



The EFL Students' Perceptions of Literacy Activities for Students' Interest in Reading at Senior High School

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Abstract

This study is aimed to know the EFL students' perceptions of literacy activities for students' interest in reading at SMA Negeri 12 Medan. A total of 265 eleventh grade students of XI P 1 until XI P 9 at SMA Negeri 12 Medan were involved in this study. This research used a descriptive qualitative design. The researcher used questionnaire technique to collect the data, the Likert Scale. The result of this research showed that most of the students' perceptions are positive, as many as 210 (79,48%) of the 265 students, this shows that more than half of the students' perceptions of literacy activities are positive, 127 (48,20%) students' perceptions of students' reading interest are positive and only 107 (40,69%) students' perceptions of reading interest are negative. This research also showed that there are 253 (95,35%) students' perceptions of interaction on literacy activities for students' interest in reading are satisfied. The frequency of students' activities on reading and what the read affect their perception of literacy activities. Students' literacy activities showed their interest in reading through their motivation in completing their sources for literacy activities. It can be concluded that most of the EFL students' perception of literacy activities for students' reading interest in Reading are positive.

Key words: *Interest, Literacy, Perception, Reading, Reading Interest*

Introduction

Every student must be able to read and write in order to keep up with the times in today's increasingly technologically advanced world, especially in the field of education. Reading and writing tasks are the mainstays of literacy exercises so far. One of the literacy skills required to meet the challenges of the 21st century is reading. According to a study by Central Connecticut State University, Indonesia ranks 61st out of 62 countries in terms of literacy. Data from 2016 indicate that Indonesia has very low levels of literacy awareness.

According to UNESCO data from 2017, only one Indonesian out of every 1,000 persons reads intently, which is a highly worrying percentage. Additionally, survey results from the BPS (Central Statistics Agency) showed that just 17.66% of Indonesian children showed any interest in reading, not even literacy awareness.

In order to resolve this situation, the Ministry of Education and Culture is organizing a School Literacy Movement. It is a concerted attempt to transform schools into institutions of higher learning that cultivate lifelong literacy among their students and constituents (Fathonah, 2019: 2). In order to boost pupils' interest in reading and to foster honorable behavior and character through multiliterate education, the school literacy movement is essential. Additionally, it can produce individuals with social, emotional, and spiritual intelligence.

The implementation of the school literacy program is stipulated in the Regulation issued by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23 of 2015 concerning Character Building. Based on this regulation, it is mandatory for students to read a textbook for 15 minutes before starting a lesson. The main goal of this program is to foster good reading habit.

The School Literacy Movement is divided into three phases: habituation, development, and learning. Currently, every school in Indonesia has a policy requiring pupils to complete literacy tasks for fifteen minutes prior to beginning teaching and learning activities. Even some schools have laws requiring each homeroom teacher and their students to create a corner library out of books from the class. This is carried out because there is still little student interest in visiting the library. This can happen when there isn't enough reading material available, and when there isn't enough variety, it makes students lazy readers. Learning more can start with developing your reading skills.

All pupils must develop these skills in order to advance intellectually and in their daily lives. Therefore, this literacy exercise is done in every school with the intention that students would learn something from reading, such as an understanding of the material they read, in addition to raising their awareness of and passion for reading. If students read or participate in literacy exercises frequently, their learning will also be simpler to understand. According to the ministry of education and culture, there are six types of literacy that must be mastered by students today in order to graduate from high school: reading-writing literacy, cultural literacy, technological literacy, scientific literacy, numeracy literacy, and financial literacy. These types of literacy are in addition to *calistung* (read, write, and count), which is the only one that is required at this time. However, reading proficiency is the secret to all of this literacy. As a result, literacy-related activities are thought to have a significant impact on students' learning. If pupils often engage in literacy reading, it might be assumed that they are more knowledgeable than other students.

Culache and Obadă (2014: 261) claims that literacy activities are created in the packaging of literacy activities prior to lessons, in teaching and learning activities in class, after the learning process, creating a literate learning environment, creating mini libraries in class, and holding literacy festivals on a regular basis with the aim of fostering and boosting students' interest in reading. Most people assume that if reading is preceded by

interest in reading, it will occur meaningfully. Interest is one of the psychological aspects of reading that might occasionally be important in the reading process (Maden, 2018: 38). According to Fitria (2018), there are five factors, including motivation, language proficiency, interest, text qualities, and environmental effect, that affect students' reading comprehension. Interest is a key characteristic that affects reading comprehension and motivates people to work without being forced to. People are directed to pay attention and spend their time to activities they are interested in participating in by their interests.

Previous research has been directed to measure the correlation between the literacy activities and reading interest by Rusma Noortayani (2018:108) The study showed that the students' reading interest was at medium level with several positive reading behaviors. From the students' perception, the activity has given them positive influence on their vocabulary growth, reading comprehension, self-quality development, and reading interest. There is also a previous study which showed that for students who want to be good in reading comprehension activities, reading interest plays an important role (Dewi Fatima Nur Alfatihah and Peptia Asrining Tyas, 2022:348).

The researcher then conducts initial observations to compare the general problems that frequently occur in the correlation between literacy activities and reading interest as described in order to compare the problems faced by students generally with the problems encountered by the topic under study. The researcher elaborates with the pupils who take pleasure in the literacy exercises held at SMA Negeri 12 Medan. At the start of teaching and learning activities, the researcher also conducts literacy exercises. About 15 minutes before the course starts, there will be a literacy activity. Reading materials relating to current events, recounting contemporary phenomena, and reading the newest and students' favorite books are all included in the literacy activities. Each student must participate in the literacy exercises, and they each have a chance to read what they enjoy or have not yet read. Following the completion of the literacy exercises, the researcher is interested in learning how the students felt about them and whether they were interested in reading.

