

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' READING HABITS AND TRANSLATION SKILLS

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Abstract: This study explores the relationship between reading habits and translation skills among eighth-semester English Education students at Abulyatama University. The research involved 8 participants who completed a questionnaire assessing their reading habits and a translation test to evaluate their translation skills. The analysis revealed an average reading habit score of 83.25, suggesting a high level of engagement in reading activities, whereas the average translation score was 57.5, indicating relatively weaker translation proficiency. The standard deviation values highlighted greater variability in translation scores compared to reading habit scores. Pearson's correlation coefficient showed a positive but weak correlation between reading habits and translation skills, indicating a modest relationship between the two variables. These findings suggest that while there is some connection between reading habits and translation skills, the correlation is not strong. It is recommended that students engage in more focused translation practice in addition to reading to enhance their translation abilities.

Keywords: Reading Habits; Translation Skills; Correlation.

1. Introduction

In the globalization era, English mastery—particularly reading and translation skills—is crucial in academic education. These skills provide an advantage in cross-linguistic communication, requiring not only meaning transfer but also cultural understanding and accurate sentence construction [3]. In higher education, especially in English Education, students must frequently read to comprehend texts and translate them effectively.

Observations of eighth-semester English Education students at Abulyatama University in 2020 revealed challenges in reading and translation, influenced by low reading interest, limited vocabulary use, and insufficient language understanding. These issues echo previous findings [9].

This study investigates the correlation between students' reading habits and translation skills, using a questionnaire adapted from [9] and an acceptability rubric based on Machali's instrument [6]. The participants have completed courses in Reading, Translation, and Interpretation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Reading and Reading Habits

Reading is a critical process for constructing meaningful representations of text through effective strategies [8]. Reading habits, defined as one's preference and consistency in reading, significantly contribute to intellectual growth and academic success [1]. Essential indicators of reading habits include one's attitude, reading frequency, books read, and time allocation for academic and non-academic reading [9].

2.2 Factors Influencing Reading Attitude

Several factors shape reading attitudes, including family environment and social influences. A positive reading environment, such as frequent family verbal interactions and exposure to literature, enhances reading engagement and academic achievement. Adolescents benefit from environments that support the importance and enjoyment of

reading [1]. Reading skills, defined as abilities to interpret and understand written text, are developed through practice and play an essential role in academic success [10].

2.3 Translation and Translating Skills

Translation is the act of transforming text from one language to another while preserving the author's intended meaning. This requires an understanding of vocabulary, idioms, and language structure [7]. The translation process involves analyzing the source text, transferring meaning, and restructuring it in the target language. Translation proficiency is essential in language learning, as it enhances communication skills and linguistic understanding [4].

Assessing translation quality is often based on accuracy, readability, and naturalness. Accurate translations should convey the original message clearly, while readability ensures the target text flows smoothly. Naturalness avoids a "foreign" feel in the translation, making it more accessible to the reader [6]. The translation quality can be measured with acceptability rating instruments, which help determine the clarity and effectiveness of a translation.

2.4 Correlation between Reading and Translating

The correlation between reading habits and translation skills lies in the cognitive processes that both skills demand. Reading involves interpretation and comprehension, which are foundational for accurate translation. Correlation analysis measures the strength and direction of relationships between reading and translating abilities. A correlation coefficient close to +1 suggests a strong positive relationship, while a coefficient near 0 suggests no significant relationship [5].

2.5 Correlation-Related Research

[9] found a positive correlation between translation ability (X1) and reading habits (X2) on writing ability (Y) among twelfth-grade students at MAN 2 Surakarta in the 2015/2016 academic year. The correlation coefficient (r) was 0.5544, exceeding the r -table value of 0.396, indicating a significant positive relationship. Additionally, the F -count of 4.88 surpassed the F -table value of 3.44, confirming the significance at the 0.05 level. The coefficient of determination revealed that 30.73% of the variance in writing ability could be attributed to translation ability and reading habits, with other factors influencing the remaining 69.27%.

3. Method

3.1 Location & Research Duration

This study was carried out at the English Education Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Abulyatama University, Aceh Besar. The research lasted for two months, from July to August 2024.

3.2 Research Method and Design

The study applied a quantitative method with a correlational design to investigate the relationship between students' reading habits and translation skills. Correlation strength ranges from -1.00 to 1.00, indicating a positive, negative, or no relationship between the variables [9]. The design involved two variables: the independent variable (reading habits), which is the factor influencing change, and the dependent variable (translation skills), which is the result of the influence [11].

3.3 Population and Sampling Technique

The population comprised all eighth-semester students in the English Education Program, totaling 13 students. Due to the small population size, the study used a census sampling technique, involving every student as both the sample and respondent. This approach ensures that the data fully represent the population [11].

3.4 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

Data collection was conducted in a controlled classroom session. Participants were given a reading habit questionnaire and a translation test, with a total time limit of one hour. During the session, they were prohibited from using mobile phones, dictionaries, or other aids to ensure the authenticity of their work.

