

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' READING HABITS AND THEIR WRITING ABILITY

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Abstract

This study intended to investigate the correlation between students' reading habits and writing ability in descriptive text. The sample was comprised of 494 (247 males and 247 females) undergraduate students from respective course years in University for the Development of the National Races of the Union, UDNr. The Reading Habit Indicator Questionnaire (RHIQ) developed by Hidayati (2021) and Writing Ability Test (WAT) were used as the research instruments in conducting the study. The descriptive statistics, independent samples *t*-test, one way ANOVA and Post Hoc (Tukey HSD) and Spearman's rho correlation were computed in order to explore the reading habits and writing ability of students according to gender and course year as well as to investigate the correlation between them. Based on the results, most of the students have good reading habits and excellent writing ability. According to gender, there was no significant difference between reading habits of students. However, there was a significant difference between writing ability of students by gender. Moreover, there were significant differences between students' reading habits and writing ability by course year. It can be concluded that there was a positive correlation between reading habits and writing ability of students ($r_s = .241$).

Keywords: Reading, Reading Habits, Writing, Writing Ability

Introduction

In Myanmar, the education governments have enacted English to be taught from the kindergarten upwards. Up to now, English is taught as a foreign language with a purpose of training young children to acquire knowledge through reading books written in English and to be able to express themselves in English. The four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing, are essential for all language learners. Moreover, these four language skills can be divided into two important skills: receptive and productive. Listening and reading are belonged to receptive skills and speaking and writing are involved in productive skills. There were some assumptions of interaction between receptive and productive skills that the more the listening, the more the speaking and the more the reading, the more the writing. The interlink between written language of reading and writing has an impact in learning, especially in language learning.

The role of reading activity cannot be ignored in the improvement of learning. Reading activities are essential for students as students can get information from reading and enlarge their thinking by reading, thereby students become enrich their own knowledge. In addition, it can be supposed that reading ability is the interpretation of the writer's thought. Reading activities can be thought to be closely related with writing activities as writing activity is an activity of expressing ideas, thoughts and desires in the form of written symbols. According to Linawih and Winardi (2020), writing is not only the process of arranging the alphabets into words or sentences, but it is also about expressing people's idea in the written text. Lianingsari (2022) stated that writing skill is a person's skill in expressing feelings, experiences and ideas. Krashen (2004) stated that writing style does not originate from actual writing experience, but rather from reading. It was concurred that the individuals who read more create the more elevated amount of

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proficiency. In accordance with the above-described factors, the researcher was interested in conducting the study entitled with “The Correlation between Students’ Reading Habits and Their Writing Ability”.

Statement of Research Problem

Ministry of Education (2016) mentioned that major changes in the area of teacher education and management are needed to improve the quality of teaching, learning, infrastructure and management in teacher education institutions, educational colleges, universities of education and the University for the Development of National Races of the Union (UDNR). Hence, this study intends to fill in the gap by investigating the correlation between reading habit and their writing ability of undergraduate students in UDNR.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to investigate the correlation between reading habits and writing ability of students from University for the Development of the National Races of the Union (UDNR).

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To find out the reading habits and writing ability of English of undergraduate students in UDNR
2. To identify whether there are any significant differences in students’ reading habits of English according to gender and course year
3. To explore whether there are any significant differences in students’ writing ability of English according to gender and course year
4. To examine whether there is any significant correlation between reading habits and writing ability of undergraduate students in UDNR

Research Questions

To achieve the above objectives, research questions are identified as follows:

1. How are the reading habits and writing ability of English of undergraduate students in UDNR?
2. Are there any significant differences in English reading habits by gender?
3. Are there any significant differences in English reading habits by course year?
4. Are there any significant differences in English writing ability by gender?
5. Are there any significant differences in English writing ability by course year?
6. Is there any relationship between reading habits and writing ability of English of undergraduate students in UDNR?

Definition of Key Terms

Reading

Reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning (Nunan, 2003).

Reading Habit

Reading habit refers to behavior which expresses the likeness of reading and tastes of reading (Sangkaeo, 1999).

Writing

Writing is a skill that is grounded in the cognitive domain. It involves knowledge, comprehension, application and synthesis of new knowledge (Khalifa, 2016).

Writing Ability

Writing ability is the skill of putting together what they think or what they want to say using words, which is who read is able to know their thoughts, ideas, feeling and what they want to convey with grammatical rules, punctuation, composition and methods. (Khalisa, 2018)

Scope of the Study

The participants of the study were undergraduate students (Second Year, Third Year, Fourth Year and Fifth Year students) of 2023-2024 academic year in UDNR.

Review of Related Literature

Model of Reading

Aebersold and Mary Lee (1997, cited in Muawanah, 2014) illustrated the model of reading based on bottom-up theory and top-down theory.

(a) Bottom-up Theory

The bottom-up theory primarily depends on the information presented in the text. Readers begin reading with pre-reading strategies such as processing information, recognize the graphic stimuli, recognize words and link to their background knowledge and predict the next sentence. In the bottom-up theory, readers must identify a complex of linguistic signals such as letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, grammatical clues, discourse markers; and from all those signals, the readers come to conclusion.

