

A CORRELATIONAL STUDY BETWEEN READING HABIT, VOCABULARY MASTERY, AND TRANSLATION ABILITY

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Abstract: This study aims finding out whether there is a correlation between (1) students' reading habit and translation ability; (2) students' vocabulary mastery and translation ability; and (3) students' reading habit and vocabulary mastery toward translation ability. The study is conducted from May to June 2013 at English Education Department of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Sebelas Maret University, and the population is all of sixth semester students. The sample is 34 students taken by cluster random sampling technique. The method used in this study is descriptive research method, with category of correlational study. The instruments in collecting the data are questionnaire and test. The techniques which are used to analyze the data are Simple Correlation and Multiple Regression Correlation. The result of the data analysis shows that in the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ (1) there is a positive correlation between students' reading habit and translation ability ($r_{-./} = 0.448 > r_t = 0.339$) and it is about 20.07%; (2) there is a positive correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and translation ability ($r_{-0./} = 0.467 > r_t = 0.339$) and it is about 21.81%; and (3) there is positive correlation between students' reading habit, vocabulary mastery, and translation ability ($R_{./0} = 0.24$ and $F_o = 6.26 > F_t = 3.32$) and it is about 28.76%.

Keywords: *reading habit, vocabulary mastery, translation ability*

INTRODUCTION

When learning English, students cannot avoid reading texts which are written in English. Their textbooks and reference books are written in English. Therefore, students should translate text so that they can understand the meaning of the text. Translation becomes one skill that is very essential in learning English. Students have to be able to transfer the meaning from second language into their first language.

Newmark (1991: 62) states that translation from L1 to L2 and L2 to L1 is recognized as the fifth skill and the most important social skill since it promotes

communication and understanding between strangers. This underlines the importance of translation for second language learners. Translation becomes one skill that should not be neglected together with four major skills. Therefore, in English Department, Translation is one of the subjects in the curriculum to be learned.

Catford (1969: 20) gives a definition of translation as follows: "translation is the replacement of textual material in one language (the source language/ SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (the target language/ TL). Translation consist in reproducing in the

receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (Nida, 1969: 12). In line with Nida, Bassnett and McGuire (1991: 2) gives definition that translation is the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and (2) the structures of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the TL structure will be seriously distorted. It explains that it is quite difficult to reproduce exactly the same message but closely similar. From the definitions above, the writer makes conclusion that translation is a process of transferring a message from source language to target language which has the closest equivalent meaning. It can be from second language to first language or first language to second language.

According to Newmark in Rahemi (2013), the work of translation is started by reading the original text in order to get understanding and ends with re-writing it in the target language. Moreover, he explained that translation involves four processes: comprehension of the vocabulary of the original source-language text; comprehension of the meaning of the original source-language message; reformulation of the message in the target-language; and judgment of the adequacy of the target language text. It seems that comprehending process always appears in translation processes.

As stated in Rahemi (2013), McWhorter states that comprehension is the main goal of reading that refers to the process of understanding what is being read. Comprehending text happens when learners read. It can be recognized, that translation

and reading have relation because both of them require a process called comprehension. When learning language, it can be ensured that the students will read. In a general sense, reading is what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text (Aebersold, 1997: 15). Stauffer in Petty and Jensen (1980: 207) states that reading is a complex process of getting information from the written text, in which it needs the ability to pronounce and comprehend even interpreting signs, letters, or symbols by assigning meaning from receiving ideas and author's impression via printed words. DeBoer and Dallmann (1964: 17) state that reading is a much more complex process. It involves all of the higher mental processes. It involves recalling, reasoning, evaluating, imagining, applying, and problem solving.

Habits are routine behaviors done on a regular basis. They are recurrent and often unconscious patterns of behavior and are acquired through frequent repetition (Joseph, 2010). Many of these are unconscious as people do not even realize they are doing them.

From the explanation above, reading habit can be concluded as the regular tendency of attitude or behavior which is acquired by frequent repetition in reacting to a written message and getting information which needs skills to understand the meaning of the text. The indicators are reading frequency, skill, attitude, and facility.

Reading frequency means the regularity which the students usually do to read texts or books. Because habit deals with repetition, so it is necessary to know how often the students read text. Based on Pew Research Center (2012), readers are more likely to read frequently every day.

Abeyrathna and Zainab (2004: 114) stated “The habit of reading was measured in terms of time spent on reading.” Based on their research, they found that the majority of students indicated reading between 1 to 2 hours every day.

Skill is defined as reading comprehension and students’ ability in their reading. It includes how far the students understand the meaning of what they read and whether they get benefit such as improve their knowledge or not. Because reading activity needs an ability in comprehending text, so that it will be useless for students if they read without knowing the message of the text.

