

## The Effects of Reading Habits on Writing Performance: A Case Study at Van Lang University

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** reading habits, writing performance, correlation

Reading habits and writing performance reportedly share a close correlation; however, there has been less investigation on this aspect in Vietnam. The research aims to bridge the gap in the literature review with a description of Van Lang University English majors' reading patterns, a report of their writing ability, and a conclusion on the relation between these two elements. Quantitative data were collected through an online questionnaire discovering students' reading habits and a writing test administered to evaluate their writing performance. The test results were analyzed through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 26 (SPSS 26). Additionally, Pearson correlation and linear regression were applied to confirm the influences of five elements in reading habits on students' writing performance. Qualitative data were obtained through a structured interview and then quantified with Microsoft Excel 2019. The interview was carried out to generalize the reading patterns of different purposive samples categorized by their writing marks. The result of the study asserts a positive correlation between students' reading habits and their writing performance ( $r_{\text{obtained}}=0.433$  to  $0.542$ ), and nearly 60% of the segments of the reading patterns were proved to have a great contribution to writing ability. The study indicates that a good reading habit entails improvement in writing achievement. The research suggests further investigation of factors influencing reading habits, the effects of teachers' instructions on students' writing performance, and the genres of essays that are most affected by reading patterns.

### Introduction

It is well acknowledged among educators that the mastery of four language skills would support the acquisition of the second language since they are considered the basics of communication. A great deal of research, hence, has been conducted to find out how to improve students' language skills. Pham (2021) asserted the enhancement of students' reading comprehension obtained through their regular reading practices. The study carried out by Taufan (2020) indicated that sociodramatic play was in use to develop students' speaking proficiency.

Kartawijaya (2018) advocated the use of an outline technique to improve students' writing skills. Students' listening comprehension would be better if listening strategies were applied (Putri & Dewi, 2019).

Simultaneously, the correlation between these skills has also been the subject to be discussed in educational research. Several studies conducted investigations specifically about the influence of reading habits on students' academic performance. Santoso (2015) studied the relationship between reading habits toward vocabulary mastery of the English language among college students. Pham (2021) asserted the significant relationship between reading habits and reading comprehension. Akbar (2014) supplemented one aspect of the field with a study on the influence of reading habits on speaking skills. The notion of correlation between reading habits and writing skills was discussed in the research of Juriati, Ariyanti, and Fitriana (2018). These studies came to the same conclusion that maintaining good reading habits could lead to improvement in academic performance.

With considerable experience gained from several years of teaching English majors at Van Lang University, the researcher noticed that students showed low interest in reading. Only around 25% of the students read lessons before each class, and just above ten percent read further materials related to the lessons. With a total lack of further reading, students frequently had difficulties in discussing questions requiring higher cognitive skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom's Taxonomy). During break time or intermission between two classes, English-majored students discussed personal affairs, entertainment, or the latest news on showbiz instead of academic content. The other noticeable problem that captured the researcher's attention was that only a few students in her classes were confident to confirm they often went to the library to read books. Most of the students admitted that the only reason for spending time in the library was preparing for the exams. The researcher assumed that most English majors at Van Lang University paid little attention to reading and had no interest in maintaining reading habits.

Writing is an essential skill that EFL students need to master since it is extensively used in workplaces or higher education when students conduct research, do dissertations, or write articles (Klimova, 2012). Moreover, writing is reportedly considered the most challenging skill to master when acquiring a second language (Hyland, 2003) since it involves a complicated process of getting ideas, organizing the outline, drafting, and revising (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). Therefore, students need to perform combined cognitive skills and language strategies (Rao, 2007) to produce a good piece of writing. In the curriculum developed by the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Van Lang University, writing is taught intensively through five courses, including Writing 1, Writing 2, Writing 3, Writing 4, and Writing 5. The researcher assumed that second-year English majors could produce good essays when completing Writing 4, which focused on writing different genres of essays. Conversely, the Writing 4 Course's Grade Point Average (GPA) in the academic year 2020-2021 displayed offensive insights into students' writing ability. Specifically, twenty-five percent of the students got average marks (5 to 6.5), while only ten percent of them had high marks (8 to 9). Remarkably, twenty percent of the learners could

not pass the course.

