



## The Influence of Reading Habits and Vocabulary Mastery on English Writing Skills

Yuspik<sup>1</sup>, Hariyanto<sup>2</sup>, Gita Amelia<sup>3</sup>, Desy Awal Mar'an<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> English Lecturer of STKIP PGRI Metro, Lampung, Indonesia

<sup>2,3,4</sup> English Instructor of UPT Balai Bahasa, Malahayati University, Lampung, Indonesia

**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this research is (1) to determine the influence of reading habits and vocabulary mastery on the English writing ability of high school students in East Lampung Regency. (2) to determine the influence of reading habits on the English writing ability of high school students in East Lampung Regency, (3) to determine the influence of vocabulary mastery on the English writing ability of high school students in East Lampung Regency. This study is a survey conducted in high schools in East Lampung Regency during the academic year 2020/2021. The sample consisted of 85 randomly selected students from several public high schools in East Lampung Regency. Data collection was carried out through questionnaires. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, validity tests, reliability tests, and multiple regression analysis. The research results indicate that (1) There is a significant combined influence of reading habits and vocabulary mastery on the English writing ability of high school students in East Lampung Regency. This is evidenced by the obtained significance value (Sig.) of  $0.000 < 0.05$  and the computed F-value of 14.573. (2) There is a significant influence of reading habits on the English writing ability of high school students in East Lampung Regency. This is evidenced by the obtained Sig. value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  and the computed t-value of 3.779. (3) There is a significant influence of vocabulary mastery on the English writing ability of high school students in East Lampung Regency. This is evidenced by the obtained Sig. value of  $0.008 < 0.05$  and the computed t-value of 2.705.

**KEYWORDS:** Reading Habits, Vocabulary Mastery, Writing Ability

### INTRODUCTION

Education is the most important thing in a person's life, because with education, an individual's life in society and the nation, and even the world, will change for the better and develop in every aspect. Through education, knowledge is acquired, and a person's mindset can evolve. If this knowledge is applied well in life, education will produce dignified and honorable individuals. Therefore, education plays a crucial role as stated in Chapter 1, Verse 1 of the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, which defines education as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and a learning process so that students actively develop their potential to possess spiritual strength, self-control, personality, noble character, as well as the skills needed by themselves, society, the nation, and the state.

National development in the field of education is the state's effort to enlighten the nation and enhance the quality of Indonesia's human resources, allowing its people to develop themselves in order to master knowledge and technology. To achieve development in the field of education, there is a need for improvement and refinement of the implementation of national education that is adapted to the progress of science, technology, and society's development. Chapter 12 of the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 states that "national education is carried out through two pathways, namely the school education pathway (formal) and the non-school education pathway (informal)." Family education is part of the non-school education pathway organized within and by families, such as religious education, cultural values, moral values, and behavioral norms. The school education pathway involves education conducted in schools through organized and continuous teaching and learning activities. The school education pathway includes primary education, secondary education, and tertiary education.

In order to develop Indonesian individuals holistically, there needs to be a balance among all aspects of human development, including mental intellectual development, social development, and emotional development. However, formal education often emphasizes solely on mental intellectual development and tends to overlook the development of attitudes, feelings, and students' skills. School learning is typically limited to verbal reasoning, logical thinking, listening, note-taking, and completing assignments



given by teachers. One of the skills that should be provided and cultivated by teachers is language skills, as language proficiency is a crucial factor in students' future success.

Ministry of Education (2005:3) states that "language is essentially the expression of human thoughts and feelings in an organized manner, using sound as its tool." Language plays a central role in students' intellectual, social, and emotional development, and supports their success in learning all subjects. Language learning is expected to help students understand themselves, their culture, and the culture of others. Additionally, language learning enables students to express ideas and feelings, participate in society, and even discover and utilize analytical and imaginative abilities within themselves.

