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Reading Habits and Comprehension: A Study of University Students

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Abstract

Reading comprehension and reading habits are two elements of learning a language. The goal of this research is to determine the relationship between students' reading habits and students' ability in reading comprehension in the second semester at Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur. In this quantitative research with correlational design, the researcher applied questionnaires to assemble the data. The questionnaire measures students' reading habits and the test measures students' reading comprehension. Based on the statistical data, the population was 2,362 students, and the sampling technique that has been used is a simple random sampling technique. Based on the Slovin Formula calculation for sampling size was 342 (margin of error: 5%), to prevent outlier data the researcher took 428 respondents from the overall faculty. By using Spearman Row, the result of the study was the positive and medium relationship between these variables namely reading comprehension and reading habits. There were some reasons why the correlation gained a medium level. It was because the majority of the respondents were seldom able to read the text in English in their daily lives otherwise only a few students read e-articles. In another situation, they like to read short stories in English. This research hopefully can be one of the references for identifying the literacy level of university students particularly in reading English texts. Encouraging the students in regular read English text in their daily routine and promoting active reading techniques are several strategies to increase the students' reading habits.

Keywords: Reading habits; reading comprehension; students at university; English skill

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1. Introduction

The ability to read is an essential thing since it influences a person's intellectual and emotional development. Reading proficiency increases one's ability to expand one's mind and improves one's chances of success. Reading is one of the skills that become the standard skill in learning a language despite other skills such as listening, speaking, and writing. Another main point of reading is actively comprehending a writer's message. Meanwhile, one of the required skills in acquiring a language in a foreign country especially English is reading in its

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learning achievement. One of the literacy activities is reading although literacy is not only reading but includes obtaining information from what is read and summarizing it. Lone, (2017) asserted that reading is a cognitive process that involves analyzing and deciphering written or printed characters or words in the reading and comprehending written linguistic signals

In learning a foreign language, the acquisition of good reading abilities is critical for academic achievement in the field of English learning. Reading is people's most valuable and significant talent, more so than speaking and writing based on Patel (2008). An adult will read and write more than small children as they have to manage many complex things related to their personal life, jobs, social, etc. (Moore et al., 1999). One attention of reading is decided to a substantial amount of reading material that it will be read and the strength of how much they do reading (Chettri, 2013). Good reading habits will increase reading performance (Florence et al., 2017).

Reading is one of the most important skills that students may gain when studying English, according to Maharsi et al., (2019)This means that reading is a great way for students to acquire English. In turn, these behaviors have a significant impact on how well students can decipher academic materials, synthesize knowledge, and engage critically with them. In the context of English education, where students are exposed to a wide range of hard texts that need a high degree of linguistic skill, it is especially important to understand the interplay between reading habits and reading comprehension. A wide range of behaviors are included in reading habits, from the frequency and length of reading sessions to the techniques used when reading. Reading regularly is a habit that can facilitate students' easy acquisition of knowledge from their classes. Practicing individual reading is a crucial aspect of learning (Erdem, 2011). According to(Pramita & Atmazaki, 2021), a student's reading habit can help them arrange the material they read. According to Jack (2008) advantages of reading habits are 1) aid in the efficient functioning of the mind. 2) build a vocabulary. 3) boots intellectual curiosity. 4) related to psychological activity. 5) positive mind.

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Habits have an impact on students' reading activities and, in this instance, have an impact on their reading comprehension (Tanura, 2022). The distinct components of reading, including decoding abilities, vocabulary acquisition, and syntactic awareness, have been the subject of several research. The same thing analysis of the connection between reading habits and reading comprehension. However, in the context of higher education such as students in universities reading habits, especially in English reading comprehension still need to be explored. As it is known it cannot be denied that the use of English is necessary both as a course and as a reference material.

1.1. Reading Habits

Generally, reading habit is a consistent practice of engaging with written material for pleasure, information, or personal development. It involves regularly setting aside time to read books, articles, essays, or any other written, and It often encompasses a variety of genres, topics, and formats. Developing a reading habit can lead to numerous benefits, including improved vocabulary, critical thinking skills, and overall mental stimulation. Nilsen et al., (2012) stated that a habit is a pattern of conduct that is repeated until it loses its sense of spontaneity, out without conscious thought, and is primarily unconscious. Reading Habits and Their Characteristics: There is general agreement in the literature that reading habits cover a wide range of behaviors, such as the frequency, duration, choice of material, and application of different reading strategies. Studies such as Smith, (2017) and Jhonson, (2019) have investigated how these dimensions of reading habits may influence the overall reading experience and, consequently, comprehension levels among English Education students.