(b) Top-down Theory

Top-down theory is the opposite of the bottom-up reading. The readers use higher level skills such as draw the meaning by linking of their background knowledge instead of focusing on letter, sound and word. Then the readers make prediction on what they read and adjust their reading process until they come to the end of the paragraph. In the similar way, it can be suggested that readers put emphasis on the general picture of the text and look for the important information by linking prior knowledge and then decide to come across the text or not.

Indicators of Reading Habits

According to Gaona and González (2011 as cited in Fitri, 2020), there are some indicators of reading habit.

- (a) **Books Read and Reading Frequency:** *Books read means a specific estimate of the number of books that individual read during some sort of time. It is also the number of many books that the students have read. Reading frequency is used to measure students' reading frequency in their spare time.*

- (b) Attitude Toward Reading is described as an individual's feeling of reading. This allows students to accept or resist reading situations (Rosli, Razali, Zamil Noor & Baharuddin, 2018 as cited in Fitri, 2020).
- (c) Time Spent on Academic Reading is the time the individual reports devoting to read books on his or her subjects of study.
- (d) Time Spent on Non-Academic Reading is the time that the student claims to commit to reading books that are not directly related to his / her study subjects.
- (e) Motivation in Family Environment is frequently reported by the individual when buying books, suggesting books, and reading family interest.
- (f) Motivation in Academic Environment: In the academic environment, motivation is the level that the student reports on the teacher's promoting literature in the classroom.

Correlation Between Reading Habits and Writing Ability

Reading habit helps the student to maximize their ability in gaining academic purpose. To support, Kiester and Kiester (cited in Muawanah, 2014) stated that it has long been recognized that in the process of learning, the reading habits of students play an important role in their academic performance. Similarly, Gilbert and Rollick (cited in Muawanah, 2014) proposed that good reading habits significantly enhance academic performance of the pupils. Reading itself not only has many advantages, but also can improve writing ability, it is because writing and reading have a close interrelationship in learning, especially in learning a language. Most people start to learn a language through written language; reading and writing. Reading and writing are interconnected as they depend on information representations, cognitive processed, environments, and contextual constraints that are identical and similar. Moreover, habits for reading are viewed as a significant effect on the success of students' writing ability, while writing ability itself is the result of a good reading habit process. According to the above-detailed description, the contribution of reading activities cannot be ignored in the process of writing.

Previous Related Study

The relevant information and consistent previous related study was described to support the present research.

The study of Aprilia (2021) with the title of "The Correlation Between Students' Reading Habit and Their Ability of Writing Narrative Text Thesis, English Education Study Program, Department of Tadris, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Tadris, State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) Bengkulu" was conducted with a sample of (70) using purposive sampling method, correlational design and quantitative method. The questionnaire developed by Cesar, Gaona and Gonzalez (2010) was applied and found that there was a very low correlation between students' reading habit and writing ability as the correlation coefficient resulted by using Spearman's rho analysis was 0.136.

Research Method

Research Design

Cross-sectional survey research, correlational design and the quantitative method were used in this study to measure the relationship between the two variables of reading habits and writing ability of undergraduate students in UDNR.

Population and Sample Size

All the participants in the study were undergraduate students in UDNR by using a simple random sampling according to gender and course year. The total number of the participants are (494); the number of Second Year students are (125) and that of Third Year students are (106) and then number of Fourth year students are (137) as well as number of Fifth year students are (126).

Instruments

In order to measure the students' reading habits, Reading Habits Indicators Questionnaire developed by Hidayati (2021) was used. Writing Ability Test in English Language was developed. The questionnaire includes (30) five-point Likert items with six indicators: books read and reading frequency, attitude toward reading, time spent on academic reading, time spent on non-academic reading, motivation in the academic environment and motivation in the family environment. Writing Ability Test was used to find out students' writing ability of English language. Pilot test was taken to find the reliability of the questionnaire and Writing Ability Test which was done with the sample of (70) undergraduate students in UDNR. After pilot testing, the reliability analysis was computed. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of the Reading Habits Indicators Questionnaire was .787 and that of Writing Ability Test was .747.

Procedure

In order to get the essential concept of this study, related literature was reviewed through articles, journals and many other relevant books and previous researches related to this study from internet source and library. Two instruments were prepared for this study after observing the related literature. Reading Habits Indicators Questionnaire developed by Hidayati (2021) was translated into Myanmar Version. Writing Ability Test was developed by the researcher. After preparing the instruments, experts' judgement reviews were conducted for expert validity by educational experts from University for the Development of the National Races of the Union (UDNR) and Sagaing University of Education (SUOE). Then pilot test was conducted with a sample of (70) undergraduate students in UDNR. Based on pilot test result, some items were modified to adapt to the students' understanding. Then, the survey was conducted in November, 2023. After accomplishing the data collection procedure, the collected data were analyzed using Microsoft Office Excel (2019) and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0 (Pallant, 2011). At last, the research findings were interpreted and also suggestions and recommendation of the study were given as well as writing the research report was done.