The problem of lacking reading habits and the offensive writing performance of second-year English majors forced the researcher to conduct this study among sophomores and juniors to discover their reading patterns, get deeper insights into their writing ability and determine if there was any relation between retaining good reading habits and improving writing performance. In addition, this study aims to bridge the gap in the literature review when quite a few researchers in Vietnam investigate the correlation between reading habits and writing performance. Based on the findings, the study suggests several implications for enhancing students' reading interest and encouraging them to maintain reading habits.

## Literature review

There have been various definitions of what the reading process is in contemporary literature. Okilagwe (1998) defined reading as a cognitive process in which students develop their critical thinking to gain meaningful interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences. Heilman (1967), as cited in Khoirunnisa and Safitri (2018), strengthened the notion when affirming that reading is a complicated process of acquiring knowledge that requires students to have a good cognition strategy for attaining the organization, the title, and the gist of the text. The performance of reading, hence, demands readers to interpret and assign meaning to the written characters (Aebersold and Field, 1997). Kidd and Castano (2013) completed the definition with the suggestion that reading develops cognitive skills.

Taking part in the reading process is reportedly believed to gain several remarkable merits. According to Singer and Alexander (2017), integrating reading into lessons helps students restore and retrieve knowledge better. Krashen and William (2012) posited that reading was a catalyst for boosting grammar and lexical resources. Okebukola (2004) complemented the notion when asserting that reading was a vehicle for transmitting knowledge from generation to generation. Therefore, besides improving students' level of fluency, enhancing their grammar competence, and boosting their lexical resources, reading also enlarges students' knowledge of the English-speaking world's cultures (Inderjit, 2014). Abiding et al. (2011) strengthened Inderjit's conclusion with an argument that performing an action of reading also sharpens readers' thoughts and raises their awareness of global issues and current affairs around the world. The literature has obviously proved a fact that reading performance has considerable influence on respective aspects, ranging from grammar and vocabulary achievement to enforcing various fields of individuals.

### *Reading habit*

The notion of reading habit has been defined in varied ways. According to Wagner (2002), reading habit is measured in terms of the number of materials being read, the frequency of reading, and the time spent on it. Similarly, Rosidi (2006), as cited in Risman, Jufriзал, and Rozimela (2019) proposed that several crucial factors forming a person's reading habit include the amount of time that the person spent on reading, the frequency he did reading, the reading

materials he chose to read, the attitude he had toward reading materials, the purpose why he performed reading and the reading strategies he had during reading time.

Another definition was contributed by Issa et al. (2012). He asserted that reading habit was a permanent and continuous practice that became a part of a person's life. In line with this idea, Okwilagwe (1998) emphasized that the reading habit was a purposive activity in which a reader spent time reading for pleasure or academic purpose until he formed a desire for reading. Fatiloro, Adesola, Hameed, and Adewumi (2017) supplemented the definition with the idea that reading habit was an individual's preferred reading styles and genres.

Druckman (2016) added another side to the term, believing that reading habit was a long-term process starting from learning letters, words, phrases, sentences, and complete texts encouraged at the early stages. There was general agreement with Druckman's notion. Greene (2001) proposed that it was advisable to attain a reading habit at an early age so that it could develop into a long-life habit. Furthermore, when a good reading habit is established with a frequency of over five times a week, a positive attitude to reading, and a preference for different genres of books, readers will read with their willingness and pleasure (Sakinah, 2018).

### *Writing skill*

Writing is believed as a productive skill in which meanings are expressed in written forms (Harl, 2013). Having the same mindset, Hedge (2005) argued that writing served as a communication need in which a writer's ideas, feelings, and arguments were delivered to a particular reader or a group of readers. It is supported by Flower and Hayes (1980), as cited in Luu (2012), who asserted that writing was a complex process of constructing thought or ideas to convey the message of the text.

