



The Correlation Between Students' Reading Habits and Their Public Speaking Performance in EFL

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026 - 06- 01	<i>This study investigates the correlation between students' reading habits and their public speaking performance in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. The study was motivated by the need to understand how literacy practices contribute to the development of productive language skills, particularly in speaking. A quantitative correlational research design was employed, involving 40 eleventh-grade students of SMK PGRI 2 Denpasar selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a reading habit questionnaire and a public speaking performance assessment rubric. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation after fulfilling prerequisite tests, including normality, homogeneity, and linearity. The results showed that students generally demonstrated high levels of reading habits ($M = 82.15$) and public speaking performance ($M = 87.45$). More importantly, the correlation analysis revealed a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between the two variables ($r = 0.732$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that students with higher reading engagement tend to achieve better performance in public speaking tasks. The findings support the theoretical assumption that reading provides essential linguistic input, including vocabulary and discourse structures, which can be transferred into speaking performance. However, the results also suggest that reading habit is not the sole determinant, as other factors may influence speaking ability. This study highlights the importance of integrating reading and speaking activities in EFL instruction to enhance students' communicative competence.</i>
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1. Introduction

The reading habits of students are important to their ability to learn a foreign language because they provide them with a constant stream of linguistic input that helps them build up their receptive and productive skills. For example, in the case

of learning EFL (English as a Foreign Language), reading habit can contribute toward developing vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, pronunciation, and discourse competence. According to Bishry (2020), reading habit is the habit of engaging with text (written material) intentionally and on a regular basis; this will help language learners develop their language skills, especially speaking skills. . Similarly, Wani and Ismail (2024), regular and consistent reading will benefit a student's academic performance due to their improved cognitive processing ability and overall language competence. Reading habits include frequency, consistency and attitude; therefore, reading habits have the potential to assist learners in understanding, interpreting, and communicating their thoughts and ideas in English.

Public speaking is the among of the most challenging forms of speaking for ESL/EFL learners because it necessitates the use of language skills that require additional competencies including; self-confidence, organization of ideas, critical thinking abilities, and understanding the audience. Many of these learners experience challenges when they perform public speaking in ESL/EFL class, which is caused by limited vocabulary, lack of fluency when speaking in an appropriate manner, inability to pronounce words correctly, and feeling anxious while performing an oral presentation. As found by Damayanty et al. (2024), improving students' performance in public speaking is closely related to developing their prior literacy experiences since reading allows students to gain knowledge about a given topic while also learning critical thought processes for constructing a well-organized, effective oral presentation. Consequently, building students' reading habits would be considered an effective strategy for helping students improve in public speaking.

Many research projects have shown a correlation between how frequently we read things and how well we can communicate using spoken English. Research by Hasanah (2022) and Syafitri (2019) indicates that students who have developed good reading skills have an improved ability to read and understand what they have read, thus providing them with the ability to convey their thoughts verbally in a clear and coherent manner. Moreover, Munawir and Ramli's study (2021) reported a positive relationship between reading habits and students' speaking ability to use vocabulary. Vocabulary is an important element of speaking because it provides the speaker with access to the many resources necessary for fluent and accurate delivery in public speaking. A student who cannot acquire enough vocabulary through reading may have difficulty communicating his or her intended message coherently in an oral presentation.

In addition to these findings, previous studies have identified strong relationships between reading ability and speaking ability. Maizarah and Purwanti (2020) found a statistically meaningful relationship between level of reading comprehension and level of speaking skills for students, which suggests that students who were able to demonstrate their ability to read and comprehend a

written text were also likely to demonstrate good verbal communication skills. According to Parmawati (2018), building up a reading habit will help improve your pronunciation which is essential to be able to communicate effectively with an audience when speaking publicly. It was concluded from this study that by forming and sustaining a reading habit you will support the development of many sub-skills that can contribute to improving overall drive-speak ability.

Recent studies have analyzed the ability of the individual to speak in public. Damayanty et al. (2024) are of the view that by reading one develops the ability to develop ideas effectively, thereby improving one's self-confidence and fluency; likewise, Rahmawati & Alatas (2025) show that reading literacy strategies enhance the overall performance of students who use them, particularly in vocational schools. In addition, Yüksel et al. (2023) demonstrated that students who have good reading habits also have high self-efficacy with regard to their ability to speak, which strongly influences their success as a public speaker.

