledge of language, such as text organization, vocabulary, grammar, and so forth. The lack of these elements can be the logical reason why English writing skill of students is poor. In other words, if students have good reading habit, they must not have difficulty to develop their skill in English writing since they have broad knowledge of different aspects of English language. Even though they still have not had knowledge of advanced technique in writing English, at least they can choose the right vocabularies representing their ideas and use simple organization of text, including the tenses. So, having this habit may encourage them to write in English language.

Besides, students with good reading habit will be more interested in reading and writing lesson because they consider reading not only as a pleasant activity, but also as an effective method

of improving their knowledge of many things. This indirectly indicates that academic achievement of students having good reading habit will be greatly affected as well. The purpose of reading is to obtain information for some purposes or because we are curious about some topics. Fulfilling this purpose will eventually increase their academic competence.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description and analysis of the data of the research, the researcher arrives at the conclusion that there is a significant effect of reading habit on students' recount writing skill. That is proved by the value of $sig 0.017 < 0.05$ and $t_0 2.483$. This result reveals a significant effect. Therefore, we can conclude that the better students' reading habit is, the better their recount writing skill will be.

Further, reading habit has a positive and a significant effect on the students' writing skill. Therefore, the researcher suggests that all teachers should encourage their students to read everyday. Giving great motivation to students to read will affect their language skills. The researcher also suggests to all students to start reading everyday. They can read everything they like because it will give them more information or new knowledge. With good reading habit, it will be easier for students to understand and to grasp information from what they read. It will make them talk or discuss about certain topics more easily because they have already known them before. Hence, they will have more confidence in giving information and sharing their ideas, especially in writing.

Next, reading habit has a positive and significant effect on writing skill. Therefore, the role of the teacher in motivating and encouraging students to make reading as their habit and to

practice and develop their vocabularies is very crucial. Later, it is this kind of motivation that will of course affect to the students' achievement.

As an academic suggestion, the result of the research must be further evaluated and assessed. A further or specific research should be taken into consideration. Nonetheless, this research can be a reference to other researchers for the next research.

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