

The Correlation Between Students' Reading Habits and Writing Performance in Narrative Text in The Ninth Grade at The State Junior High School 3 of Pringsewu

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Abstract

Reading habits constitute an important factor in supporting students' writing ability in English language learning. However, it has been observed that some ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Pringsewu have not yet developed consistent reading habits and continue to experience difficulties in writing narrative texts. Therefore, this research aimed to investigate whether there is a significant correlation between students' reading habits and their narrative writing performance. This research was conducted in 2026 and involved 62 students selected through purposive sampling. A quantitative correlational research design was employed. Data were collected using a questionnaire to assess students' reading habits and a writing test to measure their narrative writing performance. The data were analyzed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation test after fulfilling the prerequisite assumptions of normality and linearity. The findings revealed that the correlation coefficient (r) was 0.713 with a significance value (p -value) of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a positive and significant correlation between reading habits and writing performance. Accordingly, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. Furthermore, the mean score of students' reading habits was 77.4, which was categorized as Good Reader, while the mean score of narrative writing performance was 76.13, which fell into the Good category. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the better students' reading habits are, the better their narrative writing performance tends to be. Therefore, students are encouraged to improve their reading habits, and teachers are recommended to integrate reading and writing activities more effectively into classroom instruction.

Keywords: Reading Habits, Writing Performance, Narrative Text

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Abstrak

Kebiasaan membaca merupakan salah satu faktor penting dalam mendukung kemampuan menulis siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Namun demikian, masih ditemukan bahwa sebagian siswa kelas IX di SMP Negeri 3 Pringsewu belum memiliki kebiasaan membaca yang konsisten serta mengalami kesulitan dalam menulis teks naratif. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara kebiasaan membaca (reading habits) dengan kemampuan menulis teks naratif siswa. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan pada tahun 2026 dengan melibatkan 62 siswa sebagai sampel yang ditentukan melalui teknik purposive sampling. Metode yang digunakan adalah penelitian kuantitatif dengan pendekatan korelasional. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui angket untuk mengukur kebiasaan membaca dan tes menulis untuk mengukur kemampuan menulis teks naratif. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan uji korelasi Pearson Product-Moment setelah memenuhi uji prasyarat berupa uji normalitas dan uji linearitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai koefisien korelasi (r) sebesar 0,713 dengan nilai signifikansi (p -value) sebesar 0,000 ($p < 0,05$), yang berarti terdapat hubungan yang positif dan signifikan antara kebiasaan membaca dan kemampuan menulis. Dengan demikian, hipotesis nol (H_0) ditolak dan hipotesis alternatif (H_a) diterima. Selain itu, rata-rata skor kebiasaan membaca sebesar 77,4 termasuk dalam kategori Good Reader, sedangkan rata-rata kemampuan menulis sebesar 76,13 termasuk dalam kategori Good. Berdasarkan hasil tersebut, dapat disimpulkan bahwa semakin baik kebiasaan membaca siswa, semakin baik pula kemampuan menulis teks naratif yang dimiliki, sehingga disarankan agar siswa meningkatkan kebiasaan membaca dan guru mengintegrasikan kegiatan membaca dan menulis dalam pembelajaran.

Kata Kunci : Kebiasaan Membaca, Kemampuan Menulis, Narrative Text.

I. INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most influential languages in the contemporary world, serving as the primary medium of communication in education, science, technology, business, diplomacy, and international collaboration. The rapid advancement of globalization has increased the demand for English proficiency, as individuals are now required to communicate and exchange information beyond national and cultural boundaries. In many countries, including Indonesia, English is not only taught as a foreign language but is also regarded as an essential tool for accessing global knowledge and participating in international academic and professional communities. Students with adequate English proficiency are generally better equipped to utilize various educational resources, engage in cross-cultural communication, and adapt to the demands of an increasingly interconnected world. Consequently, developing English competence has become one of the major priorities of language education in the twenty-first century. Harmer (2015) emphasizes that English has become the primary medium for international communication in various fields. Therefore, equipping students with sufficient English proficiency is considered an important educational objective because it enables them to expand their academic opportunities, improve their competitiveness, and participate more effectively in the global society.