Nunan (2003) affirmed that writing was a physical and mental activity. He proved that writing was called physical since it was related to collecting words in some ways and required more practice. Additionally, writing is a mental work of inventing ideas, organizing sentences and paragraphs, and arousing readers' attention. Writing is, hence, considered a complex cognitive challenge with a test of memory, language, and thinking ability (Kellogg, 2018).

Hyland (2003) accomplished the term with the belief that writing was the most difficult language skill in acquiring a second language. This notion is advocated by Gebharb (2000) with the statement that "the usual things associated with writing are word choice, use of appropriate grammar, syntax, mechanics, and organization" (p.221). As a result, writing is perceived as a combined task consisting of various steps starting from getting ideas, organizing ideas, drafting, and polishing (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). Consequently, academic writing should be implemented in the school curriculum to help students deal with writing assignments effectively (Bailey, 2003).

### *Correlation between reading and writing*

The ongoing literature asserts writing is a thoughtful consideration of word choice, syntax, and organization (Gebharb, 2000) in a complicated process of getting ideas, organizing the outline,

drafting, and revising (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). Therefore, it is undeniable that writing is the most difficult language skill in acquiring a second language (Hyland, 2003). Reportedly, reading can be integrated to facilitate the writing process. Horning and Kraemer (2013) developed a theory in which reading should be used as an effective method to teach or learn writing in high schools or colleges. In line with this notion, Luu (2012) affirmed that EFL students could improve their writing skills when there was an integration between reading and writing. Moreover, extensive reading was reported to have a remarkable impact on improving students' writing in terms of grammar accuracy (Alqadi & Alkadi 2013).

Consistently, it is strongly believed that writing has a significant correlation with reading, for reading is one of the steps belonging to the writing process, functioning as information collection (Khoirunnisa & Safitri, 2018). Having the same mindset, Harl (2013) strengthened the idea that reading considerably influences writing, for learners use reading as the standard of how writing is supposed to be done.

Ahn (2014) affirmed the prominent role of reading in developing writing ability. Based on the results of the study, he claimed that the application of critical reading as a pedagogical writing technique could help students improve their essay writing. Similarly, Plakans and Gebril (2012) emphasized the positive impact of reading on students' writing performance with the statement that students could construct ideas, shape their opinions, and learn language use through intensive reading sources.

#### *Correlation between reading habits and writing performance*

The contemporary literature advocates that reading habits can be measured through reading materials, reading purposes, reading attitude (Rosidi, 2006), reading frequency, and time spent on reading (Wagner, 2002). Most of these factors have been emphasized to have considerable impacts on writing performance.

Acheaw and Larson (2014) affirmed that reading materials were of use to help students generate and construct ideas for writing. In line with this notion, Plakans and Gebril (2012) claimed that reading sources got students to gain ideas for the writing topic easily, shape their critical thinking, and provide language support.

Based on the results of the study conducted in 2020, Linuwih and Winardi (2020) asserted that constant reading activity could improve writing performance because the reader gained deeper insights into how to write. Having the same mindset, Diem (2007), as cited in Risman, Jufrizal, and Rozimela (2019), claimed that frequent reading habits could help to enhance students' mastery of idea development outline organization, word choice, spelling, and grammar.

Also, the attitude toward reading was confirmed to have significant effects on writing ability. Lukhele (2013) proposed that students who considered reading pleasure and rewarding activity had excellent English proficiency, which resulted in better writing performance.

Additionally, it was reported that when students spent substantial time reading, they could enhance their writing style, lexical resources, and grammar accuracy (Arndt & Woore, 2018).

This notion matched the findings of the study conducted by Sukandi in 2013. He affirmed that Indonesian college students could not produce good writing pieces because of insufficient reading time.