Though many studies have been done concerning behalf of public speaking and habits of learning by reading, only a few have specifically focused on the relationship between EFL students' reading habits and their public speaking performance among EFL learners at the upper secondary education level in Indonesia, particularly in senior high schools (SMA) and vocational high schools (SMK). Most studies that exist focus on other skills like the ability to read for comprehension, the number of words known and the total number of words read by participants, while public speaking is one skill that has not received much attention as an entire skillset. In addition, many of the previous studies used readings being done in a traditional classroom setting when making their connection to public speaking, but reading as a habit and a task done on one's own time is not often used as a way to compare with public speaking performance.

Based on these gaps, this study aims to examine the relationship between students' reading habits and their public speaking performance in EFL classrooms. By investigating this connection, the study intends to provide empirical evidence supporting the integration of reading habit development as a teaching strategy to improve students' public speaking skills. The findings may provide theory and practice about the use of reading as a basis for teaching English as a second language speaking skills and will provide teachers with helpful information so they can develop better reading-based speaking tasks.

2. Method

In This study was conducted using correlational research in order to determine the quantitative relationships of the variables and also to find out if an interaction exists between the two variables (Creswell, 2018). The two variables being examined in this study were (a) reading habits (the independent variable) and (b) public speaking performance (the dependent variable). Therefore, the purpose of the correlation design of the study was to answer the research question

of whether there is a meaningful relationship between students' reading habits and their public speaking performance when they are in an EFL classroom.

The research was designed with a focus on secondary education students (vocational high school) at SMK PGRI 2 Denpasar where English is taught as a part of core curriculum. It is a curriculum requirement for students to perform several different types of speaking tasks, one type of which is a formally structured oral presentation. Therefore, the location was chosen because students are engaged in public speaking activity, and their performance can be assessed both by way of the structured oral presentations completed and reflected within public speaking performance.

The subjects of this research were 138 eleventh-grade students who were enrolled in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class at SMK PGRI 2 Denpasar. A sample of 44 subjects was selected by means of purposive sampling. The final sample consisted of 21 females and 23 males. The members of the final sample had considerable prior experience as public speakers in English; hence the data gathered may be used to help evaluate the relationship between nonacademic reading habits and the success of public speaking.

The researcher used two research instruments to gather information about reading habits of students. The first instrument was a reading habit questionnaire that provided information about the independent variable of reading habits by gathering data from Likert scale items that assessed the following aspects of reading habits: 1) frequency of reading; 2) motivation for reading; 3) types of reading material; and 4) attitudes toward reading English language texts. There were five response options that were given for each item using a 5-point Likert scale (Selalu (SL), Sering (SR), Kadang-Kadang (KD), Jarang (JR), and Tidak Pernah (TP)). The reading habits questionnaire was completed by 44 (44) eleventh grade students at SMK PGRI 2 Denpasar during the English language class and were told to be honest in their responses to the questionnaire with respect to their actual reading behaviour.

The second instrument for This study was a public speaking evaluation rubric based on Brown (2004). This rubric was used to evaluate participants' public speaking performance, which was the dependent variable; criteria included pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and content organization. For their public speaking performance, each participant was required to present a short English speech on an appropriate and familiar topic; their performance was assessed according to the evaluation rubric. The English teacher and the researcher used the rubric to evaluate the speeches to provide for greater objectivity and consistency in evaluating participant performance.

Analyses of the data were completed with descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS 27 software. The descriptive statistics were used to create mean (average), minimum, maximum and standard deviation for both dependent variables (overall level of students' reading habits and performance in public

speaking). To guide hypothesis testing (correct statistical analysis), prerequisite tests were performed to determine normality and homogeneity via Kolmogorov-Smirnov testing; thus, ensuring both dependent variables would be able to undergo parametric testing.

Once normality and homogeneity were established, a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation testing was conducted to determine strength and direction of the relationship between students' reading habits and their performance in public speaking. The significance level was established at $p < 0.05$. The null hypothesis (H_0) was there is no correlation between students' reading habits and their public speaking performance whereas the alternative hypothesis (H_1) indicated there is a correlation between the two variables. The correlation coefficient will indicate strength (very low, low, moderate, high, & very high) of the relationship between the two variables, reading habits and public speaking performance.

3. Result

The findings of this study are organized according to its purpose - to investigate how well students' reading habits correlate with their performance in public speaking. The two categories will consist of sections on (1) descriptive results of the readings and public speaking performance for all students, and (2) descriptions of all correlations between reading and public speaking.