Findings

Descriptive Statistics of Reading Habits of Students

In order to find out students' reading habits, descriptive statistics was computed by using data resulted from student respondents to reading habits indicators questionnaire.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Reading Habits of Students

Variable	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Reading Habits	494	95.81	17.360	42	143

Table 1 shows that the mean score of the reading habits of student respondents is 95.81 and its standard deviation is 17.36. Then, percentages of levels of students' reading habits were computed.

Table 2 Percentages of Levels of Students' Reading Habits

Level of Reading Habits	Score (x)	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
High Level	$x \geq 113.17$	81	16
Moderate Level	$78.45 < x < 113.17$	330	67
Low Level	$x \leq 78.45$	83	17
Total		494	100

Table 2 indicates that the number of students who possess high level of reading habits was 81, that of moderate level was 330 and then low level was 83. Then the percentages of high, moderate and low levels of reading habits of students were 16%, 67% and 17% respectively. Thus, it can be concluded that two-thirds of students approximately have a moderate level of reading habits. Figure 1 illustrates the percentages of levels of reading habits of students in order to get clear visual presentation.

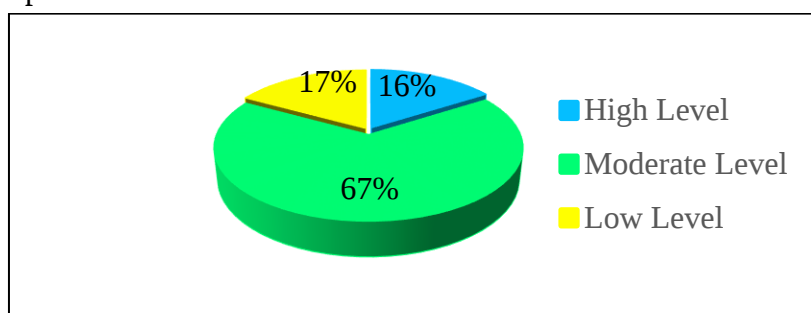


Figure 1. Percentages of levels of reading habits of students

Descriptive Statistics of Reading Habits of Students in Each Indicator

The descriptive statistics of items in each indicator was computed to determine the minimum, maximum and mean scores and standard deviation for each indicator.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of Reading Habits of Students in Each Indicator

Indicator of Reading Habits	N	Min	Max	M	SD
Books read and Reading frequency (BRRF)	494	5	24	13.91	3.298
Attitude toward reading (ATR)	494	5	25	16.19	3.283
Time spent on academic reading (TAR)	494	7	25	16.38	3.372
Time spent on non-academic reading (TNR)	494	7	25	17.10	3.355
Motivation in the academic environment (MAE)	494	7	25	17.82	3.395
Motivation in the family environment (MFE)	494	5	25	14.41	4.324

In accordance with Table 3, it can be examined that the mean score of motivation in the academic environment was the highest and that of books read and reading frequency was the lowest. It can be suggested that most of teachers provide motivation in students' learning and also in reading. But most of students are unable to read different kinds of books and also not frequently read books. The mean comparison of each indicator is shown in Figure 2.

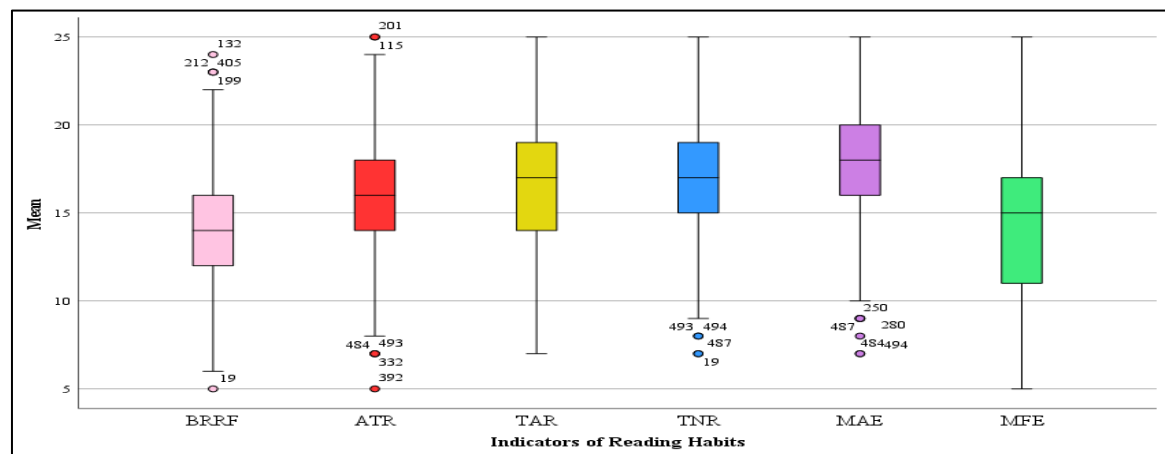


Figure 2. Mean comparison of each indicator

Descriptive Statistics for Reading Habits of Students by Gender

In order to analyze the difference in reading habits of students by gender, independent samples *t*-test was applied. Table 4 describes the comparison of means between male and female students.