Ministry of Education (2001:7) states that "communication is understanding and expressing information, thoughts, feelings, and developing knowledge, technology, and culture." The ability to communicate in a comprehensive sense involves the ability to discourse, which means understanding or producing oral and written texts realized in the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four skills are used to respond to or create discourse in societal life. Therefore, the English language subject is directed towards developing these skills, so that graduates are capable of communicating and engaging in discourse in English at a certain level of literacy.

The Ministry of Education No. 22 of 2006 states that one of the goals of education at the upper secondary level is for students to have the ability to understand concepts and the interconnection between concepts, so that they can subsequently apply them in problem-solving and develop their potential to possess communicative competence in interpersonal, transactional, and functional discourse using various oral and written language texts. Among the objectives of English language learning, one of the primary goals is to train students' writing skills. Writing in English is a challenging task, but it is not impossible to accomplish. Students don't need to wait to become skilled writers to start writing.

The English language learning outcomes of students, particularly their writing abilities, are generally lower compared to their learning outcomes in other subjects. The reason for this is that writing in English is perceived as a challenging and difficult activity, which in turn makes students apprehensive about the language. This is possibly due to the fact that learning to write in English often involves reasoning and critical thinking. There are various factors that influence these learning outcomes, including the students' level of reading habits, whether reading textbooks or other reference materials. A low frequency of reading among students results in limited foundational knowledge. Students who have a habit of reading tend to possess a broader knowledge base, making it easier for them to optimize their English language learning abilities in general and particularly their writing skills.

Sayid (2006:347) states that repetition is the continuous or predominant recurrence of something without logical connection or something that is embedded in the soul, repeated and accepted by habit. The habit of reading is a strong factor that supports good learning outcomes, especially in writing skills. Consistency in continuous learning leads to effectiveness in learning for students. The habit of reading also has an extraordinary gravitational pull on students' attitudes and behaviors in daily life. Students should utilize the gravitational pull of habits to create harmony and consistency in their learning. A good reading habit for students can be established by setting study schedules, considering the situation, place, and conditions, as well as adopting effective learning methods.

Purwanto (in Aris Yunisah: 2007:11) asserts that "vocabulary mastery is a measure of a person's understanding of a language and their ability to use that vocabulary both orally and in writing." Vocabulary mastery is a part of language mastery. If someone masters a language, it means they also master its vocabulary. An essential factor in supporting effective reading activities and turning them into good habits is vocabulary mastery. With a strong vocabulary, the input obtained from reading activities becomes better and more optimal. Soedjito (2009:24) states that "vocabulary is all the words found in a language or the richness of words possessed by a speaker or writer." Vocabulary mastery is an essential part of learning a language, especially English. Without proficient vocabulary mastery, it's highly unlikely to have good English language skills, particularly in writing, as vocabulary plays an inseparable role in writing.

Based on the above explanation, it's necessary to further examine the factors that influence students' learning outcomes, particularly those related to their low writing skills in English. From observations, it can be inferred that there are two strong factors that contribute to the low writing skills among students in public senior high schools in East Lampung Regency: reading habits and vocabulary mastery. Considering the broad scope of the issues at hand, the researcher will focus the study on "The Influence of Reading Habits and Vocabulary Mastery on English Writing Ability of 11th Grade Students in Public Senior High Schools in East Lampung Regency, Academic Year 2021/2022."



## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Writing Ability

Abbas (2006:125) states that "writing ability is the skill of expressing ideas, opinions, and feelings to others through written language." The accuracy of expressing ideas must be supported by the accuracy of the language used, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. Rahmad Rofi' udin and Damiyanti Zuhdi (1999:159) state that "writing ability is the skill of conveying thoughts, ideas, opinions about something, responding to a statement, expressing desires, or conveying feelings through written language."

Tarigan (2008:3) states that "writing ability is one of the productive and expressive language skills used to communicate indirectly and not face-to-face with others." This is further emphasized by Byrne's opinion (Haryadi and Zamzami, 1996:77) that "writing ability is the act of expressing thoughts into written language through well-structured and clear sentences, making it effectively communicable to the reader."