The instruments used were:

1. **Questionnaire** – Adopted from [9] to measure reading habits. Respondents selected answers based on their feelings and experiences. The questionnaire applied a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Somewhat Agree (SWA), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SDA).
2. **Translation Test** – Students translated a 161-word English abstract from a journal article [2] into Indonesian. The translation was evaluated using an acceptability rubric adapted from Machali's instrument [6], with Google Translate serving as a reference for accuracy and meaning equivalence.

Then, in the translation assessment, evaluation is conducted according to the assessment rubric like below:

Table 1. Acceptability Rating Instrument

Indicator	Category	Score
Pure delivery, feels natural, no spelling/grammatical errors, and correct use of terms.	Translation almost perfect	90 (A)
No distortion of meaning, no rigid literal translation, correct use of terms, only 1–2 minor grammatical/spelling errors.	Translation very good	85 (B)
No distortion of meaning, rigid literal translation $\leq 15\%$ of text, minor idiom/grammar errors $\leq 15\%$, and ≤ 2 spelling mistakes.	Good translation	75 (C)
Feels like a translation, rigid literal translation $\leq 25\%$, idiom/grammar errors $\leq 25\%$, and occasional uncommon/unclear terms.	Sufficient Translation (Enough)	60 (D)

Strongly feels like a translation, rigid literal translation Poor translation 45 (E)
 >25%, distortion of meaning and misuse of terms >25%.

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

In the analysis for reading in the questionnaire, likerts scale score is used to determine the score obtained:

Table 2. Category Score of Likerts Scale

Option/Statement	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
Positive	5	4	3	2	1
Negative	1	2	3	4	5

In the data analysis phase for translation assessment, the AI tool used to assist in analyzing the translation is ChatGPT, ensuring accuracy according to the rubric used.

4. Finding and Discussion

4.1 Finding

After conducting research that took three days, only 8 respondents could be found to take the test, with the initials RC, SR, IT, NR, DS, IB, WD, and SF. The table below shows the scores obtained by students in Reading Habits (Questionnaire) and Translation Skills.

Table 3. Result of Questionnaire on Reading Habits and Translation Test

No	Initial	Score of Reading Habit	Score of Translation Skills
1	RC	85	60
2	SR	80	60
3	IT	67	45
4	NR	90	75
5	DS	92	85
6	IB	85	45
7	WD	86	45
8	SF	81	45
TOTAL Σx & Σy		666	460

After obtaining the scores, they were then entered into the formulas for Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pearson Correlation Analysis.

Based on the results above, the author just started to substitute the values into the correlation formula as follows:

$$r = 0,631$$

Based on the results of data analysis, the Pearson correlation coefficient (**r**) obtained was **0.631**. This value indicates a **positive correlation** between students' reading habits and their translation skills. According to the interpretation scale, this value falls into the **high correlation** category. In other words, students with better reading habits tend to have better translation skills, and vice versa.

Although the correlation is high, a **significance test** is required to ensure that this relationship did not occur by chance. To further explain the strength of the relationship, the **coefficient of determination (R^2)** was calculated. This coefficient shows how much variation in the dependent variable (translation skills/Y) can be explained by the independent variable (reading habits/X). The formula for the coefficient of determination is:

$$\begin{aligned} R^2 &= r^2 \times 100\% \\ &= 0.63^2 \times 100\% \\ &= 0,3969 \times 100\% \\ &= 39,69\% \end{aligned}$$

This means that **39.69%** of the variation in translation ability can be explained by reading habits. In other words, almost 40% of a student's translation ability can be influenced by how well and often they read. However, there are still **60.31%** other factors that affect this translating ability, such as language comprehension, technical skills in translating, and other factors not examined in this study.

4.2 Discussion

The analysis revealed no strong significant correlation between reading habits and translation skills among eighth-semester English Education students at Abulyatama University, largely due to the small sample size. Although reading habits can influence translation skills, the effect level is low, indicating a need for more activities to develop these skills outside academic hours.

The Pearson correlation coefficient was $r = 0.63$, showing a positive relationship. However, it was not statistically significant as the r-score (0.631) was slightly below the r-table value (0.632). This differs from [9], who found a significant positive correlation.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was 39.69%, meaning reading habits explained 39.69% of the variation in translation skills, while 60.31% was influenced by other factors such as language mastery, translation techniques, and educational background. Although a positive relationship exists, it is insufficient to establish statistical significance. Future research should involve larger samples and explore additional factors affecting translation ability.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The non-significant results suggest that reading habits are not the main determinant of translation skills, with other factors such as language comprehension and translation

techniques playing a role. In educational practice, this highlights the need for varied teaching strategies and practical exercises, rather than relying solely on reading habits to improve translation skills.

Suggestions for future research:

1. Increase Sample Size – A larger sample may produce more accurate correlation results.
2. Use Alternative Analyses – Methods such as regression or non-parametric correlation can provide deeper insights.
3. Consider Practical Significance – Evaluate not only statistical significance but also the real-world applicability of findings.
4. Explore Different Populations – Conduct studies with larger and more diverse participant groups for broader understanding.

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