Obviously, reading habits are convincingly believed to have a close interrelation with writing performance since it is the foundation of writing skills (Tampubolon, 1993), helping learners to generate ideas and information for their writing tasks (Li, 2015). Moreover, reading habits can help to develop readers' critical thinking and increase their high order of thinking, which leads to the development of writing performance (Moran & Billen 2014). In line with this notion, Gardier (2005) affirmed that reading habit was the most influential factor in writing because it could stimulate learners' creativity and improve their lexical resources as well as confidence in writing (Maula, 2005).

### *Related studies*

A vast amount of research has been conducted to determine the correlation between reading habits and writing performance. Consistently, Mahyar (2012) pointed out a statistically noble relation between writing achievement and reading habits presented in the analysis of the variance test. At the level of 0.05, the F value was 10.446, which was higher than the F table of 3.15. The result confirmed that there was a significant difference among students who had the different quality of reading habits in the writing results. Also, the study showed that content was the most influential writing component from reading to writing, with a mean of 72.5.

The result of Kartal's research (2017) showed that with a level of significance of 0.01, the obtained value was 0.610. The study indicated a close relationship between reading habits and writing performance. The R square value demonstrated a 37.21% association between the two variables.

The study by Chuenchaichon (2011) revealed the major impact of intensive reading on improving students' writing performance in terms of grammatical accuracy, complexity, coherence and cohesion. With the p-values of the mentioned components were .04, .003, and .001, respectively, the Two-Sample-Tests displayed a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental groups when intensive reading was applied in writing classes. Reportedly, the integration of reading can help to improve writing achievement.

Additionally, related research was proceeded by Wati (2021). The correlation coefficient between reading habit and writing ability was higher than the r-table ( $0.51 > 0.329$ ), which showed a positive correlation between the two variables. Additionally, the t-value was 4.01, which was higher than the t-table of 1.7 at the significance level of 5%. Hence,  $H_a$  was accepted, and  $H_o$  was rejected. In other words, there is a significant correlation between reading habits and writing performance.

On the contrary, the research by Risman, Jufrizal carried out, and Rozimela (2019) reached a different conclusion. With the r – obtained of 0.23 compared with the r-table of 0.329 at the 0.05 significance level, the study stated that there was no significant correlation between

reading habit and writing ability.

There have been a great number of well-organized studies on the correlation between reading habits and writing performance, most of which emphasized the significant relationship between these two variables. These studies, however, have not yet investigated the notion deeply and thoroughly. There was a lack of investigation on which reading habit factor most influenced writing achievement. Also, most authors did not apply both quantitative and qualitative methods in their studies to gain wider views. This is because the students' explanation for their reading patterns needs investigating by questionnaires and interviews to gain a thorough understanding of students' perspectives. For this reason, the present study was conducted to discover and clarify the reading habits of EFL students at Van Lang University and to determine the correlation between their reading habits and their writing performance through quantitative and qualitative methods. In light of the research's findings, EFL teachers at Van Lang University can have obvious insights into the impact of reading habits on students' writing performance, so they probably consider developing plans for encouraging English majors' reading habits and reviewing effective techniques for writing classes.

### *Research Questions*

To achieve the above purposes, the study focuses on these research notions:

1. What are the reading patterns of EFL students at Van Lang University?
2. To what extent do the sophomores and juniors at Van Lang University perform their writing abilities?
3. Is there any relation between reading habits and writing performance?

Ha: Students' reading habits have effects on their writing performance.

Ho: Students' reading habits do not affect their writing performance.

## **Methods**

### *Pedagogical Setting & Participants*

Established in 1995, Van Lang University has gained several achievements in education and has become one of the first private universities in Viet Nam to win international recognition for its academic research. Based on Decision No.109/QĐ/VL-HĐT 18th, August 2020 of Chairman of the Van Lang University's Council about Educational Philosophy, the educational institution's philosophy of education consists of a holistic, lifelong, ethical, and impactful learning experience.