Alongside the growing importance of English, literacy has also become a central concern in educational development worldwide. Modern education no longer focuses solely on students' ability to recognize written words but also emphasizes their capacity to understand, interpret, evaluate, and utilize information obtained from various sources. Literacy is widely recognized as a fundamental competency that supports students' academic achievement, critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning. Among various dimensions of literacy, reading literacy occupies a particularly significant position because reading functions as the foundation for acquiring knowledge across different disciplines. Through reading activities, students continuously develop vocabulary, strengthen language comprehension, enrich background knowledge, and cultivate analytical thinking skills that support learning in almost every subject. Consequently, students with stronger reading literacy generally demonstrate better academic performance than those who possess limited reading abilities.

Despite the increasing awareness of literacy development, improving students' reading literacy remains a considerable challenge in Indonesia. Various educational policies have been introduced to encourage literacy-based learning; however, many students continue to demonstrate relatively low reading engagement. Reading activities are frequently carried out only to fulfill classroom assignments rather than becoming habitual practices that students voluntarily perform outside school hours. As a result, opportunities to expand vocabulary, develop comprehension strategies, and strengthen higher-order thinking skills through extensive reading remain limited. This condition is reflected in the findings of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022, which reported that Indonesian students obtained a reading literacy score of 359, considerably below the average score of 476 achieved by students from OECD countries. These findings indicate that strengthening students' reading culture remains an important priority within the Indonesian educational system. They also suggest that greater attention should be devoted to fostering sustainable reading habits, as regular reading activities contribute not only to literacy development but also to broader academic success.

Within the context of English language learning, students are expected to develop competence in four fundamental language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills function as an integrated system in which progress in one area frequently supports development in another. Listening and reading provide learners with linguistic input, whereas speaking and writing represent productive skills through which learners communicate ideas and demonstrate language mastery. Richards and Renandya (2017) argue that effective language learning depends on the integration of these four language skills because they complement one another throughout the learning process. Consequently, difficulties experienced in one skill may influence learners' performance in other skills. Students who experience limited exposure to English through reading, for example, may encounter challenges when attempting to express ideas accurately and coherently in written form because they possess insufficient linguistic input to support their writing.

Among these four language skills, reading and writing are often regarded as the most cognitively demanding because both involve complex mental processes that extend beyond simple language recognition. Reading requires learners to identify explicit information, interpret implicit meanings, analyze textual organization, evaluate ideas critically, and integrate new information with prior knowledge. Writing, on the other hand, requires learners to transform ideas into coherent written discourse by organizing information logically, selecting appropriate vocabulary, applying grammatical rules accurately, and maintaining coherence throughout the text. These processes demand not only linguistic competence but also cognitive, organizational, and critical thinking abilities. Consequently, students who demonstrate stronger reading competence often possess greater linguistic resources that facilitate writing development, whereas students with limited reading experience may struggle to express ideas effectively due to restricted vocabulary, insufficient understanding of text organization, and inadequate exposure to authentic language use.

The correlation between reading and writing has long been recognized as one of the fundamental concepts in language learning. Rather than functioning as separate skills, reading and writing mutually reinforce each other throughout the learning process. Reading provides learners with authentic examples of language use, enabling them to observe how ideas are introduced, developed, connected, and concluded within different types of texts. Through repeated exposure to various reading materials, learners gradually acquire new vocabulary, internalize grammatical structures, recognize patterns of text organization, and become familiar with different writing styles. These accumulated language experiences subsequently influence the quality of students' written production. Brown (2015) argues that reading serves as an essential source of language input that contributes significantly to writing development because learners utilize the linguistic knowledge gained from reading when constructing their own written texts. In this regard, reading may be viewed not merely as a receptive language skill but also as an important foundation that supports productive language performance, particularly writing.

