



Journal of English Teaching and Applied Linguistic

<http://jurnal.stkipgribl.ac.id/index.php/jeta>

print ISSN 2722-3388

online ISSN 2722-3396

**TRANSLATION ABILITY, READING HABIT, AND READING SKILL IN
VOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS IN INDONESIA: A CORRELATION**

AKSENDRO MAXIMILIAN

Ph.D. Scholar, University of Lucknow, India

aksendro@gmail.com

Abstract: The present study aimed to investigate the correlation between 1) translation ability and reading skill; 2) reading habit and reading skill; 3) translation ability, reading habit and reading skill. This study employed a correlational method as its research design. This study was implemented in a vocational school in Kota Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. The sample comprised 30 tenth grade vocational school students of SMK PGRI 2 Bandar Lampung. The data were collected from conducting two tests (reading test and translation test) and reading habit questionnaire. The data analysis was conducted with product moment and multiple linear regressions. The result of the study revealed that: 1) there is a correlation between students' translation ability and students' reading skill; 2) there is a correlation between students' reading habit and students' reading skill; 3) there is a correlation between students' translation ability and reading habit toward students' reading skill. Finally, this paper discusses some findings related to the correlation between translation ability, reading habit and reading skill in the context of Indonesian vocational school students.

Keywords: Translation, Reading Habit, Reading Skill, Vocational School.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational school is one of the formal educations in Indonesia which

prepares the students to be competent in a certain skill (Maximilian 52). Vocational school level provides the

quality training employees for several strategic sectors needed. The students in the vocational school are prepared to be ready to work directly and become well-trained employees in some sectors. In other words, the vocational school creates ready-to-use human resources.

In Indonesian vocational school curriculum, English still becomes one of the important subjects to be mastered by every student. Since communication becomes one of the important aspects of the working world, it is realized that today human resources who can communicate well, especially in English, are needed in the working world. Therefore, it is not arguable that English is very needed since nowadays global communication is mostly conducted in English.

The data from researchers' preliminary study shows that most vocational school students choose reading skill as the most important skill in learning English subject. It is because they think that in their field when they are practicing or doing their task in the workshop, they find that all instructions are written in the English language. They also must to read the manual books written in English.

Therefore, the students conclude that they must master the English reading skill well. Students' English reading skill could be one of the helpful skills for their next job. Besides that, the reading instruction also dominates the curriculum in most schools, including the vocational school curriculum. The English language teaching practice in Indonesia emphasizes on the materials of English reading skill.

Reading could be defined as the process of understanding the meaning of written language involving the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text (Maximilian 191). In addition, reading skill is recognizing the message, understanding the author's intentions, and grasping at implicit meaning (White 22). Likewise, Fischer describes that reading involves the understanding process of a whole text composed of written signs (12). According to Annamalai and Muniandy, reading is the ability for recognizing, examining, and understanding the meaning and information of the written language (33). Thus, it could be concluded that reading is the interaction between the reader and the text in order to understand and to

comprehend the message from the author.

For improving reading skill, the students are expected to have a good English reading habit and they have to practice to read English text much more. De Boer and Dallmann (8) state reading skill could be improved only by reading abundantly. Getting the habit of reading is a great deal. The people may wish to begin with easy material, with daily newspaper, a popular magazine, or book of easy short stories, as they develop fluency and pleasure in reading and accuracy. On the other side, generally, people have a reading habit as a way to acquire new information and knowledge from the text (Annamalai and Muniandy 33). Therefore, students are expected to develop a strategy for their reading habits. By having a good reading habit, the students could improve their skill in comprehending the English text.

Reading habit refers to the ways someone organizes his/her reading activities regarding intensity or time of reading, the number of reading text, and the kind of reading text. Sangkaeo defines a reading habit as the behavior of the likeness of reading and tastes of reading. Furthermore, reading habit

could be identified as about how often, how much, and what the readers read (Shen 560). The researchers have found that people's reading habits are related to gender, age, educational background, academic performance and professional growth (Annamalai and Muniandy 33; Mokhtari and Sheorey 159). Besides that, Chettri and Rout (14) state that reading habit is important for healthy intellectual growth and plays a very important role to enable a person in achieving language proficiency. Therefore, it is clear that reading habit is considered to have a correlation to the academic performance and language proficiency including reading skill and translation ability.