Attitude consists of students’ feeling, interest, and response toward reading. Students will read if they have pleasure in doing it. Their interest in reading also becomes one factor for students to build a habit of reading. Once they feel enjoy in reading, there will be no reason for students to hate reading text. It will be always interesting for them. Based on Gaona and Gonzalez (2010: 58), it is stated, “In the school context, the promotion of reading not only depends on knowledge or skill, but also on the student wanting to read (values and attitudes) (Colomina, 2004: 48).” It means that attitude become the important indicator for reading. Moreover, Gaona and Gonzalez (2010: 66) add that one of the reading habit’s factors is attitude the students have toward reading. McKenna and Kear (1990) in Soiferman further suggest that understanding the role of attitude in developing readers is important for two reasons: First, attitude may affect the level of ability ultimately attained by a given student; second, even for the fluent reader, poor attitude may lead a child not to read when other options exist. It can be

concluded that attitude is a key point of reading habit and becomes important indicator in investigating students’ reading habit.

Facility means the environment or stuffs which facilitate students’ activity in reading. Reading activity will happen if there are several books provided in students’ environment such as school library or in their house. Owning books also are very helpful in developing students’ habit in reading.

Word is the smallest and the most important part of a language. That is why people should at least know about vocabulary. Vocabulary will support all of the language skills. Considering to this, reading definitely needs vocabulary mastery to understand the meaning of the text. Moreover, in understanding meaning, reader needs to comprehend the text so that he/ she can get the message clearly as what the writer wants to deliver. It is related to the translation ability.

English and Indonesian are two different languages; therefore, their language components to a great extent are also different. It brings the problem that translation cannot escape from other linguistics components such as the structure or phrases, modifiers, clause orders, etc. Knowing vocabulary is important for getting meaning from a text. Vocabulary is a list set of words for a particular language or a list or set of words that individual speaker of a language might use (Hatch and Brown, 1995: 1). Burns and Broman (1975: 295) give the definition of vocabulary as the stock of words used by a person, class, or profession to make up language either in oral or written communication. While, Ur (1998: 60) states that vocabulary can be defined, roughly, as the words which are

taught in foreign language. Hornby (1995: 721) defines mastery as a complete knowledge, or great skills, and control.

Birjandi (1999) states that one of the knowledge areas which is directly related to translation is the knowledge of vocabulary. It is obvious that without knowing the meaning of words, no one can translate a text and, consequently, no translation can take place. By mastering vocabulary, reader will easier to comprehend the meaning because they know about the meaning of the content words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Miller in Birjandi (1999) also believes:

“If a student doesn’t know the meaning of a word in a particular context, it does little good for him to recognize the word by sight. Of course, a word can have many different meanings, depending upon its use in context. The more meanings a student has for a particular word, the more likely he will be to attain the exact comprehension of a passage that is intended.”

Based on the explanation, it is considered that vocabulary is particularly needed in comprehension which happens in translation. It can be concluded that vocabulary mastery is a complete knowledge and skill in possessing a list or set of words of a particular language which are taught in foreign language by person, class, or profession. The indicators of vocabulary mastery are word meaning, word formation, and word classification. Word meaning includes synonym, antonym, hyponym, and definition. Word formation includes derivation and inflection. Word classification includes noun, verb, adjective, and adverb.

From those explanations, the writer underlines that reading habit and vocabulary became crucial elements in translation ability. Therefore, the writer wants to find out whether there is a correlation between the students’ reading habit, vocabulary mastery, and translation ability.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses descriptive research method. Allison et al (1996: 14) states that descriptive research sets out to seek accurate and adequate descriptions of activities, objects, processes, and persons. They also add that it is not only concerned with data gathering but also with identifying and predicting relationships between the variables. Some research categories or studies in descriptive research are surveys, case studies, causal-comparative studies, correlational studies, and developmental studies. In this descriptive research, the writer conducted a correlational study. According to Allison (1996: 16) correlational study is a study that is aimed to assess the level of interrelated probability of the two variables that are correlated. Therefore, this study investigates the correlation between three variables: reading habit, vocabulary mastery and translation ability.

The writer uses questionnaire and test as the techniques of collecting the data. Questionnaire is used to get the data of reading habit. There are 60 statements in the try out test and 42 statements in the test which have four optional answers. Test is used to collect the data of the students’ vocabulary mastery and translation ability. The test of vocabulary mastery is in the form of multiple choice items which consists of 60 questions in the tryout and 30 questions in the test with five optional answers. The

test of translation ability is in the form of multiple choice items which consist of 50 questions in the tryout and 31 questions in the test with five optional answers.