Students' Reading Habits and Public Speaking Performance

The descriptive statistics offer a general overview of the distribution and central tendencies of the two variables examined in this study. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Reading Habits and Speaking Performance

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reading Habits (X)	40	60	99	3286	82.15	9.046
Speaking Performance (Y)	40	75	99	3498	87.45	6.980
Valid N (listwise)	40					

As presented in Table 1, the reading habits of students are relatively high ($M = 82.15$). This suggests that most students have a good amount of linguistic exposure through written texts, which assists with language development according to the input hypothesis. Bishry (2020) argues that regular reading helps learners acquire vocabulary and grammatical structures that underpin their productive use of language. However, the wide range of scores (60-99) and the high standard deviation ($SD = 9.046$) reveal that there is great variation in reading

habits between students, and these habits will likely vary depending on the individual student (motivation, access to resources, and learning environment) Wani & Ismail (2024).

In comparison, students' public speaking performance demonstrates a higher mean score ($M = 87.45$) alongside a narrower distribution ($SD = 6.980$), reflecting a more consistent level of achievement among participants. This pattern may be associated with the use of structured assessment practices, particularly rubric-based evaluation, which tends to produce more concentrated score distributions. As highlighted by Brown (2004), standardized rubrics can reduce variability by applying uniform assessment criteria. The relatively consistent speaking scores may also indicate the influence of shared instructional experiences within the classroom.

The contrast in variability between reading habits and speaking performance suggests that the two constructs develop under different conditions. Reading habits largely emerge from individual, out-of-class practices, whereas speaking performance is more closely linked to guided instructional processes. Additionally, the concentration of scores toward the higher end for both variables raises the possibility of a ceiling effect, where limited score dispersion may reduce the sensitivity of the measurement. According to Creswell (2018), such conditions should be considered carefully, as they may affect the interpretation of subsequent statistical analyses.

A further observation concerns the difference in minimum scores, where reading habits (60) fall below speaking performance (75). This indicates that students with lower engagement in reading are still able to attain relatively strong speaking outcomes. Such a pattern points to the role of multiple contributing factors in speaking development, including classroom practice, teacher support, memorization strategies, and confidence, as emphasized by Yüksel et al. (2023). Moreover, using self-reports for reading habits allows for possible reporting errors that can lead to response biases like social desirability (Dörnyei, 2007), where participants may over- or under-report their reading activities. Additionally, rubrics used to assess speaking skills still have some degree of rater bias.

Prerequisite Tests

Before the main inferential analysis was carried out, a series of considerations were taken to confirm whether or not the data met the requirements for parametric statistical procedures. These considerations included performing tests of normality, homogeneity of variance, and linearity. It is important that all assumptions of parametric statistical procedures are met because failure to do so may result in the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis producing invalid results.

Table 2. Tests of Normality of Reading Habits and Speaking Performance

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Reading Habits (X)	.090	40	.200*	.972	40	.424
Speaking Performance (Y)	.093	40	.200*	.959	40	.160

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on the results reported in table 2, it is clear that all of the Shapiro-Wilk tests' significance values for the various data groups exceeded 0.05. The reading habits' significance value (0.424) and speaking performance's significance value (0.160) are both greater than the threshold value of 0.05, indicating that each variable's data follows a normal distribution. Accordingly, one can conclude that the assumption of normality for both of the research variables has been satisfied.

Table 3. Tests of Homogeneity of Variances of Speaking Performance

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Speaking Performance (Y)	Based on Mean	2.904	7	11	.056
	Based on Median	.631	7	11	.723
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.631	7	3.869	.722
	Based on trimmed mean	2.508	7	11	.084

According to Table 3, the result of Levene's Test indicates a mean significance value of 0.056, which is above the level of 0.05. Thus, data variance is assumed to be homogenous. The median (0.723), adjusted-median (0.722), and trimmed mean (0.084) significance values are also greater than 0.05. These results support the overall conclusion of the homogeneity of variance assumption. As a result, there is sufficient evidence that the data can be further analyzed using parametric statistical methods.

Table 4. ANOVA Table of Reading Habits and Speaking Performance

ANOVA Table						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Speaking	Betw (Combined)	1525.900	28	54.496	1.603	.207

Performance	een	Linearity	1019.050	1	1019.05	29.97	.000
(Y) * Reading	Grou				0	2	
Habits (X)	ps	Deviation	506.850	27	18.772	.552	.898
		from					
		Linearity					
		Within Groups	374.000	11	34.000		
		Total	1899.900	39			

Based on the ANOVA table, it indicates that the correlation between reading habits and speaking performance is linear by showing a significance level of linearity at 0.000 ($p < .05$). However, there is no significant deviation from linearity as indicated by the deviation from linearity value of 0.898 ($p > .05$). Thus, it appears that the assumption of the linearity has been met according to the results.