Beside reading habit, translation ability is considered to be one thing which has relation to students' reading skill. According to Newmark (7), translation is a craft consisting an attempt to replace a message or statement in one language by the same message or statement in another language. Widyamartaya (11) defines translation as the replacement of textual material in source language by equivalent textual material in the target language. Traditionally, when people

read the text which is written in a foreign language, to make it easier, they are transferring the foreign language into their mother tongue first. For instance, in reading English text, the Indonesian students sometimes need to transfer the source language which is English into the target language which is the Indonesian language (*Bahasa Indonesia*). Transferring the source language into the target language is called translation. In other word, practically, the students do translation first when they read the English text.

The habit of translation in reading text is turn out to be the result of conventional teaching method which is usually used by the teacher at school; one of them is the direct method. In the direct method, the teacher usually asks the students to read the text, asks the difficult word, and asks the student to translate the text (Maximilian 53; Ajeng 78). As a result, translating in reading the English text becomes a habit for the students.

However, translating process could be useful to improve students' English skills including reading skill. The translation is a complicated process which requires rapid multilayered analyses of semantic field,

syntactic structure, sociology and psychology of reader or listener responses and cultural defense (Newmark 61). It means that by doing the translation, the students need to involve in a complicated critical thinking process related to language knowledge and skills. As a result, the students are accustomed to practice their complex language competences while doing translation. The students who usually do translation is hoped to have good reading ability and good formation of reading habit in one foreign language.

In this case, the translation ability observed in this study is students' translation ability of the text from English into *Bahasa Indonesia*. On the basis explanation drawn above, the study has attempted to find proof whether or not 1) there is any correlation between students' translation ability and reading skill; 2) there is any correlation between students' reading habit and reading skill; 3) there is any correlation between students' translation ability, reading habit and reading skill.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study investigates the students' translation ability, reading habit and reading skill from a group of students and the characteristics under the investigation had been possessed by the students. As stated by Ary et al. (27), a method which the goal is to describe the relationship between two or more events or characteristics is called the correlational method. Thus, this present study employs a correlational method as its research design. The sample of 30 students was selected by using cluster random sampling technique from a population of the tenth-grade students of SMK PGRI 2 Bandar Lampung in the academic year of 2017/2018.

The data were gathered by conducting two tests and one questionnaire. The first test, reading test, was used to collect the data of students' reading skill. The second test, translation test, was used to collect the data of students' ability in translating the English text into *Bahasa Indonesia*. The translation test used in this study is translation test of text from English into *Bahasa Indonesia*. Whereas, the reading habit questionnaire was used

to measure the students' reading habit in reading English text. Based on the result of pilot study, it is proved that the research instruments are valid and reliable.

The data analysis was conducted with product moment and multiple linear regressions. Product moment formula was used to prove the relationship between two variables: 1) between students' translation ability (X_1) and reading skill (Y); 2) between students' reading habit (X_2) and reading skill (Y). While multiple linear regression was used to prove the relationship between two dependent variables (X) and one independent variable (Y), in this case between students' translation ability (X_1), reading habit (X_2), and reading skill (Y).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After collecting and calculating the data of all variables, the descriptive statistics data can be described as follows: 1) the highest score of students' reading skill is 90, the lowest score is 64, and the mean score is 76.13; 2) the highest score of students' translation ability is 91, the lowest score is 56, and the mean score is 74; 3)

the highest score gained by the questionnaire of students' reading habit is 76, the lowest score is 55, and the mean score is 64.37. See Table 1 for the descriptive statistics data of all research variables.

Table 1. Descriptive data of students' reading skill, translation ability, and reading habit

Classification	Reading	Translation	Reading Habit
Highest score	90	91	76
Lowest score	64	56	55
Mean score	76.13	74	64.37
SD	6.96	8.94	6.27

Before testing the hypothesis, the data above were tested using regression line to see the significance and linearity of regression among variables. The results are as follows: 1) The F_o score (18.75) of regression for translation ability and reading skill scores is higher than F_t (4.1). Because F_o is higher than F_t ($F_o > F_t$), the regression of translation ability and reading skill is significant. The score of F_o for linear

regression (0.77) is lower than F_t (2.41) for linear regression ($F_o < F_t$). It means that regression of translation ability and reading skill is linear; 2) The F_o score (20) of regression for reading habit and reading skill scores is higher than F_t (4.1). Because F_o is higher than F_t ($F_o > F_t$), the regression of reading habit and reading skill is significant. The score of F_o for linear regression (0.92) is lower than F_t (2.41) for linear regression ($F_o < F_t$). It means that regression of reading habit and reading skill is linear; 3) The F_o score (22.3) of multiple regression for translation ability, reading habit and reading skill scores is higher than F_t (3.34). Because F_o is higher than F_t ($F_o > F_t$), the regression of translation ability, reading habit and reading skill is significant.