The data were analyzed by using Product Moment and Multiple Linear Regression. Product Moment Formula is used to test the first and the second hypotheses which say that there is a positive correlation between reading habit and translation ability, and there is a positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and translation ability. The statistical hypothesis for the first hypothesis $H_0 : r_{x_1y} = 0$. It means that there is no correlation between students' reading habit (X_1) and translation ability (Y). Then, $H_a : r_{x_1y} > 0$. It means that there is a positive correlation between students' reading habit (X_1) and translation ability (Y). While the statistical hypothesis of the second hypothesis are $H_0 : r_{x_2y} = 0$. It means that there is no correlation between students' vocabulary mastery (X_2) and translation ability (Y). Then, $H_a : r_{x_2y} > 0$ means that there is a positive correlation between students' vocabulary mastery (X_2) and translation ability (Y).

Multiple Linear Correlation is used to test the third hypothesis which says that there is a positive correlation between reading habit and vocabulary mastery toward translation ability. The statistical hypothesis for the third hypothesis are $H_0 : R_{y12} = 0$. It means that there is no correlation between students' reading habit (X_1) and vocabulary mastery (X_2) simultaneously and translation ability (Y). Then, $H_a : R_{y12} > 0$ means that there is a positive correlation between students' reading habit (X_1) and vocabulary mastery (X_2) simultaneously and translation ability (Y).

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the testing of the first hypothesis, it is known that there is a positive correlation between reading habit and translation ability is accepted. The result of the first hypothesis testing computation shows that the correlation coefficient (r_{x_1y}) between reading habit (X_1) and translation ability (Y) is 0.448. The value of $r_{2.3}$ (0.448) is consulted to r -table at the significance level $\alpha=0.05$ for $n=34$ (0.339). The result shows that $r_{2.3}$ (0.448) is higher than r_4 (0.339) or $r_{2.3}$ (0.448) $>$ r_4 (0.339). It means that there is a significant, positive correlation between reading habit and translation ability of the sixth semester students of English Education Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Sebelas Maret University in the academic year of 2012/2013. Then, it also means that the increase of reading habit will be followed by the increase of students' translation ability. The 20.07 % variation of translation ability (Y) is influenced by reading habit (X_1) and 79.93 % is influenced by other factors.

Comprehending text happens when learners read. It can be recognized that translation and reading have relation because both of them require a process called comprehension. When learning language, it can be ensured that the students will read. The writer considers that every people will translate through reading. It brings an activity which is looking for the meaning of a text. The learner's knowledge in reading will influence their ability in translation. Reading broadens the thinking horizon of a person, improves vocabulary and cultivates sensitivity towards people of different cultures. Jack (2008) explained, "The habit of regular reading helps us

develop a good vocabulary. An extensive reader will have a wide recognition vocabulary. He might not know the exact meaning of every word, but he will have an excellent understanding of the essence of the sentence.” It means that habit of reading is very useful in enhancing knowledge of vocabulary. Every time they come across with new words or strange words, they will try to find out the meaning of the words based on its context. Readers will learn about how to comprehend a text.

Reading improves the readers’ knowledge about various fields so that they will try to understand meaning in various contexts. Besides, reading will improve the readers’ knowledge about cultures. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that reading habit will improve one’s vocabulary mastery and one’s comprehension. Translation ability requires good comprehension and certain amount of vocabulary. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between reading habit and translation ability.

From the testing of the second hypothesis, it is known that there is a positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and translation ability is accepted, because the correlation coefficient (r_{203}) between vocabulary mastery (X_2) and translation ability (Y) is 0.467 and after being consulted to the r-table, $r_o(0.4670) > r_t(0.339)$. It means that there is a significant, positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and translation ability. Then, it means that the increase of vocabulary mastery will be followed by the increase of students’ translation ability. The 21.81 % variance of translation ability (Y) is determined by vocabulary mastery (X_2) and 78.19 % variance of translation ability (Y) is determined by other factors.

Knowing vocabulary is important for getting meaning from a text. It is obvious that without knowing the meaning of words, no one can translate a text and, consequently, no translation can take place. By mastering vocabulary, reader will be easier to comprehend the meaning because they know about the meaning of the content words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. A word has several meanings and its meaning is different in various contexts. Learners should know the meaning of a word to understand when they read text or book. Learning vocabulary in context is a good way to help learners in comprehending text. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and translation ability.