Nurgiyantoro (2001:273) asserts that "writing is the activity of expressing ideas through language media." Writing is a productive and expressive activity, requiring writers to have the skill to use vocabulary, sentence structure, and language organization effectively. Semi (1993:47) defines writing ability as the capacity to transfer thoughts and feelings into written language using symbols. In line with this perspective, Harris (1999:276) states that writing ability is defined as the skill to use language to express ideas, thoughts, or feelings to others through written form.

Suparno and Mohammad Yunus (2008:13) assert that writing is an activity of conveying communicative messages using written language as the medium or tool. Writing involves the expression of ideas, thoughts, or feelings using linguistic symbols. In written communication, there are at least four elements involved: 1. The writer as the message sender, 2. The content of the writing or message, 3. The channel or medium in the form of written text, and 4. The reader as the message recipient. Gie (2002:3) states that "writing ability is the skill in creating letters, numbers, names, any form of language sign, using a writing instrument on a specific page." On the other hand, composing involves a series of activities by an individual to express ideas and convey them through written language to be understood by readers.

Based on the above explanations, it can be concluded that writing ability is the skill of expressing ideas, feelings, in the form of written language using appropriate symbols.

### 2. Reading Habit

Tampubulon, DP. (2008:228) states that "reading habit is the act of reading that has become ingrained in an individual." Habit determines reading activities and frequency, including the choice of reading materials, level of participation in class, engaging in tasks, asking and answering questions, and the ability to read outside the classroom. Sutarno, NS (2006:20) asserts that reading culture is an attitude and action or behavior of reading that is carried out regularly and consistently.

Aspects of reading habit include the pleasure of reading, awareness of the benefits of reading, reading frequency, and the number of books a student reads. Reading habit is a positive attitude and a sense of attachment within the student. It entails a positive attitude and an internal sense of connection and interest toward reading activities and books. The aspects of reading habit include the joy of reading, frequency of reading, and awareness of the benefits of reading. Herwono (2000:68) states that "reading habits are individual and cannot be generalized." However, good habits are those that are programmed and planned. Pertaining to reading habits, the following factors are relevant:

#### 1) Reading Time

Reading anytime and anywhere has not yet become a cultural norm in Indonesian society. Indonesians prefer talking and listening over reading and writing, often considering it unimportant to allocate time for reading. In reality, allocating reading time doesn't require too much effort — just 5 minutes a week to read anything interesting can suffice.

#### 2) Reading Frequency

The frequency of reading varies from person to person, depending on individual reading habits and specific motivations behind reading. Someone might read three times a day consistently throughout the week, while another person might read only once a year when circumstances necessitate it.



### 3. Vocabulary Mastery

Ramli (2003:219) suggests that "the foundation of expression is words. Thus, vocabulary mastery is crucial for individuals to succeed in life and communicate effectively. Vocabulary forms the basis of language mastery, as it's essential for various language activities such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The more vocabulary a person possesses, the easier it becomes to convey and receive information. Vocabulary consists of a collection of words known by an individual or is part of a particular language. One's vocabulary can be defined as the set of all words understood by that person or all the words likely to be used by them to compose new sentences. Vocabulary is an integral part of a language that underpins its comprehension. The quality of a person's vocabulary mastery affects the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This highlights the significant impact of vocabulary mastery on language skills, as one's ideas cannot be effectively conveyed without words.

Roekhan (1991:25) states that "the term vocabulary has characteristics, including: (1) all words in a language, (2) the range of words owned by an individual, (3) words used in a specific field, and (4) a list of words compiled in a dictionary with brief and practical explanations." Burhan Nurgiantoro (2001:213) asserts that "vocabulary, lexicon, and word treasury are the words possessed by a language." Based on these definitions, it can be concluded that vocabulary is the wealth of words an individual possesses to comprehend text and to construct sentences for communication. Additionally, the understanding of vocabulary involves not only the accuracy of words and their meanings but also their acceptability by everyone; it should be adapted to the situation and speech act.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the formulated problem and proposed hypothesis, the researcher employs a survey research method. This method involves sampling from a population and using a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. Singarimbun and Effendi (1995:3) state that "data are used to explain causal relationships between variables through hypothesis testing."