Table 4 *t* value for Reading Habits of Students by Gender

Indicator of Reading Habits	Gender	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Books read and Reading frequency (BRRF)	Male	247	14.00	3.469	.178	.600	492	.549 (ns)
	Female	247	13.82	3.123				
Attitude toward reading (ATR)	Male	247	16.09	3.285	-.206	-.699	492	.485 (ns)
	Female	247	16.30	3.284				
Time spent on academic reading (TAR)	Male	247	16.23	3.230	-.300	-.987	492	.324 (ns)
	Female	247	16.53	3.509				
Time spent on non-academic reading (TNR)	Male	247	17.00	3.293	-.202	-.670	492	.503 (ns)
	Female	247	17.20	3.420				
Motivation in the academic environment (MAE)	Male	247	17.95	3.373	.267	.874	492	.382 (ns)
	Female	247	17.68	3.419				
Motivation in the family environment (MFE)	Male	247	14.08	4.311	-.668	-1.720	492	.086 (ns)
	Female	247	14.75	4.320				

Note. ns= not significant

According to the result of independent samples *t*-test shown in Table 4, it can be observed that there was no statistically significant difference in reading habits between male and female students ($p > .05$). The result revealed that male students are as fair as female students in reading habits. The mean comparisons of reading habits of students are illustrated in Figure 3.

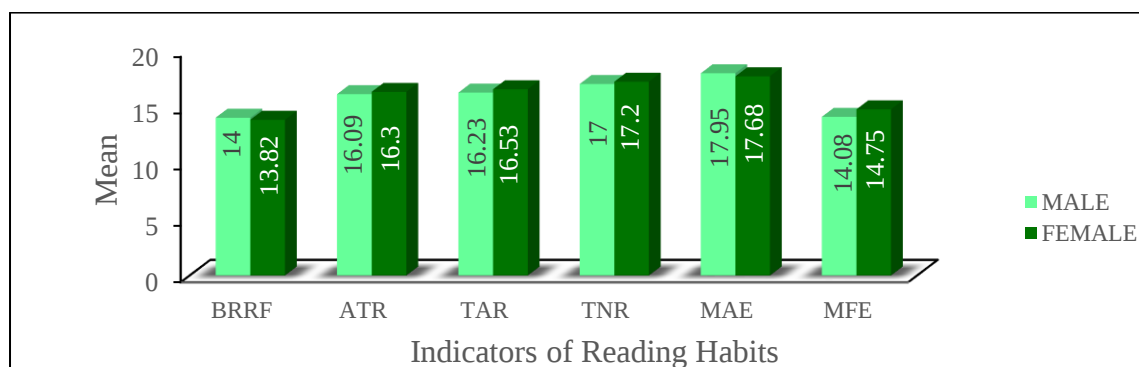


Figure 3. Mean comparisons of reading habits of students by gender

Descriptive Statistics of Reading Habits of Students by Course Year

The mean scores and standard deviation of reading habits of students by course year was illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics of Reading Habits of Students by Course Year

Indicator of Reading Habits	Course Year	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Books read and Reading frequency (BRRF)	Second Year	125	13.38	3.136
	Third Year	106	13.15	3.416
	Fourth Year	137	15.20	3.225
	Fifth Year	126	13.66	3.060
Attitude toward reading (ATR)	Second Year	125	15.47	3.702
	Third Year	106	16.15	3.014
	Fourth Year	137	17.27	3.095
	Fifth Year	126	15.77	2.980
Time spent on academic reading (TAR)	Second Year	125	15.96	3.322
	Third Year	106	15.75	3.280
	Fourth Year	137	18.01	3.148
	Fifth Year	126	15.55	3.154
Time spent on non-academic reading (TNR)	Second Year	125	16.30	3.510
	Third Year	106	16.70	3.166
	Fourth Year	137	18.64	3.029
	Fifth Year	126	16.55	3.174
Motivation in the academic environment (MAE)	Second Year	125	17.75	3.963
	Third Year	106	17.28	3.045
	Fourth Year	137	18.69	3.127
	Fifth Year	126	17.39	3.195
Motivation in the family environment (MFE)	Second Year	125	13.30	4.314
	Third Year	106	13.59	4.068
	Fourth Year	137	16.27	4.151
	Fifth Year	126	14.20	4.122

According to the descriptive statistics results described in Table 5, the mean scores of fourth year students were definitely higher than those of second year, third year and fifth year

students in most of indicators of reading habits. Visual presentation of mean comparisons of reading habits of students by course year is demonstrated in Figure 4.