From the testing of the third hypothesis, it is known that there is a positive correlation between reading habit and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and translation ability. The result of the computation shows that the correlation coefficient (R_o) between reading habit (X_1) and vocabulary mastery (X_2) simultaneously and translation ability (Y) is 0.536. After being consulted to the F-value, it shows that $F_o(6.26)$ is higher than $F_t(3.32)$. It means that there is a significant, positive correlation between reading habit and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and translation ability. Then, it means that the increase of reading habit and vocabulary mastery will be followed by the increase of students’ translation ability. From the multiple correlation computation using Regression Line Analysis, the result shows that the value of the coefficient of multiple correlation (R) is 0.536 and R^2 is 0.2876. $R^2(0.2876)$ is the coefficient of determination. It means that 28.76% variance of translation ability (Y) is determined by reading habit

(X_1) and vocabulary mastery (X_2) and the rest, 71.24% variance, is determined by other factors.

Reading habit will improve one's vocabulary mastery and one's comprehension. Translation ability requires good comprehension and certain amount of vocabulary. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between reading habit and translation ability. Learning vocabulary in context is a good way to help learners in comprehending text. If learners have a good comprehension, they can improve their translation ability because comprehension is part of translation process. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between vocabulary mastery and translation ability. Based on the whole explanation, the writer concludes that there is significant correlation between reading habit and vocabulary mastery simultaneously to translation ability.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

From the result of the study, the researcher describes some conclusions. First, there is significant, positive correlation between reading habit and translation ability of the sixth semester students of English Education Department Sebelas Maret University in the academic year of 2012/2013. The contribution of reading habit to translation ability is 20.07%. It means that the increase of students' reading habit will be followed by the increase of students' translation ability.

Second, there is significant, positive correlation between vocabulary mastery and translation ability. The contribution of vocabulary mastery to translation ability is 21.81%. It means that the increase of students' vocabulary mastery will be

followed by the increase of students' translation ability.

Third, there is significant, positive correlation between reading habit and vocabulary mastery simultaneously and translation ability. The total effective contribution of reading habit and vocabulary mastery to translation ability is 28.76%. It means that the increase of students' reading habit and vocabulary mastery simultaneously will be followed by the increase of students' translation ability.

Basically, the conclusion is that both reading habit and vocabulary mastery correlate and contribute to translation ability. The very strong relationship between variables occurs when the contribution is 100%. Based on the computation, the contribution of reading habit to translation ability is about 20.07% and the contribution of vocabulary mastery to translation ability is about 21.81%. Both of them have below 20% contribution to translation ability. Therefore, their relationship is weak because it is less than 50%. However, the contribution of reading habit and vocabulary mastery to translation ability cannot be neglected. Reading habit and vocabulary is needed to enhance the students' translation ability.

Reading habit has contribution to translation ability. Therefore, it is important to improve the students' habit in reading. Reading brings an activity to comprehend message from what is being read. Comprehending meaning also happens in the process of translating. That is why, knowledge in understanding meaning through reading supports the students' ability in translating text. Reading is very useful in enhancing knowledge of vocabulary. Students will discover a lot of new words through reading. Reading

improves knowledge about various fields and contexts. It will bring the students to understand the different meaning of words that are used in different context. Moreover, reading improves the students' knowledge about culture diversity. Reading habit is very useful in language learning and has countless benefits for the reader itself.

Vocabulary mastery has higher contribution than reading habit to translation ability. It is important to enhance the students' vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary is one crucial element in learning language. Therefore, it is definitely needed in the translation field. The area of vocabulary is directly related to translation area. Without knowing the meaning of words, there will be no translation happens. By mastering vocabulary, the students know the meaning of words, even the word which have several meaning. It will help the students to recognize the exact meaning of words in certain context. Therefore, the students can comprehend the text correctly and transfer the meaning accurately.

Based on the conclusion above, teacher should motivate the students to read a lot until it becomes a habit in order to increase the students' translation ability. Reading habit will be formed when a student doing reading as their daily activity and happens unconsciously. Teacher and parents should be creative to make reading activity become interesting so that the students feel enjoy to read. The facility should be provided at school and home so that the students easily can access the sources to read.

Teacher should help the students to enrich their knowledge of vocabulary in order to help the students get success in translation. Not only the teacher, should the students also do many exercises in

translating text to achieve good translation. Students should improve their knowledge in comprehending and understanding the meaning of texts by reading. Students should improve their vocabulary mastery through reading and other activity because it is the main element in translation. For other researcher, there are many factors which can influence translation ability. Reading habit and vocabulary mastery are some factors that influence translation ability. However, there must be other factors which have contribution to translation ability. Therefore, the writer hopes that this research can be used as a reference for other researcher to do the related research, especially study which is related to translation ability.

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