Several studies have investigated the influence of reading frequency on reading comprehension. According to Sutarno, (2006) a person with a reading habit is someone who has spent a significant amount of time in their life becoming acclimated to and processing reading for part of that period. Research by Brown (2017) suggests a positive correlation between regular reading habits and improved comprehension skills. However, contradictory findings by (Clark, 2020) indicate that the quality of reading engagement may be more critical

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than frequency alone. This dichotomy underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of the role of reading frequency in academic text comprehension.

Reading is the key to installing new experiences in the mind. When someone reads, it opens a window to explore a new world by gathering knowledge that is still unknown. Reading is not just about recognizing words on the surface of a text but involves focus and attention to explore the deeper meaning of each new experience presented in the text. The structure of language in writing is similar to a skeleton that forms the basis of what the author wants to convey. Just as a skeleton gives a construction its initial shape, language structure provides a foundation for the writer's ideas, ensuring the writing is organized and easily understood by the reader. By choosing the right language structure, writers can convey their message more effectively and clearly to readers (Natsir, Y., & Anisati, 2016).

1.2. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of analyzing and building written language. Hamidah (2016) revealed that the texts that the students read can teach them something. In the process of understanding written language, text becomes more meaningful information that is reflected in images and new information that they learn as they read. Therefore, reading not only helps improve language skills, but also provides an opportunity to develop in-depth reading comprehension and expand information about various fields of knowledge, to create a knowledgeable and qualified generation that is ready to face academic challenges and daily life.

Determining whether or whether the reader finds meaning in what they read requires an understanding of reading comprehension. Indriani (2019) argued that reading comprehension is the ability to interpret the text's purpose, meaning, and information. Therefore, students should be able to know their strategies to understand the meaning of what they read. Students will attempt to identify the subjects and major concepts in each paragraph they read, as stated Rosmarie & Mualimin (2021). Students need to practice the same technique with texts written in any language, but particularly in English. Long-term

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reading as a focus method is also employed when attempting to comprehend text. According to Brown's analysis (2017), extended reading sessions are beneficial for improving readers' attention spans.

Reading has a significant impact on everyone who has ability in reading skills. It can increase someone's literacy level specifically textual literacy. Based on Haryono (2016) statement, reading proficiency has a significant impact on a person's social, intellectual, and personal life. Reading is not just a routine activity, but the key to developing oneself in various aspects of life. On the other hand, the more modern method sees reading as a collaborative procedure that involves the reader's characteristics, the texts, and the duties. The study by Syafitri et al., (2019) decided that there was an association between reading habits and reading comprehension among 48 students in the English Department. Secondly, Sartika et al., (2020) in Senior High School found that there was a high level of correlation between reading habits and reading comprehension among 124 students. Reading habits were not the only element influencing students' reading comprehension; a variety of internal and external factors, including intellectual capacity, linguistic proficiency, psychological makeup, environment, and experience, were also significant such as facilities, and time to learn. A study by Andreani et al., (2021) found that reading habits partially correlated to reading comprehension among students at the university level. Their study merely involved 68 students. However, this study specifically focuses on the genre. In other words, students who have strong reading habits and genre awareness are better able to comprehend what they read. Ramadhianti et al., (2020) had a similar finding that there was a link between reading habits and reading comprehension among 30 students in Senior high school.

Based on the information and findings, theories from the previous researchers it can be seen that studying reading habits and reading comprehension is still relevant as it is known that reading comprehension is related to the PISA (Program for International Students Assessment) finding. PISA is a test that is meant to evaluate and see the education system

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worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of the community in a country. PISA result can't be separated from the reading skills as in that test reading becomes the skill to analyze the literacy level of the respondent who participates as the representative. Further, based on the result of the PISA in 2022 almost no students in Indonesia achieved reading proficiency at level 5 or above meanwhile, the participants can understand lengthy texts, work with abstract or counterintuitive concepts, and distinguish between truth and opinion using subliminal cues related to the information's course (OECD, 2023). Related to this, the present research focuses on two research questions, they are Is there any correlation between reading habit and reading comprehension among students in Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur? What is the level of correlation between reading habit and reading comprehension among students in Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur?