The researcher decided to choose the Simple Random Sampling method since it was the most suitable and practical way to collect data efficiently and could help to minimize any bias involved in the study. The research was carried out in the second semester of the academic year 2021-2022 with a population of 60 sophomores and juniors who were between the ages of 20 and 22 and majored in the English language at Van Lang University. The researcher's preference for this population lay in the fact that they have attained foundation and advanced knowledge

gained from several reading and writing courses. Sixty undergraduates participating in the study filled out the online questionnaire and took a writing test. From the result of the writing test and in accordance with the purposive and judgment sampling method, 15 students among 60 participants were selected to attend the subsequent structured interview. Fifteen samples in which three achieved excellent, 4 had good, 4 got mediocre, and 4 had poor scores were asked to share their ideas on their reading habits, explain the reasons for their reading patterns and express their perspectives on the correlation between reading habits and writing performance.

### *Design of the Study*

The mixed-method approach was applied in the study, which means that both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered and analyzed to fulfill the objectives of the research. The quantitative data was collected by delivering an online questionnaire to determine students' reading patterns and a writing test to find out the correlation between reading habits and writing performance. Before students filled out the questionnaire, they had been informed of their writing test results. Qualitative data was obtained through a structured interview in which participants were asked to share their reading habits, their explanations for their reading patterns, and their opinions on the relationship between reading habits and writing performance. The mixed methods were implemented since it is useful to "capitalize on the strengths of each approach" and "offset their different weaknesses" (Spratt et al., 2004, p.6).

### *Data collection & analysis*

The data collection process began with an online questionnaire designed on Google Forms and presented to 60 students who were in the second and third years of the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Van Lang University. The question list was divided into six sections, including demographic information, attitudes toward reading, reading frequency, reading materials, time spent on reading, and the purpose of reading. The online survey was posted to the Facebook Group of the Faculty of Foreign Languages for two weeks and took participants around 5 minutes to complete all the questions. Regarding the merits of the quantitative method, Hinchey (2008) asserts that it is "an efficient way to gather larger amounts of data". In line with the notion, Wright (2005) emphasizes that conducting a survey benefits the researcher by saving time and effort since the data is collected automatically and simultaneously.

The questionnaire consisted of 26 questions divided into two parts. The first part has three questions regarding demographic information, including courses, genders, and ages. The second part, with 23 questions, explores students' reading patterns through five components: reading materials, reading purposes, reading attitudes (Rosidi, 2006), reading frequency, and time spent on reading (Wagner, 2002). These five indicators are presented in five sections. Specifically, section A with five items (Question 1 – 5), determines students' attitudes toward reading habits; section B having five questions (6-10), finds out the frequency of reading; section C, with four questions (11-14) concerns students' reading materials; section D consisting of 4 items (15-18) asks the amount of time spent for a reading activity, and section E including five questions (19-23) discovers students' reading purposes. The items of the questionnaire were



adapted from Balan, Katenga and Simon (2019) and Daniel, Esoname, Chima and Udoaku (2017), who had already tested and affirmed the validity of these questions.

The online questionnaire was administered to gather data regarding students' reading habits using a five-point Likert Scale in which participants were asked to choose one of the options (1 = totally disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = totally agree). Subsequently, the results were demonstrated through specific numbers and percentages (%) with the application of the software called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 26 (SPSS 26). Based on the results, the study could determine Van Lang EFL students' reading patterns.

In order to determine the reliability of the data, the researcher applied Cronbach's Alpha and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), consisting of KMO and Bartlett's Test on the data collected from the questionnaire.

### *Reliability Statistics*

**Table 1.** Cronbach's Alpha (N=60)

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	N of items
Participants' reading attitude	.860	3.173	5
Participants' reading frequency	.979	2.967	5
Participants' reading materials	.962	3.417	4
Time that participants spent on reading	.959	2.971	4
Participants' reading purposes	.976	4.020	5

Cronbach's Alpha was applied to compute the reliability of the five-point Likert Scale instrument used to explore students' reading patterns. It is shown in Table 1 that Cronbach's Alpha for reading attitude 5-item scale is .860. The 5-item reading frequency variable score is .979, followed by the 4-item reading materials variable with .962 Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach's Alpha scores of the time spent on reading consisting of 4 items and the 5-item reading purposes were .959 and 9.76, respectively. These Cronbach's Alpha scores indicate that the items on the questionnaire were undoubtedly reliable for the actual research. ( $0.6 < \text{Cronbach's Alpha} < 1$ ).

