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PRE-COURSE READING ACTIVITIES: EFFORTS TO INCREASE INTEREST IN READING OF STUDENTS OF HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Reading skills play a crucial role in our lives because knowledge is acquired through reading. Efforts to increase interest in reading should continue, including the students at the university/college level. One of the efforts is through SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) for 15 minutes before the lecture begins. This study aimed to describe the reading habits of students (time, average length of reading); types of reading book to read, and students' responses. The subjects were 58 students of Home Economics Bachelor Degree Program in State University of Surabaya. The data collection techniques used by observation, questionnaire, and document studies. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics with percentages and descriptive qualitative analyses. The results showed that: 1) the reading habits of students: 62.07% of the students did not have the habit of reading; 31% of students read in their spare time; 72.72% of the students read for an average of 15-30 minutes, and 27.28% of the students read for 30-60 minutes; 2) types of reading most read by students were jokes, science, adventure, fantasy, mystery, stories of everyday life, and newspaper or magazine; and 3) the students felt good at reading; the benefits of reading to them was that it could increase knowledge; it was for inspiration and imagination; the students advised to increase the time of reading; they wanted to be provided with e-books; there were needs to be reading in the morning before the lectures began and it applied to all classes in the Home Economics Department. In conclusion, the SSR activities were beneficial for the students.

KEYWORDS: *Sustained Silent Reading, Interest in Reading, Home Economics Students*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is the key to educational success. Noted by Farr *reading is heart of education* (Farr, 1984). Reading is very important therefore reading is considered a key determinant in the success of learning and education. Reading activities have not been entrenched in the community in Indonesia. This causes Indonesia to position 64 of 65 countries in terms of reading ability. This is based on data obtained from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2012. Indonesia joined in PISA for 16 years since 2000. PISA is conducted every three years in 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015. The latest data for 2015 published on December 6, 2016 on the official website of PISA. Indonesia ranks 62 out of 72 countries participating in PISA.

By showed the number above, we can see that the reading ability of people in Indonesia increased from the results of PISA 2012 and then occupies the second lowest position. However, Indonesia is still relatively low compared with the reading ability in other countries. The Central Bureau of Statistics in 2012 showed that the population aged 10 years and over more watching television

activities amounted to 91.68%, sports 24.99%, listen to the radio at 18.57%, while the reading is only at 17,66%. From these data it can be seen that the reading is still very minimal done compared to other activities.

Reading has not become a habit in Indonesian society. The lack of reading habits have led to a lack of mastery of science and technology in Indonesia that resulted in human society in Indonesia become uncompetitive. Reading habit that is done from elementary school age to study in college even to adult later will form reading behavior. People in developed countries such as Europe, USA, UK, Japan and Korea make reading as one of the activities that cannot be separated from their lives. One study titled "A Research on Newspaper Reading Habit in Japan: An Empirical Study" found that the habit of reading the newspaper in Japanese society is very high (Chih-Chung, 2014). It became one of the picture developed countries such as Japan in the culture of reading is high.

Previous research conducted by MacGilchrist (1997) pointed out that there was one important finding about the role of reading, where the level of students' abilities at the age of 7 years was a good predictor of the top level of achievement in the future. An obtained relationship between the ability read in 7 years and the level of achievement exam in 16 years.

The ability to read considered affecting the aggressive attitude of primary school students. A study carried out for six years (1996-2002) by Sarah Miles and Deborah Stipek of *Stanford University School of Education*, found that children in 1st grade, which was the ability to read relatively low, currently in 3rd grade tend to have a high level of aggressiveness (Witdarmono, 2006; Nurlaela, et al, 2018). Grade 3rd students, who have low reading skills, also tend to have high aggressive behaviour in grade 5. Nature aggressive in this regard includes the scrappy, impatient, disruptive, and the habit of pressing the other children (*bullying*). According to two researchers, together with the level of the association, which enabled children to experience the frustration level low reading piling up, and that's what causes them to become aggressive. Conversely, there were linkages between social attitudes and the ability to read. Social attitudes in this regard include the attitude of helpful, compassionate, empathetic, have zeroed in on the distress, and helpful/entertaining friends were disappointed. Children who have good social attitude when grade 1st was usually better able to develop the ability to read at grade 3rd and 5th. The results of this study demonstrated the importance of education and effective teaching in reading skills in the early elementary levels.