2. Method

Quantitative research methodology has been employed in this research. A correlation research design was used to examine the link between two variables. The variables of the study are reading habit and reading comprehension. For the population in this study, the researcher took all second-semester students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur (UMKT) as a population in determining data. This population selection is based on the previous observation of the researchers. The second-semester students have been taking English for their General basic course which conducted several activities and one of the major activities was reading comprehension in Open Learning (OPL) application as their Learning Management System (LMS). Therefore, it became the best reason that the students have been familiar with English text. Meanwhile, the total population in this study was 2,362 students.

As regards the large population, the sampling technique that has been employed was simple random sampling. For a large population, the main advantage of employing simple random sampling is that it guarantees every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen randomly which aids in producing a sample that is representative of the entire

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population. However, subgroups within the population are not taken into consideration by this technique.

To decide on the sampling, the researcher used a Slovin formula calculator from statology.com to count the sample. With a significance value of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, it was gained that the sample of this research was 343. To avoid the outlier and several distractors likewise the corrupted data, the researcher used 428 respondents as the sample. The respondents were from the overall undergraduate faculty meanwhile it is 16 studies programs at Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur. Although it employed simple random sampling, the researcher in general distributed the questionnaire and the test via *Google form* without emphasizing any particular study program, so each study program was involved as the researcher came into their class directly to socialize and distribute the instrument. The figure below explains the respondents' variation from each faculty. Moreover, the researcher merely employed two techniques to gather data: tests and questionnaires served as the research's tools.
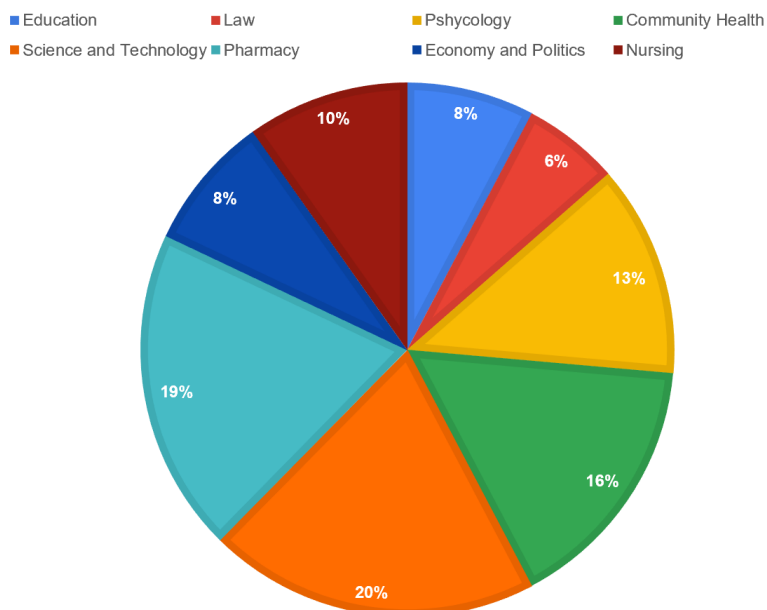

Figure 1. **The Percentages of Respondents in the Second Semester at UMKT Based on Faculty**

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2.1. Reading Habits questionnaire

Students' reading habits are the subject of data collection through questionnaires. Questionnaire. Closed-ended questions have been included in the study's questionnaire. Respondents can respond to the question from the available responses on the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be adapted from (Sartika et al., 2020) whereby they took each element of their questionnaires based on the previous researchers namely from (Saepudin, 2015) and (Rahayu et al., 2016). The elements of the questionnaires are the rate of reading, the rate of visiting the library, the purpose of reading, the time to read, and the type and number of the book. Related to this questionnaire, Sartika et al., (2020) have already validated it. Therefore, the present research used this instrument as the questionnaire. The number of validated reading habit questionnaires would be 8 items. Table 1 below explains the Likert scale that will be used for the questionnaires. It is frequency of intensity starting from 1 for never (TP/*Tidak Pernah*), and 2 for rarely (JR/*Jarang.* 3 for often (SR/*Sering*), and 4 for always (SS/*Selalu*). The value for TP is 1, JR is 2, SR is 3, and SS is 4.