**Table 2.** KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.790
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1860.566
	df	253
	Sig.	.000

The researcher implemented KMO Test to examine how suited the data obtained from the

questionnaire was for factor analysis. As shown in Table 2, the KMO value of the sampling is .790, which presents a strong partial correlation between the variables. In other words, it is reasonable to conduct factor analysis. For factor analysis, Bartlett's test was also applied to determine whether the variables are unrelated and imperfect. With sig. =.000, which is less than 0.05. The table indicates that there is a correlation between variables in the data. Based on the KMO value of .790 (>0.5) and a significance level for Bartlett's test of .000, the data collected from the questionnaire was ideal for factor analysis without question.

To gather data for students' writing performance, the researcher administered a writing test on Microsoft Teams in which 60 participants belonged to the Research Team created by adding their emails. The participants were asked to write an essay on the assigned topic for a duration of 60 minutes. The researcher required all participants to turn on their cameras during the test to minimize the problem that students might cheat while doing the test. Moreover, the researcher got the IT Department to block access to any web browsers once the participants logged in to the system to take the test. Their works, then, were marked by two raters assessing four components: task fulfillment, organization, vocabulary, and grammar based on the Writing Rating Scale of Vietnamese Standardized Test of English Proficiency (VSTEP). The researcher and her colleague were the two raters who have been lecturers at Van Lang University for years and have gained considerable experience in rating writing tests in VSTEP. Additionally, the researcher applied the Inter-rater Reliability of the test using Pearson Correlation to ensure the reliability of the writing test results. The researcher subsequently used Pearson correlation with ANOVA and coefficients to determine the correlation between students' reading habits and their writing performance.

**Table 3.** Inter-rater Reliability of the test

		<b>Rater 1</b>	<b>Rater 2</b>
<b>Rater 1</b>	Pearson correlation	1	.714**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
<b>Rater 2</b>	Pearson Correlation	.714**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60
Measure of agreement		Kappa value: <b>.712</b>	

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As presented in Table 3, the Pearson correlation value,  $r$ , at the 0.01 level is .714, and sig. (2-tailed) was .000, which is smaller than 0.05. Based on these two values, it indicates that there is a significant correlation between the scores marked by the two raters. Additionally, the level of agreement between the two raters was analyzed using Cohen's Kappa (Descriptive statistics, SPSS 26). The Kappa value demonstrated in Table 3 is .712, which shows a strong agreement between the two raters.

The qualitative data was obtained through a structured interview in which 15 students were chosen in accordance with their writing scores. The population in which 3 got excellent, 4 had

good, 4 obtained mediocly, and 4 had poor writing scores was asked a list of 10 questions regarding students' reading patterns and their perspectives on the correlation between reading habits and writing performance. Each participant was invited to join the interview on Microsoft Teams, which lasted around 10 minutes, and was informed that the interview was video recorded. To gather most information and avoid misunderstanding, the interviewees were allowed to use Vietnamese whenever they had difficulties expressing ideas in English. The researcher subsequently translated the ideas into English during the analysis process. The qualitative data from the interview was interpreted with the support of thematic analysis in which the writer adopted open coding to capture noticeable ideas about the attitude toward reading, frequency of reading activity, reading materials, time spent for reading, purposes of reading, and the correlation between reading habits and writing ability. Subsequently, the researcher applies axial coding to generate themes relating to these issues and make generalizations about the relationship between students' reading habits and their writing achievements.