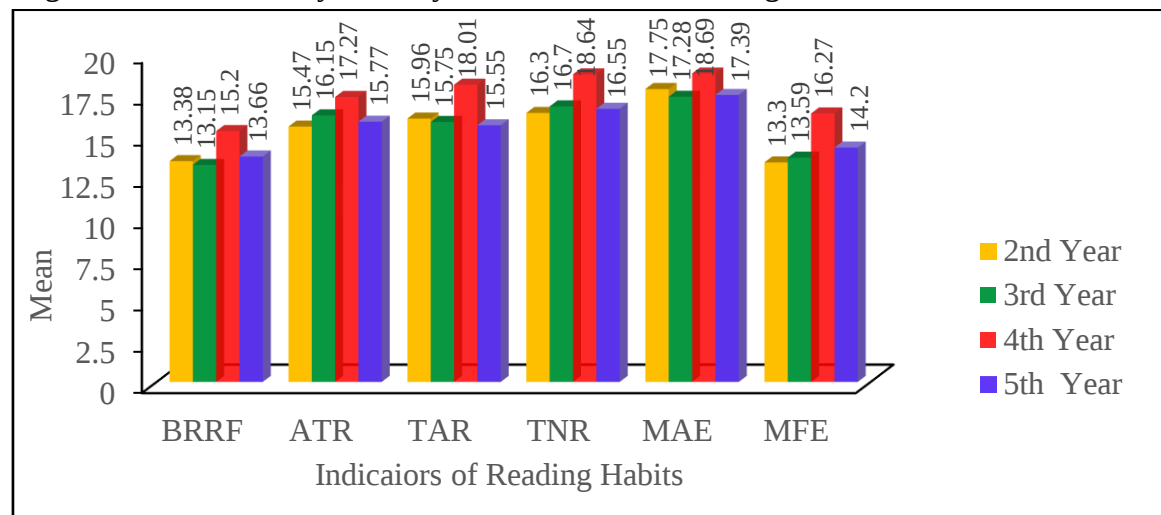


Figure 4. Mean comparisons of reading habits of students by course year

In order to analyze whether there were significant differences in reading habits of students by course year or not, One-Way ANOVA analysis was computed (see Table 6).

Table 6 ANOVA Results of Reading Habits of Students by Course Year

Indicator of Reading Habits		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Books read and Reading frequency	Between Groups	334.201	3	111.400	10.853	.000***
	Within Groups	5029.516	490	10.264		
	Total	5363.717	493			
Attitude toward reading	Between Groups	246.661	3	82.220	7.953	.000***
	Within Groups	5066.070	490	10.339		
	Total	5312.731	493			
Time spent on academic reading	Between Groups	516.846	3	172.282	16.586	.000***
	Within Groups	5089.608	490	10.387		
	Total	5606.453	493			
Time spent on non-academic reading	Between Groups	462.260	3	154.087	14.842	.000***
	Within Groups	5087.076	490	10.382		
	Total	5549.336	493			
Motivation in the academic environment	Between Groups	157.334	3	52.445	4.650	.003**
	Within Groups	5526.270	490	11.278		
	Total	5683.603	493			
Motivation in the family environment	Between Groups	705.278	3	235.093	13.532	.000***
	Within Groups	8512.652	490	17.373		
	Total	9217.929	493			

Note. **The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.

***The mean difference is significant at the 0.001 level.

Table 6 describes that there were significant differences in all indicators of reading habits in terms of course year based on the results of One-way ANOVA analyses. Hence, Post Hoc Test was executed by using Tukey HSD test. Moreover, to be able to interpret the detailed level of significance.

Table 7 Results of Post Hoc Test (Tukey HSD) Multiple Comparisons of Reading Habits of Students by Course Year

Indicator of Reading Habits	Course Year (I)	Course Year (J)	MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Books read and Reading frequency	Fourth Year	Second Year	1.828	.396	.000*	.81	2.85
		Third Year	2.053	.414	.000*	.99	3.12
		Fifth Year	1.546	.395	.001*	.53	2.57
Attitude toward reading	Fourth Year	Second Year	1.798	.398	.000*	.77	2.82
		Third Year	1.119	.416	.037*	.05	2.19
		Fifth Year	1.500	.397	.001*	.48	2.52
Time spent on academic reading	Fourth Year	Second Year	2.055	.399	.000*	1.03	3.08
		Third Year	2.260	.417	.000*	1.19	3.33
		Fifth Year	2.467	.398	.000*	1.44	3.49
Time spent on non-academic reading	Fourth Year	Second Year	2.346	.399	.000*	1.32	3.37
		Third Year	1.944	.417	.000*	.87	3.02
		Fifth Year	2.095	.398	.000*	1.07	3.12
Motivation in the academic environment	Fourth Year	Third Year	1.403	.434	.007*	.28	2.52
		Fifth Year	1.297	.415	.010*	.23	2.37
Motivation in the family environment	Fourth Year	Second Year	2.974	.516	.000*	1.65	4.30
		Third Year	2.676	.539	.000*	1.29	4.07
		Fifth Year	2.072	.514	.000*	.75	3.40

Note. *The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

According to Post Hoc Test (Tukey HSD) results, fourth year students were statistically and significantly different from second year, third year and fifth year students according to books read and reading frequency, attitude toward reading, time spent on academic reading, time spent on non-academic reading and motivation in the family environment. However, there was a significant difference between fourth year students and third year and fifth year students in the motivation in the academic environment. It can be deduced that fourth year students have good English reading habits among selected undergraduate students.