Furthermore, the influence of reading extends beyond vocabulary acquisition and grammatical knowledge. Reading also enriches students' background knowledge, stimulates imagination, broadens perspectives, and provides numerous examples of how ideas can be communicated effectively through written language. Students who regularly engage in reading activities are exposed to diverse topics, writing styles, and organizational patterns, enabling them to develop greater flexibility when composing texts. This extensive exposure encourages learners to express ideas more confidently, organize information more systematically, and produce writing that is richer in both content and language. Conversely, students with limited reading experiences often encounter difficulties generating ideas, maintaining logical organization, and selecting appropriate language because they have relatively few textual models from which to learn. These differences suggest that reading habits may play a substantial role in shaping students' writing performance and deserve further investigation within the context of English language learning.

II. METHODE

This study adopted a quantitative correlational research design to examine the correlation between students' reading habits and their performance in writing narrative texts. The research was carried out at State Junior High School 3 of Pringsewu during the 2025/2026 academic year. The target population comprised all ninth-grade students enrolled at the school. Sugiyono (2023) defines a population as a group of individuals or objects sharing particular characteristics that are selected by a researcher for investigation. Ninth-grade students were chosen because they had completed sufficient English instruction and had experience in reading and writing activities relevant to the objectives of this study. The sample consisted of 62 students selected through purposive sampling based on predetermined research criteria.

To obtain the required data, two research instruments were employed: a reading habits questionnaire and a narrative writing test. The questionnaire was developed to identify students' reading habits by examining three main dimensions, namely reading frequency, reading duration, and the types of reading materials they commonly read. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Before its administration, the questionnaire underwent expert validation to ensure that the items adequately represented the research variables and were appropriate for measuring students' reading habits.

Students' writing performance was measured through a narrative writing task in which each participant was instructed to compose a narrative text based on a predetermined topic. The resulting compositions were assessed using an analytic writing rubric adapted from Brown (2007, p. 245), which evaluates five aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. To increase the reliability and objectivity of the assessment, two independent raters evaluated all writing products using the same scoring rubric. The use of inter-rater scoring helped minimize subjective judgment and improve the consistency of the evaluation results.

The data collection process was conducted in two consecutive stages. First, students completed the reading habits questionnaire to provide information about their reading behavior. After the questionnaire had been administered, they completed the narrative writing task under the teacher's supervision. Once both instruments had been completed, the questionnaire responses and writing scores were compiled, coded, and organized systematically before being processed for statistical analysis.

Data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistical analysis was first employed to describe the characteristics of students' reading habits and narrative writing performance. Before testing the research hypothesis, prerequisite analyses were carried out to examine whether the data satisfied the assumptions of normality and linearity. After these assumptions had been fulfilled, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analysis was applied to determine the strength and direction of the correlation between students' reading habits and their narrative writing performance. Statistical significance was evaluated at the 0.05 level. Throughout the research process, ethical principles were maintained by obtaining formal permission from the school before data collection, ensuring that participation complied with school regulations, and protecting the confidentiality of all participants' identities.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research aimed to determine whether there was a significant correlation between ninth-grade students' reading habits and narrative writing performance at State Junior High School 3 of Pringsewu. The findings are presented through descriptive statistics, prerequisite tests, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Reading Habits and Writing Performance

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Reading Habits	62	77.35	5.62	65	87
Writing Performance	62	76.13	8.47	50.00	88.50

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the research variables. The mean score of students' reading habits was 77.35 with a standard deviation of 5.62, indicating that students generally demonstrated positive reading habits. The scores ranged from 65 to 87. Meanwhile, the mean score of narrative writing performance was 76.13 with a standard deviation of 8.47. The writing scores ranged from 50.00 to 88.50. The findings indicate that students generally achieved satisfactory levels of both reading habits and narrative writing performance. To provide a clearer overview of students' achievement levels, the scores were arranged as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Reading Habit and Writing Performance Categories

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Reading Habits	Good Reader	41	66.1
	Excellent Reader	21	33.9
Writing Performance	Poor	1	1.6
	Fair	3	4.8
	Average	10	16.1
	Good	25	40.3
	Very Good	23	37.1

As shown in Table 2, the majority of students demonstrated positive reading habits. A total of 41 students (66.1%) were categorized as Good Readers, while 21 students (33.9%) were categorized as Excellent Readers. Regarding narrative writing performance, most students achieved the Good category (40.3%), followed by the Very Good category (37.1%). Only four students were categorized as Fair and Poor. These findings suggest that the participants generally possessed adequate reading habits and writing abilities.