From the clarification above, the researcher would like to make research entitled "The EFL students' perception of literation activities for students' interest in reading at SMA Negeri 12 Medan". This study will use descriptive qualitative research method to answer the research problems. To clarify the several issues regarding students' perceptions of literacy activities for students' interest in reading at SMA Negeri 12 Medan as described above, the statement of the problem is formulated as follows: What are students' perceptions of literacy activities for students' interest in reading at SMA Negeri 12 Medan? What are the factors that influence students' perceptions of literacy activities for students' interest in reading at SMA Negeri 12 Medan? Do literacy activities interact students' interest in reading at SMA Negeri 12 Medan?

Method

In this study, the researcher employed a descriptive qualitative design. According to Sugiono, qualitative research used the researcher as the primary instrument and combines and analyzes inductive data as the data gathering technique. (Sugiono, 2010: 9). The subject

of this research was the students of Senior High School 12 Medan and the researcher decided to use the sample of this research was especially the students in grade XI, there are nine classes consist of six Science classes and three social classes. The researcher decided to choose all classes as the sample of this research. There are 265 pupils in total. Research instrument is a tool used to measure natural and social phenomenon observed. To answer the problems formulation, instruments are used to help in obtaining the data. The instrument for the data collected was questionnaire. A questionnaire was used to collect the data from the students to gain information about students' perception on literacy activities for students' interest in reading at SMA Negeri 12 Medan. Beside the instrument above, the researcher used another tools in the process of collecting data, such as pen and notes. Data collection technique that used in this study is questionnaires. According to Arikunto (2010: 194- 197) questionnaire is a collection of numbered questions used to collect information from respondents in terms of reports about their personality, or things they know. Questionnaires do have many advantages as an instrument for collecting data, among which respondents are free to express their opinions and can be distributed simultaneously to many respondents. In this study, the questionnaire used is a close-ended questionnaire, where the closed questionnaire is a questionnaire that has provided the answer, so that the respondent only needs to choose or put a tick in the appropriate column or place (Arikunto, 2010; 195). After collecting the data, data analysis was done by analysed the whole data obtained. A qualitative method is kind of research without using any calculation or statistic procedure. Analyzing data refers to a method of treating the data was collected by the researcher. The data was analyzed by applied Miles and Huberman Model. The data analysis process is divided into 3 major parts, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing developed by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The result of the students' perception questionnaire on literacy activities for students' interest in reading were shown as below:

Table 1. Students' Percentage on literacy activities for students' interest in reading

No	Scale	Percentage
1	4	Strongly Agree 20,27%
2	3	Agree 56,98%
3	2	Disagree 21,17%
4	1	Strongly Disagree 1,58%

Discussion

The research problem of this research is investigating the EFL students' perception of literacy activities for students' interest in reading. To answer the research question, the researcher distributed questionnaires. The questionnaire distributed to all the students of eleventh grades at SMA Negeri 12 Medan, that consist of 265 students voluntarily participated in filling out the questionnaire. In collecting the data, the researcher made questionnaire in the form of Google Forms and distributed through students' WhatsApp groups mobile. The researcher also using technology in collecting the data. The questionnaires consist of twenty positive questions that related to students' literacy activities for students' interest in reading.

Question statement in the questionnaire is sorted based on the interaction of literacy activities for reading interest, (Rusma Noortayani, 2018:108) stated that the students' reading interest was at medium level with several positive reading behaviors. From the students' perception, the activity has given them positive influence on their vocabulary growth, reading comprehension, self-quality development, and reading interest.

The data obtained from the first table in the questionnaire showed the highest frequency with a percentage of 58,36% agree and 21,12% strongly agree with the questionnaire. It can be concluded that according to students' perceptions, the literacy activities are good and useful for students related to their needed in supporting their lesson. Through literacy activities, they get many benefits and information. They have big enthusiasm in joining the literacy activities.

In the second table, the data obtained in the questionnaire showed the highest frequency with a percentage of 48,20% agree and 40,69% disagree with the statements regarding to the students' interest in reading. There were lack of interest in reading. The students are not fond of reading and joining whether reading club or visiting library.

From the last table, the data obtained in the questionnaire showed the highest frequency with a percentage of 64,40 % agree and 30,95% strongly agree with the questionnaire related to the students' interaction in reading. It is clearly that the literacy activities are closely related to the students' interest in reading. The literacy activities support them to read more after realizing that reading gives them many benefits.

Conclusion

The goal of this study is to learn how students felt about literacy activities for their interest in reading. Based on the data analysis and discussion in the preceding chapter, it can be concluded as below:

- 1) Students' impressions of literacy activities for reading interest are both good and negative. This may be demonstrated by looking at the percentage of data that is based on the certain dimensions. With a proportion of 79, 58 percent, perceptions about the dimension of literacy activities were good. With a proportion of 39,02 percent, perceptions relating to the factor of students' interest in reading were unfavourable. Perceptions of students interaction were overwhelmingly favourable, with 95,62% expressing satisfaction. According to the findings, students are interesting in reading through the literacy activities.
- 2) The literacy activities support students to enrich their knowledge by getting many

informative source through reading. Students' interest in reading takes important part in developing their ability and literacy activities are their way to complete their needs. The literacy movement in the School has a positive impact on the growth of students' reading interest.

- 3) Literacy activities that have been implemented in the classroom have a real and massive impact. Increasing the comfort and beauty of the class shows that the application of literacy activities has a positive impact according to the results of interviews with students. Motivation and enthusiasm for learning has also increased, as can be seen from the enthusiasm of students in participating in the learning process.

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