## Results/Findings and discussion

### *Quantitative analysis*

The quantitative analysis based on the online questionnaire and writing test scores consisted of descriptive statistics, including mean, minimum, maximum, frequency, percentages, and standard deviation. Moreover, reliability statistics were analyzed, covering Cronbach's Alpha, Pearson Correlation, Regression with Durbin, ANOVA and coefficients. The findings were presented under the headings: Reading habit (Reading Attitude, Reading Frequency, Reading Materials, Time spent on Reading and Purposes of Reading), Writing Test Scores, and the Correlation between Reading Habit and Writing Performance. These analyses were conducted to respond to the research questions exploring the reading patterns of EFL students at Van Lang University and determining the correlation between their reading habits and their writing achievements.

### *Demographic information*

Demographic information collected from the questionnaire was analyzed with the application of descriptive statistics of SPSS 26, covering the frequency of participants' classes, genders, and ages.

**Table 4.** Demographic data on participants' classes, genders, and ages (SPSS 26)

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
<b>Classes</b>	K25	42	70%
	K26	18	30%
<b>Genders</b>	Male	22	37%
	Female	38	63%
<b>Ages</b>	20	18	30%
	21	30	50%
	≥22	12	20%

A descriptive frequency analysis of respondents' classes, genders, and ages is presented in Table 4. It demonstrates that most of the participants (N= 42, 70%) belonged to K25, which were juniors, and the other 30% (N=18) were sophomores belonging to K26. The table also revealed that the majority of students responding to the survey were female (N= 38, 63%) compared with 37% of male participants (N=22). In addition, the findings displayed that half of the population, 50%, were 21, while the other 30% were at the age of 20. The age above 22 contributes 20% (N = 12) to the population.

### *Reading habit*

### *Reading attitude*

**Table 5.** Descriptive statistics of participants' reading attitude (SPSS 26)

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD)%	2 (D)%	3 (N)%	4 (A)%	5 (TA)%	Mean	SD
1	In my opinion, reading is rewarding and interesting.	5	5	30	31.7	28.3	3.73	1.087
2	Reading helps to improve my vocabulary significantly.	8.3	21.7	35	20	15	3.12	1.166
3	I usually take notes of less-common words, idiomatic expressions, colloquialisms, or useful structures from the texts.	16.7	15	28.3	15	25	3.17	1.404
4	I'm into discussing the contents of the books with my peers.	15	23.3	36.7	11.7	13.3	2.85	1.219
5	I do not like it when I hear someone says that reading is time-consuming.	13.3	21.7	31.7	18.3	15	3.00	1.249

Statistics demonstrated in Table 5 shows the degree of each item on participants' reading attitudes. Sixty percent of the respondents agreed that reading was rewarding and interesting (M=3.73), while they neutrally stated that their lexical resource was enhanced through reading activity (M=3.12). The population was still neutral when expressing their ideas on the habit of taking notes of less-common words, idiomatic expressions, colloquialisms, or useful structures from the texts (M=3.17). The rates of the last two items are 2.85 and 3.00, respectively, which shows the participants were neutral in expressing that they were into discussing the contents of the books with their peers and they did not like it when someone said that reading was time-consuming.

**Table 6.** Descriptive statistics of participants' reading frequency (SPSS 26)

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD) %	2 (D) %	3 (N) %	4 (A) %	5 (TA) %	Mean	SD
6	Despite being busy with my homework, I try to find some time to read every day.	6.7	16.7	30	31.7	15	3.32	1.127
7	I read at least two English articles or journals every week.	6.7	16.7	50	21.7	5	3.02	.930
8	I read at least one book once a month.	6.7	26.7	41.7	25	0	2.85	.880
9	In each semester, I read at least two English books (besides the coursebooks).	5	28.3	41.7	25	0	2.87	.853
10	I buy/borrow at least one new book every three months.	8.3	31.7	36.7	20	3.3	2.78	.976

As shown in Table 6, the rates of all items are around medium evaluation (2.61-3.40). With the mean scores of 3.32 and 3.02, respectively, the overall population neutrally claimed that they tried to find some time to read every day despite their busy schedule and they read at least two English articles or journals every week. The last three items 8, 9, and 10 have lower mean scores that are just around 2.8. These scores present that most respondents were neutral to state that they read at least one book once a month ( $M=2.85$ ), read at least two English books (exceeding the coursebooks) each semester ( $M=2.87$ ), and bought/borrowed at least one new book every three months ( $M=2.78$ ).