Descriptive Statistics of Writing Ability of Students

With the use of descriptive statistics, the minimum, maximum, mean scores and standard deviation was described in Table 8.

Table 8 Descriptive Statistics of Writing Ability of Students

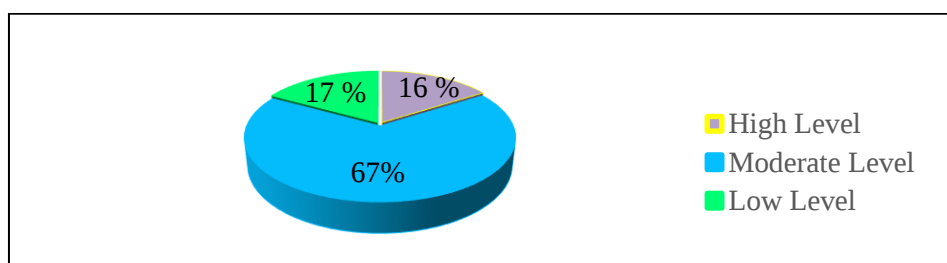
Variable	<i>n</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Writing Ability	494	13	48	36.41	6.533

As Table 8 shows, students' writing ability has the mean ($M = 36.41$) and standard deviation ($SD = 6.533$). Students got 48 marks as the maximum score and 13 as the minimum in their writing ability. Then, percentages of levels of students' writing ability were computed.

Table 9 Percentages of Levels of Students' Writing Ability

Level of Writing Ability	Score (x)	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
High Level	$x \geq 42.943$	79	16
Moderate Level	$29.877 < x < 42.943$	332	67
Low Level	$x \leq 29.877$	83	17
Total		494	100

Table 9 points that the number of students who possess high level of writing ability was 79, that of moderate level was 332 and finally low level was 83. Then the percentages of high, moderate and low levels of reading habits of students were 16%, 67% and 17% respectively. Hence, it was concluded that two-thirds of students have a moderate level of writing ability. Percentages of levels of writing ability of students was illustrated in Figure 5.

**Figure 5.** Percentages of levels of students' writing ability

Descriptive Statistics of Writing Ability of Students by Gender

In order to analyze the difference in writing ability of students by gender, independent samples *t*-test was applied. Table 10 describes the comparison of means between male and female students.

Table 10 *t* value for Writing Ability of Students by Gender

Variable	Gender	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Writing Ability	Male	247	35.77	5.949	-1.279	-2.185	492	0.029*
	Female	247	37.05	7.022				

Note. *The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 10 shows that there was a significant difference in writing ability between male and female students at 0.05 level ($p = .029$). And, it can be deduced that female students have good English writing ability than the male students. Graphic presentation for mean comparisons of writing ability of students is presented in Figure 6.

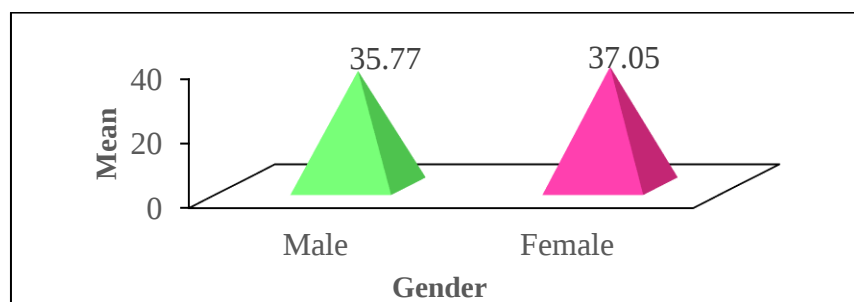


Figure 6. Mean comparisons of students' writing ability by gender

Descriptive Statistics of Writing Ability of Students by Course Year

The mean scores, standard deviations, number of participants, minimum and maximum scores of writing ability of students in terms of course year are illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11 Descriptive Statistics of Writing Ability of Students by Course Year

Variable	Course Year	<i>n</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Writing Ability	Second Year	125	13	45	31.89	7.631
	Third Year	106	14	47	37.52	5.612
	Fourth Year	137	15	46	38.47	5.407
	Fifth Year	126	19	48	37.71	4.941

As described in Table 11, the mean score of fourth year students was the highest ($M = 38.47$) in the writing ability of students. And it can also be observed that the mean scores of third year and fifth year students was almost equal. But second year students' writing ability scores were the lowest ($M = 31.89$). It can be assumed that fourth year students have good English writing ability as most of fourth year students are proficient in English among the selected undergraduate students. Visual presentation was illustrated in Figure 7.