Before testing the hypothesis, prerequisite tests were conducted to ensure that the assumptions for Pearson Product-Moment Correlation were fulfilled.

Table 3. Results of Prerequisite Tests

Test	Variable	Sig.	Interpretation
Normality	Reading Habits	0.200	Normal
Normality	Writing Performance	0.200	Normal
Linearity (Deviation from Linearity)	X-Y	0.161	Linear

Table 3 shows that the significance values obtained from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test were 0.200 for both reading habits and writing performance. Since these values exceeded 0.05, the data were normally distributed. Furthermore, the significance value of Deviation from Linearity was 0.161, which was greater than 0.05. This result indicates that the correlation between reading habits and narrative writing performance was linear. Therefore, the assumptions required for Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis were satisfied.

After the prerequisite tests were fulfilled, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation test was conducted to examine the correlation between the two variables.

Table 4. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation between Reading Habits and Writing Performance

Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reading Habits and Writing Performance	0.713	0.000

Table 4 reveals that the correlation coefficient between students' reading habits and narrative writing performance was 0.713 with a significance value of 0.000. Since the p-value was less than 0.05, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This result suggests a significant positive correlation between students' reading habits and narrative writing performance. Based on the interpretation of the correlation coefficient, the obtained value falls within the strong correlation category.

The findings suggest that students with stronger reading habits tend to perform better in narrative writing. Students who frequently engage in reading activities are exposed to a wider range of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and patterns of text organization, which can support the development of writing skills. Through reading, students gain models of how ideas are developed, organized, and expressed effectively in written form. This finding supports Brown (2007), who argues that reading provides essential linguistic input that contributes to the development of writing. Through reading activities, learners acquire vocabulary, language patterns, and discourse structures that can later be applied in their own writing. As a result, students with stronger reading habits are more likely to produce narrative texts with better organization, richer vocabulary, and clearer development of ideas. The findings are also consistent with previous studies. Apriyani (2023) found a significant positive correlation between reading habits and narrative writing ability. Similarly, Sariningsih, Sawitri, and Widhiasih (2020) reported that reading habits contributed significantly to students' ability to organize ideas and maintain coherence in narrative texts. Likewise, Firdausa (2023) concluded that students with better reading habits demonstrated stronger writing performance and broader vocabulary mastery. The consistency between the present research and previous studies strengthens the evidence that reading habits play an important role in supporting students' narrative writing performance.

Overall, the findings indicate that reading habits are strongly associated with narrative writing performance. Therefore, encouraging students to develop regular reading habits may be an effective strategy for improving writing achievement, particularly in narrative writing. (Eka, 2023)

IV. CONCLUSION

This research aimed to determine whether there was a significant correlation between students' reading habits and narrative writing performance among ninth-grade students at State Junior High School 3 of Pringsewu. The findings revealed a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables, as indicated by the Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficient ($r = 0.713$) with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate that students who demonstrate stronger reading habits tend to achieve better performance in writing narrative texts. The findings suggest that regular reading activities provide students with greater exposure to vocabulary, grammatical structures, text organization, and language patterns, which can be transferred to their writing and support the development of more coherent and well-structured narrative texts. Therefore, reading habits can be regarded as one of the important factors contributing to students' narrative writing performance.

The findings also support the theoretical perspective that reading serves as an essential source of linguistic input for writing development and are consistent with previous studies that reported a positive correlation between reading habits and writing performance. From a practical perspective, the results imply that English teachers should encourage students to develop regular reading habits by integrating literacy-based activities into classroom instruction and providing greater opportunities to engage with various English reading materials, particularly narrative texts. Such activities may help students enrich their vocabulary, strengthen their understanding of text organization, and improve the overall quality of their writing. However, because this research focused on one junior high school and examined only the correlation between two variables, the findings should be interpreted within this context. Future research is recommended to investigate additional factors that may influence writing performance, such as vocabulary mastery, reading comprehension, writing motivation, grammar proficiency, or learning strategies. Moreover, involving larger samples from different educational levels and schools may provide broader evidence and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting students' writing performance.

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