Table 1. **The Value of the Questionnaire**

Likert Scale	Value
SS= Selalu (always)	4
SR= Sering (often)	3
JR= Jarang (seldom)	2
TP= Tidak Pernah (never)	1

Table 2 below shows the score for reading habit it was adopted from Pao, (2016). The score of reading habits starts from 0 to 100. The category for each range score 0-40 is categorized as low, 41-60 is average, 61-80 is high, and 81-100 is very high. this reading habit would be scored to see the categorization. The formula to count the reading habit is: score/total score x 100% = result

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Table 2. The Range Score and Category in Reading Habit

Range Score	Category
0-40	Low
41- 60	Average
61-80	High
81-100	Very High

2.2. Reading Comprehension Test

To find out students' scores in reading comprehension, the researcher gave a test. A test is a systematic procedure for observing a person's behavior using measuring instruments in the form of numbers or categories. Tests are used to collect data on students' reading comprehension. The reading comprehension test used is an objective test in the form of a multiple-choice test consisting of 25 items. This reading comprehension test has been used before so there is no need to test the validity and reliability again. The reading comprehension test is adopted from (Ratnawati, 2006). The researcher gave a score of 4 for correct answers and a score of 0 for incorrect answers. Table 3 below explains the score of reading comprehension. There would be 25 questions on reading comprehension in this test. The procedure of scoring is 4 points for every correct answer. The result of the test is used as variable X to calculate the test achieved by each participant.

Table 3. Score Range and Criteria of Reading Comprehension

Score	Range Criteria
10-55	Poor
56-65	Fair
76-85	Good
86-100	Very Good

The data has been analyzed by using the Spearman-Brown Correlation as the data was not normal after the normality checking. The Research used the categories in classifying the correlation which is submitted by (Sugiyono, 2016). The level of correlation strength is measured based on the correlation coefficient interpretation table, as follows:

Table 4. Size of Correlation Coefficient

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Interval	Category
0.00 – 0.19	Very Low
0.20 – 0.39	Low
0.40 – 0.59	Moderate
0.60 – 0.79	Strong
0.80 – 1.00	Very Strong

3. Findings and Discussion

A reliability test comes first, and then a normalcy test. Although the instrument is valid and reliable, as was already indicated, validity and reliability tests were conducted to ascertain the validity of the test's items and reliability. In the meanwhile, data normality is necessary to meet the requirements for inferential statistics. The data must therefore be regularly delivered. The correlational test is the last phase and the key component of the study.

This research's validity has been examined. 428 second-semester students participated in this study as responders. For n-(df=2), the r-table indicates that 428-2=426. Thus, the r-table value has a 5% margin of error and is 0.098. Every item on the reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery tests is valid, according to the SPSS output results. The reliability test yielded similar results as well. For the reading comprehension exam, Cronbach's alpha was 0.883, while it was 0.858 for the reading habits questionnaire. The coefficient table demonstrates the high reliability of the data.

Based on descriptive statistics, it shows the average reading habits of 428 respondents. In this research there are two variables, namely reading habits and reading comprehension, according to data collection there are 8 statements about reading habits and there are 25 questions for reading comprehension.

In the first statement for reading English articles every day for an hour, there are 63.1% of students rarely do this and 1.9% of students always do this, in the second statement students who carry out activities reading English books have a percentage of 66.6% who choose rarely

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to do this and there are 2.3% of students always reading English books, for this third statement students who read English e-books there are 65.4% of students who rarely do it than students who always read e-books have a percentage of 1.6%. After that, for the fourth statement, how often do students carry out activities to read English-language magazines and it turns out that there are around 60.5% of students who rarely do that.

After that, in the fifth statement of students who carry out short story reading activities most choose rarely with a percentage of 53%, and those who choose always with the smallest percentage of 3% of students who do this, in the next statement in the sixth statement that reads English entertainment articles there are 51.9% of students who rarely do this activity and there are about 4.2% who always read English entertainment articles. then in the seventh statement, students stated whether they read more English books than Indonesian books every day and in the percentage most students choose rarely to read English books with the percentage of 58.2% and 3% of students always read English entertainment articles, then in the seventh statement students are stated whether more English books are read compared to reading Indonesian books every day and in the percentage most students choose rarely to read English books with a percentage of 58.2% and there are 3% of students who always read more English books than reading Indonesian books every day, then in the last statement for reading English novels, there is the highest percentage in the choice rarely with 52.3% of students while those who choose always are around 1.6% of students.