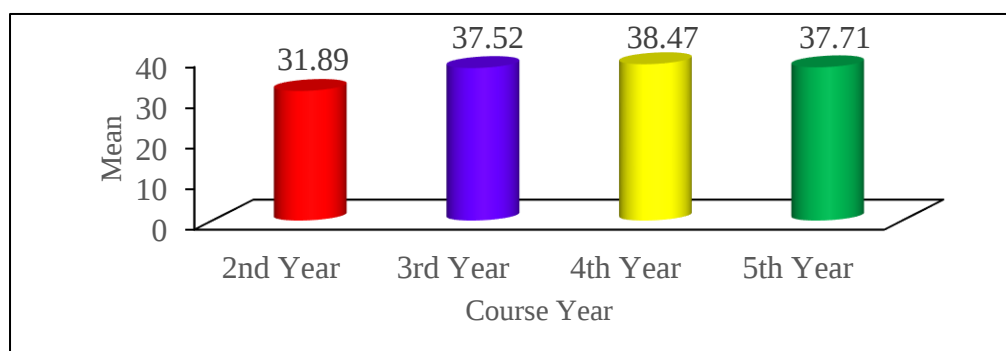


Figure 7. Graphic presentation of students' writing ability by course year

Then One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed to find out whether there was a significant difference in writing ability of students from different years or not. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 12.

Table 12 ANOVA Results of Writing Ability of Students by Course Year

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Writing Ability	Between groups	3484.632	3	1161.544	32.422	.000***
	Within groups	17554.769	490	35.826		
	Total	21039.401	493			

Note. ***The mean difference is significant at the 0.001 level.

Writing ability of students was found statistically significant difference by course year and Post Hoc Test (Tukey HSD) multiple comparisons procedure was applied (see Table 13).

Table 13 Results of Post Hoc Test (Tukey HSD) Multiple Comparisons of Writing Ability of Students by Course Year

Variable	Course Year (I)	Course Year (J)	MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Writing Ability	Second Year	Third Year	-5.631	.790	.000*	-7.67	-3.59
		Fourth Year	-6.586	.740	.000*	-8.49	-4.68
		Fifth Year	-5.826	.756	.000*	-7.77	-3.88

Note. ***The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As the Pos Hoc Test (Tukey HSD) results, there was a significant difference between second year students and third year students, between second year and fourth year students and between second year and fifth year students in writing ability at the 0.05 level. It can be assumed that second year students are the junior students in university level and they started getting in touch with different kinds of English text.

Findings for the Correlation Between Students' Reading Habits and Writing Ability

The correlation between reading habits and writing ability of students was investigated using Spearman rho correlation. The results are shown in Table 14.

Table 14 Correlation Between Students' Reading Habits and Writing Ability

		Reading Habits	Writing Ability
Reading Habits	Spearman's rho correlation	1	.241***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		< .001
	n	494	494
Writing Ability	Spearman's rho correlation	.241***	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	< .001	
	n	494	494

Note. ***Correlation coefficient is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 14, there was a significant, weak and positive correlation between reading habits and writing ability of undergraduate students ($r_s = .241$, $p < .001$). It can be assumed that the reading habits have a positive effect on the writing ability of students.

Conclusion

Discussion

The first research question was “How are the reading habits and writing ability of English of undergraduate students in UDNR?”

According to the result of descriptive statistics of levels of reading habits, most students in UDNR have the moderate level (67%) of reading habits and only few students possess high (16%) and low (17%) levels of reading habits. It can be said that two-thirds of undergraduate students in UDNR have good English reading habits. The proficiency of language skills of undergraduate students, especially their reading skill, would be at the intermediate level and they would be able to use English efficiently for both academic and professional purposes.

With regard to the result of mean comparison of each indicator of reading habits, it can be concurred that undergraduate students in UDNR are motivated by teachers and teachers took care about the learning of students as they are prospective teachers and they would apply their knowledge in their teaching profession. However, most of students seem to do online reading rather than books, and reading frequency of students is low as there are many cocurricular activities for students to do in their daily lives.

Be in harmony with the descriptive statistics of students' writing ability, the percentage of students who have high level of writing ability was 16%, for moderate level was 67% and for low level was 17%. It can be supposed that two-thirds of students in UDNR are proficient in English writing as they are well-trained and practiced in English writing. Moreover, English language competition is always held to improve the language proficiency of students.

The second research question was “Are there any significant differences in English reading habits of students by gender?”

In accordance with the independent samples *t*-test results, there were no significant differences in reading habits of students by gender. Therefore, it can be concluded that both male and female students almost equally have good habits in English reading. All students have the same effort in language learning, especially in reading, as English is the instructional medium at the university level. Moreover, it may be convinced that most of the undergraduate students in UDNR are interested in language learning and fond of reading.

The third research question was “Are there any significant differences in English reading habits of students by course year?” According to One Way ANOVA analyses results, there were statistically significant differences between fourth year students and other students (second year, third year and fifth year students) at the 0.05 level. It can be deduced that fourth year students have good attitude toward English reading and they frequently read many kinds of books written in English as they are well-trained and get enough practice in reading. They are also motivated by teachers and educators and also supported by families as they are expected to be proficient in language acquisition. However, most of fifth year students started a preparation for their profession and challenges that they can face after graduating. Then, second year students

have just started their university lives and initiated their reading habits. As third year students have just selected their specialized subjects, their interest was higher only in their specialized subjects.