When the above study conducted for elementary school age children (5-9 years), how about the ability to read in children aged 9-14 years? *Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)*, which aims to measure the level of knowledge and skills of children aged 14-15 years (the end of compulsory education age), studied children from 29 developed and developing countries. PISA study was conducted for three years with a different focus, but on-going. Focus in 2000 (32 countries) was reading literacy. Focus on 2003 (40 countries) in mathematical literacy and problem solving. Furthermore, the focus in 2006 (57 states) is scientific literacy. The results of the study in 2003, Indonesia was ranked the lowest in reading skills. The big three top occupied Finland, Korea and Canada. For Indonesia, this means five PISA literacy level models, the ability of Indonesian children are at level one. That is, only able to understand one or some of the information in the text are available. Ability to interpretation, assess, or linking text content with the situation outside the limited experience of public

life. As a result, the children will be hard to use reading skills to expand their knowledge and skills in other areas. This situation resulted in the age of 19-20 years they may be just able to finish her high school. While age already working, most likely eliminated in the competition for jobs. Such a situation would easily lead to price them-selves down and trigger to antagonize the society and environment (Witdarmono 2006; Nurlaela et al, 2018).

Indonesia is one of the countries that succeeded in reducing the literacy rate. Data 2014 UNDP noted that the literacy rate of the people of Indonesia reached 92.8% for adult group, and 98.8% for the category of teenagers. This achievement actually shows that Indonesia has passed the crisis stage of literacy in terms of literacy. Nevertheless, the challenges currently faced are the lack of interest in reading. In addition to the availability of books in Indonesia has not been adequate, the government is also facing low motivation of reading among learners, including students. It is of concern that in the era of information technology, the students are required to have the ability to read in the sense of understanding the text analytical, critical, and reflective. The global community must be able to adapt to technological advances and freshness/contemporary. Prague Declaration (UNESCO, 2003) proclaimed the importance of information literacy, the ability to seek, understand, critically evaluate, and manage the information into useful knowledge for the development of personal and social life.

Culture of reading reflects the progress of a nation or society. Reading not only needs to focus on high school students but also students at the college. Once the importance of the ability is reading, so it is necessary the availability of a conducive learning environment, so as to create a generation of literate. In connection with this, the less conventional learning encourages growth of interests and reading habits should be corrected. Learning models are better able to create a learning environment literate, which can improve students' reading ability, should be applied widely.

Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 23 Year 2015 on Growth Budi Character mandated school community to read for 15 minutes before starting the teaching and learning activities. Reading books non-text lesson is one way to grow a character because this book is an effective means to teach moral values without patronizing. In addition, the reading makes fun school environment for the school community can choose readings that correspond to their interests.

Reading in a short time, but often and regularly proven to be more effective than a longer read, but infrequently (1 hour/week on certain days). Key to the success of this activity is on continuity and frequency of activities and not on the number of hours and minutes read. The reading is done constantly and frequently, able to cultivate the habit of reading.

Purpose of 15 minutes reading before the lesson aims in making the whole school community as lifelong learners to be able to fully develop their potential; and providing a pleasant reading experience to the learners.

Associated with the development of literacy in students of Culinary Study Program, it is meant as an effort to increase student interest and reading habits. Hardianto study (2018) about interest in reading FIP-UNY students, found that student interest in reading in general is still low. Student activity on campus is waiting in front of the class, only a small percentage of students who use their spare time to read a book or visit the library. Research conducted by Annamalai, 2013, entitled "Reading habit and attitude among Malaysian Polytechnic

Students' revealed that student from the polytechnic has a low reading interest and they do not enjoy reading. Ahmed, 2016 with the title "Reading habits and attitudes of university-KAL Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia" there is a positive attitude towards reading activities undertaken by students. In addition, research conducted by Zarra-Nezhad (2015) with the title "The Effect of Attitude and Motivation on the Use of Cognitive and metacognitive Strategies among Iranian EFL Undergraduate Readers" stated that there is a strong relationship in terms of attitude and motivation to read on English. Although language comprehension in other universities, students' interests and reading habits may already relatively high, but the effort to increase students' interest and reading habits need to be increased.

5 METHODS

The study was descriptive, which describe the reading habits of students, types of books read, the activity of students during silent reading, and student response. Subjects were students of S1 PKK UNESA as many as 59 students. Data collection technique used observation, questionnaire, and profile record. Data were analysed with descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis.

6 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Reading Habits of Students

The pie chart gives information about Reading Habits of Students. The questionnaire result shows of the number of 58 students, a total of 36, or 62.07% of the students have not had the habit of reading, while the remaining 22 or 37.93% already have the habit of reading prior to any compulsory reading in the lecture.