The research variables consist of the dependent variable, which is English writing proficiency (Y), and two independent variables: reading habits (X1) and vocabulary mastery (X2). In this research, the data collecting techniques used tringgulations such as interviewing, questioners, documentation, observation and test. The population of the research was students of senior high school in East Lampung and the sampling technique used was proporsional random sampling.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 1. Th influence of reading habits (X1) and vocabulary mastery (X2) has a positive impact on the improvement of English writing skills

The research findings indicate that the combined influence of reading habits (X1) and vocabulary mastery (X2) has a positive impact on the improvement of English writing skills among high school students in East Lampung Regency. This implies that both reading habits and vocabulary mastery significantly contribute to enhancing the English writing proficiency of high school students in the said region, as evidenced by a Sig value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  and F-value of 14.573. Furthermore, the multiple regression equation is expressed as follows:  $Y = 13.959 + 0.409X1 + 0.299X2$ . This means that an increase of one unit in the reading habits variable (X1) contributes 0.409, while an increase of one unit in vocabulary mastery (X2) contributes 0.299 to the English writing ability.

Writing skills involve the activity of expressing ideas, thoughts, or feelings in written language, following the principles of structured writing for clear comprehension by readers. Reading habits refer to the process readers use to understand the messages conveyed by authors through written words. Vocabulary, in this context, encompasses all the words understood by an individual or all the words they might use to construct new sentences. In conclusion, it can be summarized that both reading habits and vocabulary mastery influence the English writing ability of high school students in East Lampung Regency. This quantitative research suggests a significant combined effect of these factors on English writing proficiency.

#### 2. The Influence of Reading Habits (X1) on English Writing Proficiency (Y)

Based on the research findings, it is concluded that reading habits have a significant positive influence on the improvement of English writing skills among high school students in East Lampung Regency. The obtained Sig value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , with a calculated T-value of 3.779. Reading habits contribute 16.48% to English writing proficiency. This indicates that the act of reading performed by students has a substantial impact on their writing abilities.

#### 3. The Influence of Vocabulary Mastery (X2) on English Writing Proficiency (Y)



Based on the research results and existing theory, it can be concluded that vocabulary mastery has a significant positive influence on the improvement of English writing skills among high school students in East Lampung Regency. The obtained Sig value is  $0.008 < 0.05$ , with a calculated T-value of 2.705. Vocabulary mastery contributes 9.74% to English writing proficiency. This means that the level of vocabulary mastery possessed by students significantly contributes to their ability to write in English.

Vocabulary mastery refers to knowledge of words, while writing proficiency involves the ability to express ideas and thoughts in a systematic written form. The better a student's vocabulary mastery, the easier it is for them to express ideas and thoughts in writing, as proven by the results of this study.

## CONCLUSION

And the data analysis and discussion results can be summarized as follows:

1. There is a significant combined influence of reading habits and vocabulary mastery on English writing proficiency among high school students in East Lampung Regency. This is evidenced by a Sig value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  and an F-value of 14.575.
2. There is a significant influence of reading habits on English writing proficiency among high school students in East Lampung Regency. This is supported by a Sig value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  and a T-value of 3.779.
3. There is a significant influence of vocabulary mastery on English writing proficiency among high school students in East Lampung Regency. This is confirmed by a Sig value of  $0.008 < 0.05$  and a T-value of 2.705.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are offered to the readers:

1. Teachers and educational institutions should pay attention to teaching methods and techniques to enhance the quality of the teaching-learning process. Effective teaching methods can lead to better outcomes for students.
2. Teachers and educational institutions should motivate students to cultivate reading habits and improve their vocabulary mastery to enhance their writing skills. This study has demonstrated the positive impact of these factors on writing proficiency.
3. Future research in this area should consider larger sample sizes and additional variables for more comprehensive insights into the topic.

These recommendations aim to contribute to the continuous improvement of English writing skills among high school students in East Lampung Regency.

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