Moreover, the data of population of all variables are in normal distribution. The results are as follows: 1) The L_o score of the data of reading skill is 0.126 and the L_t is 0.162. Because L_o is lower than L_t ($0.126 < 0.162$), it means that the population of reading skill variable is in normal distribution; 2) The L_o score of the data of translation ability is 0.14 and the L_t is 0.162. Because L_o is lower than L_t

($0.14 < 0.162$), it means that the population of translation ability variable is in normal distribution; 3) The L_o score of the data of reading habit is 0.124 and the L_t is 0.0161. Because L_o is lower than L_t ($0.124 < 0.162$), it means that the population of reading habit variable is in a normal distribution.

The Correlation between Translation Ability and Reading Skill

After calculating the data using product moment formula, it is found that the coefficient correlation (t_o) between translation ability and reading ability is 5.53, while the $t_{t(0.05)}$ for $df=28$ is 2.248. Because t_o is higher than t_t , it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between translation ability and reading skill.

This result shows that there is a positive and significant correlation between translation ability and reading ability in the context of students in vocational school in Indonesia. It is in line with what has been stated by Newmark (76) that the good translator must have good reading skill in foreign language, the knowledge of the subject, sensitivity to both mother tongue and

foreign language, and competence to write in the target language. Meanwhile, Widyamartaya writes that literal translation is the process of changing speech and writing form with reproduces the original meaning of source language that is closely followed by grammar, organization, style of the source language (14). In other words, people need to understand all aspects of reading text well, including content, vocabulary, organization, and meaning before they do the translation. It proves that the translation ability is related to the reading skill.

Reading skill is needed in translation activity, and also, translation ability is very needed in reading activity. In reality, when reading foreign language text, some readers need to translate the reading material into their mother tongue first. It also happens to the students in Indonesian vocational school. For instance, the students said that they had to translate the memo which was written in English into *Bahasa Indonesia* first to understand or to catch the meaning of memo. The students who have good translation ability will understand the ideas, meaning, and information of the

written English text easily. In fact, translating into reading English text becomes a habit among vocational school students in Indonesia. Why does it become a habit? This habit is turn out to be the result of conventional teaching method which is usually used by the teacher at the school. One popular teaching method used by most teachers in teaching reading is direct method (Maximilian 53). In the direct method, the teacher usually asks the students to read the text, asks the difficult word, and asks the student to translate the text (Ajeng 78). However, according to the students observed in this research, they are very comfortable with doing translation while reading English text. This habit also does not give disadvantages or negative effect on the student. As well as, the correlation between translation ability and reading skill has been proven to be positive in this research.

The Correlation between Reading Habit and Reading Skill

After calculating the data using product moment formula, it is found that the coefficient correlation (t_o) between reading habit and reading ability is

4.417, while the $t_{t(.05)}$ for $df=28$ is 2.248. Because t_o is higher than t_t , it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between reading habit and reading skill.

It has been proven that reading habit has a positive and significant correlation to reading skill of the vocational school students in Indonesia. Reading habit is something important to improve reading skill. Some researchers have focused their efforts in studying students' reading habits, and the results show that reading habit is correlated to language performance, academic performance, professional growth (Mokhtari and Sheorey 158; Annamalai and Muniandy 33; Yamashinta 258). In addition, Annamalai and Muniandy (39) prove that there is a significant and positive correlation between students' cumulative grade point average (GPA) and the time spent for reading. Since reading habit is very important for students' academic performance and it is correlated to language performance, it is also correlated to reading skill.

Students who read a lot and have a broad knowledge of some field will have better reading comprehension. Reading habit refers to the habit of how

often, how much, and what the readers read (Shen 560). It is clear that reading habit contributes to reading skill. As stated in the explanation above, reading skill is very needed by the vocational school students for their study and their future careers. They need reading skill because most of the instructions and guides in their working fields are written in English. It is a must for them to be able to understand the meaning of English reading text. They need, obviously, to build a positive reading habit to improve their skill in reading English text.