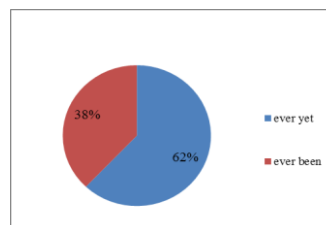


Figure 1: Reading Habits of Students

The bar graph below shows the situation while reading in a time range. The Y-axis shows the number of students reading in certain mood conditions mean while the X axis shows different moods from a time for the same period given. The first part shows a total of 18 students (82%) who read at unoccupied time / rest, when gloomy time and in the morning time. The data shows that students' reading habits still need to be improved. The main purpose of reading is to help children understand what they read so they can move from "learning to read" to "reading to learning" (Mautone, et al., 2003; Torgesen, 1998). Overall, reading it becomes a necessity, habit, even tradition, because basically people are required to continue to learn. That is, humans must continue to read in order to have new knowledge and insight and develop.

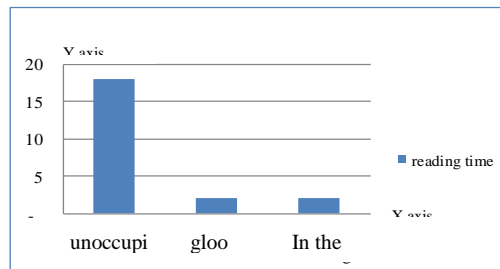


Figure 2: Reading Time Students

Related to the long reading, students read as much as 72.72% on average for 15-30 minutes a day, the next as much as 27.28% of the students read an average of 30-60 minutes a day.

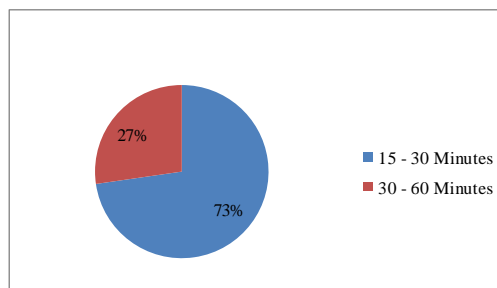


Figure 3: Reading Durations

Overall, even though most of the students read about 15-30 minutes a day, but it was a very valuable capital to further develop the habit of reading. As noted earlier, the reading in a short time, but often and regularly proven to be more effective than a longer read, but infrequently (1 hour/week on certain days). Key to the success of this activity is on continuity and frequency of activities and not on the number of hours and minutes read. The reading is done constantly and frequently, able to cultivate the habit of reading.

3.2 Type of Reading Book

Meanwhile, the other bar graph gives information the type of textbook read by students. Y axis shows the number of students reading and the X axis are represent the number in type of textbook In this way, reading type most widely read by students that joke as much as 8 (36.4%) students, while type of science textbook as much as 7 students (32 %). The rest is in addition to the type of jokes and science, students also read a kind of adventure, fantasy, mystery, stories of daily life and a magazine or newspaper.

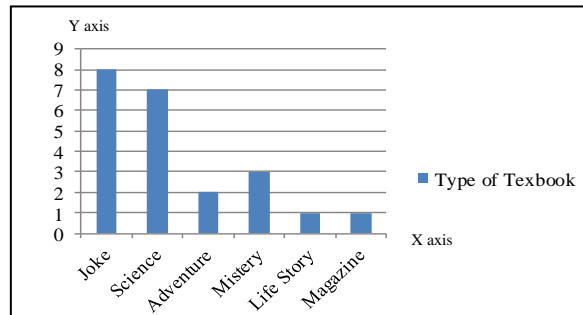


Figure 4: Type Textbook

Type of reading book read by students was quite diverse. The diversity of types of books showed that basically students had interest in reading books other than books lectures. This implies the importance of providing a physical environment that supports the development of reading interest. Availability reading room, reading corner, or other forms, in many places on campus is significant when it can be pursued.

3.3 Student responses

The given pie charts represent the proportion of benefit after reading book. As many as 63.6% of the students said that the benefits of reading can provide new experiences, while the remaining 36.4% of the students mention the benefits of reading can provide a psychological effect in the form of entertainment, adds new vocabulary and provide motivation.

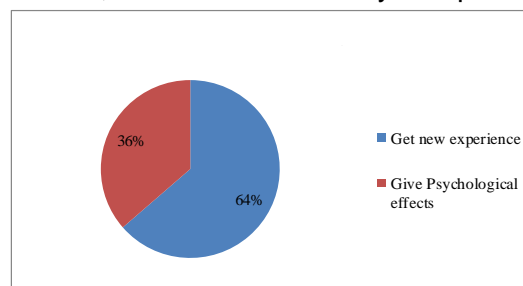


Figure 5: The Benefits of Reading

The first part shows total of 93.10% of the students stated there should be reading before starting the course with a reason to increase knowledge and as a warm up before lectures begin. Meanwhile the remaining 6.9% of the students stated there should be no reading before lectures begin with the reason it will reduce hours of lectures.