Students' reading scores must be obtained to determine the correlation between reading habits and reading comprehension. It comes from 25 reading comprehension questions, the reading comprehension test has the lowest score, namely 5, and the highest score, namely 22. Table 5 below displays the findings of the Spearman-Rho Correlation Coefficient between reading habit scores and reading comprehension.

Table 5. Correlation Result

Variable	Sign	Correlation Coefficient
Reading Habits	.031	.524

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Reading Comprehension	.031	.524

Table 5 shows that the p-value is 0.524. According to Cohen (2007), if the p-value is 5 it means there is a correlation between two variables. So, based on the findings, there was a correlation between students' cognitive reading strategies and reading comprehension. Therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. The correlation coefficient is r=0.031, with a correlation coefficient range between 0.35 to 0.428. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a correlation between the two variables. And according to Sugiyono (2016), it reads "medium".

The results of this study show that reading habits are correlated with reading comprehension. The sample size for this study is large enough so that sampling can run well. On the other hand, the results of this research can also reflect the actual situation, namely the relationship between reading habits and reading comprehension, as shown in the previous chapter, various reading perspectives prove that reading habits are necessary for reading comprehension.

Based on the explanation above it can be concluded that there was a correlation between reading habits and reading comprehension in second-semester students at Muhammadiyah University Kalimantan Timur. This means that reading habits are not the only aspect that influences the level of reading comprehension but there are other influencing factors. When students understand their reading, several factors influence it. According to Sumadoyo (2011), intellectual (related to intelligence), language skills (related to vocabulary, how much understanding of vocabulary is owned), psychological (related to attitudes, interests, and emotions), environment (related to social economic, and cultural background), and experience (related to knowledge and habits in reading) are some factors that influence students' reading comprehension abilities.

The similarity of this research from the previous was about the significant and positive correlation between reading habits and reading comprehension. The differentiation from the

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previous was in the number of respondents who participated in collecting data. Previous research (Syafitri et al., (2019), Sartika et al., (2020), (Ramadhianti et al., 2020), (Ansdreani et al., 2021) tends to use a small number of respondents compared to this present research which used 428 respondents. Sartika et al., (2020) and (Ramadhianti et al., 2020) applied senior high school students as respondents in their study. Meanwhile, Ansdreani et al., (2021) and Syafitri et al., (2019 used students in the university. However, they used English department students rather than general students in the university. Therefore, the novelty of this present research was in the type of respondents. The researcher took randomly students from a university to be a sample. In other words, the respondents came from different backgrounds and knowledge of reading comprehension and reading habits. They did not come from the English department only but from every department. Uniquely, the result didn't have so much different range. Mostly, the coefficient relation was in moderate to high correlation.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to determine whether reading Habits and reading Comprehension depth are correlated. The researcher used a correlational design in conjunction with a quantitative technique to address the study topic. The sample of this study was selected using a simple random sampling technique. The selection of the sample semester was done through simple drawing. The population of this study is representatives from each study program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur will be sampled. The total sample according to the sample size table is 428. Therefore, the researcher used 428 students randomly to be the sample in this study.

According to the results of data analysis, the researcher concludes that there is a significant relationship among students' reading habits and the reading comprehension of second-semester students at the Muhammadiyah University of East Kalimantan at a "medium" level. Not all students get high scores in reading comprehension, on the contrary, other factors influence the level of reading comprehension, specifically internal and external factors. Internal factors are factors within students such as intellectual or intelligence, language ability,

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psychology, environment or situation, and experience or involvement. Moreover, external factors such as facilities provided at school that do not support students' English learning and limited or incomplete time to study English twice a week. Considering that there was a medium and positive relationship between reading habits and reading comprehension, educators at every level of education must work on reading habits for students. The students especially students in university must have a responsibility to do more literacy, particularly in reading. They have to have a habit of reading as it will have a positive impact on the result of PISA in Indonesia for the next data collection. Further, hopefully, the results of this research can be taken into consideration to improve students' reading comprehension through good reading habits. By doing this step, they directly support the success of the learning process and support the government's program in increasing literacy can be achieved.

Acknowledgments

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