Table 5. Paired Samples Test of Reading Habits and Speaking Performance

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig.
		Me	Std.	Std.	95% Confidence				
		an	Dev	Erro	Interval of the				(2-
			iat	r	Difference				taile
			on	Mea	Lower	Upper			d)
				n					
Pai	Reading	-	6.1	.975	-7.273	-3.327	-	39	.000
r 1	Habits (X) -	5.3	69				5.4		
	Speaking	00					33		
	Performance								
	(Y)								

Based on Table 5, According to Table 5, reading habits and speaking performance have an average difference of -5.300; therefore, speaking performance was better than the average reading habits. Additionally, with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), there is statistical significance between the two variables.

Correlation between Reading Habits and Public Speaking Performance

This area of study deals with the relationship between students' reading habits and their public speaking proficiency. The data used for this analysis was collected through the Pearson Product Moment Correlation method by employing SPSS software. The data results are captured in the succeeding table.

Table 6. Correlations of Reading Habits and Speaking Performance

Correlations	
Reading	Speaking

		Habits (X)	Performance (Y)
Reading Habits (X)	Pearson	1	.732**
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	40	40
Speaking Performance (Y)	Pearson	.732**	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	40	40
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

According to Table 6, The on Pearson's coefficient of correlation (r) using a sample size of 40. The critical value for r at alpha level of significance of 0.05 was 0.312, where our calculated value of r was found to be equal to 0.732. Since our calculated value of r is greater than the critical value from the alpha table ($0.732 > 0.312$) we will reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1), indicating a statistically significant positive correlation between students' reading patterns and their ability in public speaking. There is also statistical significance supporting H_1 from the calculated probability value (Sig. 2-tailed) obtained from the above calculations ($0.000 < 0.05$) and supporting H_1 ; therefore, a statistically significant relationship exists between the two variables. The calculated value of r (0.732) shows a strong positive correlation between reading habits and success in public speaking; therefore, if a student develops a strong reading habit, he/she is likely to be more successful in public speaking than a student who does not develop strong reading habits.

This relationship between receptive language skills and productive language skills is demonstrated by the findings of Bishry (2020), which noted that through regular reading, one has been provided with repeated exposure to vocabulary, grammatical systems, and discourse structures that can then be used in oral production. The more a student reads regularly, the bigger their vocabulary will become, as well as their awareness about language; both factors are important for successful communication during public speaking tasks. Brown (2004) also stated that there are other factors that contribute to successful speaking, such as having sufficient language input and an effective organization of ideas in your mind.

Reading habits may also be associated with cognitive and affective dimensions of speaking performance. By Reading Regularly, Students Have access to information, different points of view, and various concepts; consequently helping them to generate content more readily and confidently when making presentations. Frequent Reading Will Provide Students with Greater Feelings of Preparedness and Familiarity on the Various Topics Being Presented. According to Yüksel et al., (2023), Self-Efficacy and self-confidence are both significant

contributors to being an effective public speaker.

Taken together, in summary, the findings confirm that reading habit is one of the major supportive elements contributing to the student's growth and development in public speaking. When students speak, the level of speaking performance is determined by not only the amount of oral fluency demonstrated but also by the amount of literacy exposure, the cognitive/practical preparation they did prior to speaking, and their emotional (affective) state at the time of speaking. The findings reveal the importance of including reading-based speaking activities, i.e., presentations, discussions, summarization tasks, and argumentative responses, as part of EFL course curriculum to further develop students' ability to communicate. Moreover, the correlation level of students' reading habit and Public Speaking Performance determined by using the rubric below.

Table 7. Correlation Level

Coefficient Interval	Correlation Level
0.00 – 0.199	Very Low
0.20 – 0.399	Low
0.40 – 0.599	Moderate
0.60 – 0.799	Strong
0.80 – 1.000	Very strong

Sugiyono. (2017)

5. Conclusion

The study concludes finding a significant connection between reading proficiency and students' ability to succeed at public speaking in EFL (English as a foreign language) classes. It appears that individuals who engage in more consistent reading typically present an improved performance when performing public speaking presentations. Continued exposure to reading materials assists in speaking development through the enhancement of vocabulary, the improvement of language knowledge, the expansion of general knowledge, and the ability to organize thoughts more efficiently than those who do not read regularly. These findings support the purpose of this research study by demonstrating that reading proficiency is a key element in determining students' success in formal public speaking activities.

According to these results, it is important that teachers be encouraged to use reading in their speaking lesson plans (e.g., provide reading material for students to use in their presentations, utilize reading material to encourage group discussions; use reading material as a basis for summarizing during presentations; and use reading material as a resource to conduct persuasive speaking activity) to develop students' reading ability and oral communication at the same time. Further studies should sample more students with a larger and more diverse study pool,

examine more variables that might impact how a student speaks, and measure whether the addition of reading improves student development in relation to public speaking skills through experimental or longitudinal research.

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