The fourth research question was “Are there any significant differences in English writing ability of students by gender?”

In accordance with the independent samples *t*-test result, there was a significant difference in writing ability of students by gender at the 0.05 level. It can be supposed that female students have greater effort in productive skills, especially in writing as they perform better in language acquisition. Although both male and female students have the same proficiency level of reading, most of the male students are hesitant in producing and sharing information they had even known. Unlike male students, female students prefer sharing information and have efficiency in demonstrating what they know and also what they want to. Moreover, female students are more accurate and intelligent in learning grammar and vocabularies as well as mechanics. On the other hand, male students can interpret the theme of the paragraph but female students can organize the sequence of the paragraphs well and also the content. Therefore, it may be said that female students are proficient in English writing ability.

Next, the fifth research question was “Are there any significant differences in English writing ability of students by course year?”

According to ANOVA analysis of writing ability of students by course year, there were significant differences between second year students and third year students, between second year students and fourth year students, and also between second year students and fifth year students at the level of 0.05. But there were no significant differences in writing ability among third year, fourth year and fifth year students. It may be said that third year, fourth year and fifth year students are proficient in English as they are well-trained and also get enough practice in language learning. As writing is a way to develop individual perspective in written form, second year students are too young to communicate with others in a written way and also to express their opinions, thoughts and feelings. Moreover, in writing descriptive text, they might encounter some difficulties such as punctuation, sentence structures, grammar constructions and so on, but other senior students are familiar with different types of texts and have enough practice to overcome such difficulties and have experience because of the English competition.

Finally, the sixth research question was “Is there any relationship between reading habits and writing ability of undergraduate students in UDNR?”

According to the Spearman rho correlation coefficient results between reading habits and writing ability of students in UDNR, it can be concluded that students' reading habits positively and significantly correlate with writing ability ($r_s = .241$), and thus reading habits become one of the factors in developing language skills. In interpretation of the findings, it may be concluded that reading habits influence the writing ability of students and students who have good reading habits are proficient in English writing. This result of the study is also supported by Aprilia (2021) who found that there was a very low positive correlation between students' reading habits and their writing ability.

Suggestions

For Teachers- They should motivate students to read, create comfortable environment for them to read and provide different kinds of books and texts, allow students to read non-academic books in their leisure time, need to recommend books that are consistent with students according to their age group in order to get knowledge and apply in their practical lives. Reading frequency of students should be checked to perceive whether students have good reading habits or not. They also have to correct the misbehavior of students while reading and instill positive attitude toward reading.

For Students- They should learn how to improve their reading habits and they need to perceive the importance of reading habits to their writing skills as well as their critical thinking skills. Then they should also be aware that writing is not an easy skill and try to learn to develop their writing ability in various ways so that their language learning will be efficient and effective.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations for further studies were made:

1. Although this research is limited to undergraduate students in UDNR only, further studies may be conducted in all specialized subject groups from different universities in all educational regions.
2. With regard to the present study, six indicators were used to explore the reading habits of students, so more concrete and relevant indicators or dimensions of reading habits including interview questions and coping with second language learners should be applied.
3. In order to conduct a study about reading habits, libraries are recommended to be at par with international standard and also provided with updated and modern books.
4. In testing the writing ability of students, the study is limited to descriptive text only. Hence, different types of texts should be allowed to write in the paragraph level. Furthermore, various grammar patterns and structures should be used in sentence level, so that students' writing ability could be evaluated that in what kinds of text and to what extent students are proficient in.
5. As the data obtained in the study were self-reported data and analyzed with quantitative method, more studies using both quantitative and qualitative method (mixed method) should be carried out so as to study the reading habits of students.

Conclusion

The study was conducted to explore students' reading habits, writing ability and investigate the correlation between these two variables of undergraduate students in UDNR by using simple random sampling technique. In addition, the study found out the gender differences and course year differences in reading habits and writing ability of students.

The result of the study revealed that the reading habits of undergraduate students in UDNR were positively correlated with their writing ability. The results and findings of the study were consistent with Aprilia (2021) that there was a very low significant correlation between reading habits and writing ability. The results of the study also pointed out that the correlation between students' reading habits and their writing ability is very low. It can be concluded that students' writing ability can be influenced by the texts they have read as there are different types

of genres in writing and also generic structure in writing descriptive text. Moreover, students have to apply knowledge, vocabularies and grammar patterns they have learned while they're reading. Students need to realize the importance of reading habits in promoting their writing ability.

Although language acquisition seems to be difficult, the students will be able to learn it easily with the help of good habits. Habits help the students to become effective and efficient language learners. If students keep reading English books, magazines, novels or stories, it will help their writing skills. By frequently reading English books, students become notice grammar patterns, sentence structures and organization of text, different types of text and enrich vocabularies and mechanics as well as uses of English language. As students usually get ideas, information and experience from reading activity, reading habits are regarded as the most influential factor in writing. That's why most of good readers become good writers.

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