On the contrary, most of the vocational school students in Indonesia, unfortunately, do not have good competence in reading skill (Maximilian 53). Similarly, reading the English text has always been a nightmare for most vocational school students in Indonesia (Maximilian 191). It shows that the students still have a problem in reading English text. One aspect that creates the problems is they have not developed good reading attitude and habit, therefore it influences to their desire in learning English, especially reading skill. For this reason, all students should develop

positive reading attitude including reading habit to improve their reading skill. Walberg and Tsai (161) state that there are some factors which contribute to a positive reading attitude including reading habit: 1) believing that reading is important; 2) enjoying reading; 3) having a high self-concept as a reader; 4) having a home environment where verbal interaction takes place regularly. In short, due to positive reading habit influences students' reading skill, the student should pay more attention to their reading attitude and try to solve their problems which obstruct their habit in reading, consequently, it can help the students to improve their reading skill.

The Correlation between Translation Ability, Reading Habit, and Reading Skill

After calculating the data using multiple linear regressions formula, the result shows that F_o for translation ability, reading habit and reading skill is 22.35, while the $F_{t(0.05)}$ is 3.35. Because F_o is higher than F_t , it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between translation ability, reading habit and reading skill.

It has been proven that translation ability and reading habit has a positive and significant correlation to the reading skill of the vocational school students in Indonesia. Translation ability is correlated to reading skill, likewise, reading habit is also correlated to reading skill. Translation is the expression in another language (target language) of what has been expressed in another language (source language), preserving semantics and stylistics equivalences which require a highly complicated process of reader responses toward the reading text (Bell 5; Newmark 17). It means that translator must have good reading skill in foreign language, knowledge of the subject, sensitivity to both mother tongue and foreign language, competence to write in the target language. Translators need to have good reading skill in one foreign language, in this case English, when they translate English reading text into *Bahasa Indonesia*. Besides, the translator should have good ability to organize reading habit in one foreign language (English). To be the good translators, the students need to have not only sensitivity, intuition, and

intelligence, but also knowledge of English.

The translators need to have good reading skill, otherwise, the reading skill could be improved by having good translation ability. Translation ability plays a role in reading ability. Based on the research result, students who have good translation ability have good reading ability. The ones who have good translation ability will understand the meaning and information of the written text easily. During the research, the vocational school students state that they usually translate every word in the English reading text into *Bahasa Indonesia* while reading. They do the translation to get the precise meaning of the text. They are not sure and not confident if they do not translate the text before reading the whole text.

Beside translation ability, reading attitude also plays the important role in the process of achieving reading skill. The positive attitude inspires positive reading skill (Annamalai and Muniandy 34). As we know that reading is important to get new knowledge and new information, therefore, by having a good reading skill, the students could have any benefit and it will support some aspects of students' life.

According to Kim and Anderson, reading is useful not only for getting information and knowledge but also for “building maturity and widen awareness of contemporary issues” (qtd. in Annamalai and Muniandy 33). Annamalai and Muniandy (33) also state that a good reading habit will be useful for the development of the capacity of mental and personality. Furthermore, Chettri and Rout (14) also say that reading habit is needed for people’s healthy intellectual growth and this habit contributes a crucial role in enabling people in achieving language competencies. In summary, for the benefit reason for reading, it is suggested for the students to have and to increase their reading habit.

From the research result and the explanation above, it is undoubtedly that both of translation ability and reading habit have a positive and significant correlation toward students’ reading skill in the context of Indonesian vocational school students. Therefore, both English teachers and students should pay more attention to the two important aspects, reading habit and translation ability, to support the students in mastering English language skills including reading skill.

CONCLUSION

Within the context of this present study, it can be summed up that: 1) There is correlation between students’ translation ability and students’ reading skill; 2) There is correlation between students’ reading habit and students’ reading skill; 3) There is correlation between students’ translation ability and reading habit toward students’ reading skill. This result shows that translation ability and reading habit are important aspects of reading skill. Both of the aspects should be considered both by the English teachers and students in supporting the students’ success in mastering reading skill. As well as, the English teachers should always support and motivate the students for improving their reading habit and their translation ability to improve their reading skill. Not only for reading skill, by improving their motivation in reading, the students will be reading more and more, then it will lead them to the improvement of their English language skills, namely writing skill, speaking skill, and listening skill.

WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED

- Ajeng, Galuh Dwi. "The Effectiveness of Using Visual Auditory Kinesthetic in Teaching Reading for Junior High School Students." *Lentera: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, vol. 1, 2015, pp. 75-88. <http://jurnal.stkippgribl.ac.id/index.php/lentera/article/view/137>.
- Ajeng, Galuh Dwi. "THE BASIC CAUSES OF INDONESIAN EFL STUDENTS' ANXIETY IN DOING SPEAKING." *Lentera: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan* 1 (2016): 233-250. <http://jurnal.stkippgribl.ac.id/index.php/lentera/article/view/352>
- Ajeng, Galuh Dwi. "THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY AND THEIR ABILITY IN WRITING HORTATORY EXPOSITION TEXT." *Lentera: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan* 2 (2017): 93-99. <http://jurnal.stkippgribl.ac.id/index.php/lentera/article/view/89>
- Ary, Donald, et al. *Introduction to Research in Education*. Belmont, Wadsworth, 2010.
- Annamalai, Subashini, and Balakrishnan Muniandy. "Reading Habit and Attitude among Malaysian Polytechnic Students." *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2013, pp. 32-41. <http://www.acarindex.com/dosyalar/makale/acarindex-1423904251.pdf>.
- Bell, Roger T. *Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice*. London, Longman, 1991.
- Chettri, Kushmeeta, and S.K. Rout. "Reading Habits: An Overview." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, vol. 14, issue 6, 2013, pp. 13-17. <http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol14-issue6/C01461317.pdf>.
- De Boer, John, and Martha Dallmann. *The Teaching of Reading*. New York, CBS College Publishing, 1982.

- Fischer, Steven Roger. *A History of Reading*. London, Reaktion Books, 2004.
- Maximilian, Aksendro. "THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCAFFOLDED READING EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING READING VIEWED FROM STUDENTS' READING ANXIETY." *Lentera: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan 1* (2016): 285-302. <http://jurnal.stkipgribl.ac.id/index.php/lentera/article/view/355>
- Maximilian, Aksendro. "The Effectiveness of Using Scaffolded Reading Method in Teaching Reading for Vocational School Students." *Jurnal Pendidikan Bumi Raflesia*, vol. 2, no.1, 2013, pp. 51-61. <https://lpmpbengkulu.net/download.php?file=JURNAL%20LPMP%20TAHUN%20KE%202%20NO.%201%20TAHUN%202013.pdf>
- Maximilian, Aksendro. "The Effectiveness of Scaffolded Reading Experience in Teaching Reading Viewed from Students' Intelligence." *The 4th International Conference on Education and Language*, 2016, pp. 191-198. <http://artikel.ubl.ac.id/index.php/icel/article/view/521/1123>
- Maximilian, Aksendro. "THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PEER CORRECTION TO GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY IN STUDENTS' WRITING (A Study at the Second Semester Students of English Education Study Program of STKIP PGRI Bandar Lampung in the Academic Year of 2013/2014)." *Lentera: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan 2* (2014): 75-92. <http://jurnal.stkipgribl.ac.id/index.php/lentera/article/view/152>
- Mokhtari, Kouider, and Ravi Sheorey. "Reading Habits of University ESL Students at Different Levels of English Proficiency and Education." *Journal of Research in Reading*, vol. 17, no. 1, 1994, pp. 156-166. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229656007_Reading_habits_of_university_ESL_students

- ents at different levels of English proficiency and education.
- Newmark, Peter. *A Textbook of Translation*. London, Prentice Hall, 1991.
- Sangkaeo, Somsong. "Reading Habit Promotion in Asian Libraries." *IFLA Council and General Conference*, 1999, n.pag. <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifa65/papers/091-114e.htm>.
- Shen, Li-Bi. "Computer Technology and College Students' Reading Habits." *Chia-Nan Annual Bulletin*, vol. 32, 2006, pp. 559-572. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.526.1818&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.
- Walberg, Herbert J., and Shio-Ling Tsai. "Correlates of Reading Achievement and Attitude: A National Assessment Study." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 78, no. 3, 1985, pp. 159-167. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ314558>.
- White, Ronald. V. *The English Teacher's Handbook: A Short guide to English Language Teaching*. England, Longman, 1997.
- Widyamartaya. *Seni Menerjemahkan*. Yogyakarta, Kanisius, 1989.
- Yamashinta, Junko. "Effect of Extensive Reading on Reading Attitudes in a Foreign Language." *Reading in a Foreign Language*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 248-263. <http://www.nflrc.hawaii.edu/rfl/October2013/articles/yamashinta.pdf>.