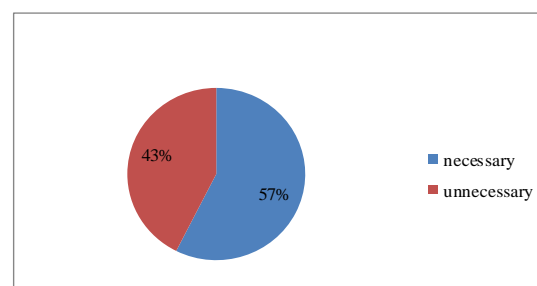


Figure 6: Reading Activities before Class

Meanwhile total of 98.27% of students expressed feel happy during reading activities because this activity can be entertaining. While 1.73% of students stated normal during reading activities because they feel to be not focused with the activities of lectures.

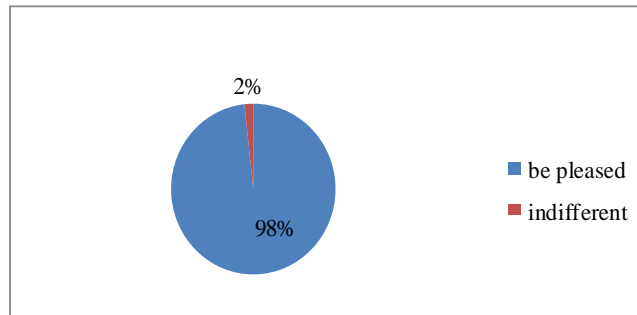


Figure 7: The Impact of Reading

The pie chart shows 59% of students suggested that the length of reading should be increased. While 41% of students suggested that this activity should be provided e-book and clear reading schedule.

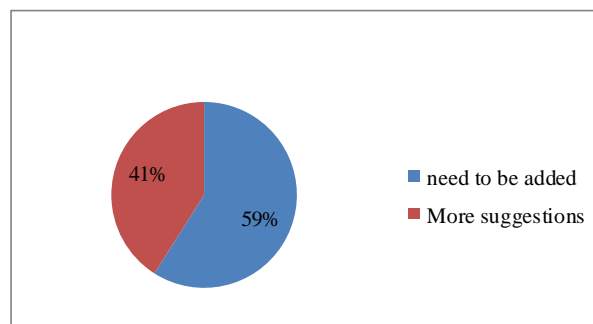


Figure 8: Length Reading Event

As many as 86.2% of students stated, reading activity in the morning before the lecture begins to apply to all classes in home economics department, because it can increase students' knowledge and as a warm-up before the lesson. While as many as 13.8% of students said this is not necessary, because it causes students not focus on the subject.

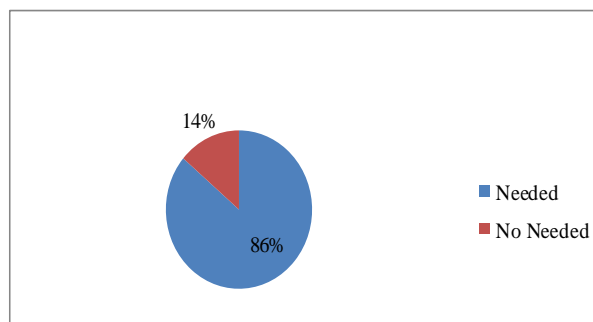


Figure 9: Reading Activity at Home Economics Department

The pie chart indicates that the student response was positively related to reading before the lecture. Only a few students who did not agree with these activities, because they became not focus on the course. Reading activities conducted before the lecture begins, aiming for students not only read the lecture books, but also read other useful books. Thus their insights and knowledge will be more developed and read into the habits of even their characters.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall showed that: 1) the reading habits of students: 62.7% of students did not have the habit of reading; 31% of students read at leisure time; 72.72% of students read about 15-30 minutes, and 27.28% of the students read for 30-60 minutes; 2) types of books read by students were jokes, science, adventure, fantasy, mystery, life stories, and magazine or newspaper; and 3) the response of students: students got excited when reading; benefits of reading for them was to increase knowledge; can be an inspiration and imagination; students suggest additional reading time; students expected supplied e-book; read every morning before the course begins should be applied in all classes in the Department of the PKK. In conclusion, silent reading activity is very beneficial for students.

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