**Table 7.** Descriptive statistics of participants' reading materials (SPSS 26)

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD) %	2 (D) %	3 (N) %	4 (A) %	5 (TA) %	Mean	SD
11	I'm interested in books written in English more than ones written in other languages.	8.3	20	36.7	25	10	3.08	1.094
12	I prefer to read articles, journals, or short stories rather than comic books.	3.3	6.7	13.3	55	21.7	3.85	.954
13	I usually read English books on my major or books recommended by my teachers.	5	6.7	33.3	40	15	3.53	.999
14	I prefer to read e-books more than printed ones.	18.3	10	25	26.7	20	3.20	.853

It is revealed in Table 7 that the majority of participants (76.7%) firmly agreed that they preferred to read articles, journals, or short stories rather than comic books ( $M=3.85$ ). They

were also in favor of item 13 that they usually read English books on their majors or books recommended by their teachers ( $M=3.53$ ). The respondents continued to show their neutral idea that they were interested in books written in English more than ones written in other languages ( $M=3.08$ ). They were also neutral in mentioning that they preferred to read e-books more than printed ones ( $M=3.20$ ).

**Table 8.** Descriptive statistics of time participants spent on reading (SPSS 26)

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD) %	2 (D) %	3 (N) %	4 (A) %	5 (TA) %	Mean	SD
15	I read 30 minutes – 1 hour every day.	1.7	8.3	30	35	25	3.73	.774
16	I read 1 hour – 2 hours every day.	1.7	23.3	55	16.7	3.3	2.97	.780
17	I read 2 hours – 3 hours every day.	8.3	26.7	36.7	25	3.3	2.88	.993
18	I read 4 hours every day.	11.7	26.7	45	13.3	3.3	2.70	.962

The results demonstrated in Table 8 present that most participants are willing to spend 30 minutes to one hour reading daily ( $M=3.73$ ) while they express their neutral notions on spending a longer time on the activity. With the mean scores of 2.97 and 2.88, respectively, the respondents were neutral in spending from 1-2 hours and from 2 – 3 hours reading every day. The lowest mean score of the item 18  $M=2.70$ , only slightly above 2.60, indicates that the students are obviously reluctant to spend such much time (4 hours) reading daily.

**Table 9.** Descriptive statistics of participants' reading purposes (SPSS 26)

Items	Questionnaire	1 (TD) %	2 (D) %	3 (N) %	4 (A) %	5 (TA) %	Mean	SD
19	I read books to refresh myself and reduce stress.	3.3	3.3	28.3	45	20	3.75	.932
20	I read books to widen my lexical resources and learn how to write sentences, paragraphs, and essays.	3.3	3.3	10	51.7	31.7	4.05	.928
21	I read books to acquire knowledge and get news about the world.	3.3	0	5	55	36.7	4.22	.825
22	I read books for learning purposes such as doing assignments, writing essays, or revision for exams.	3.3	0	10	51.7	35	4.15	.860
23	I read books to understand other people's viewpoints.	6.7	0	13.3	53.3	26.7	3.93	1.006

As shown in Table 9, most of the participants firmly agreed that their own reading purposes forced them to conduct the activity ( $M= 3.90 - 4.40$ ). The primary purpose of almost every respondent (91.7%) is reading for knowledge and updated news about the world ( $M=4.22$ ). They were also in strong agreement with the purposes of reading for doing assignments, writing essays or exams ( $M=4.15$ ), and reading to widen lexical resources and learn how to write ( $M=4.05$ ). These purposes are followed by reading to understand other people's viewpoints ( $M=3.93$ ), to feel relaxed, and reduce stress ( $M=3.75$ ).

### *Writing Test Scores*

The works of 60 participants in the writing test were marked by two raters. As discussed in the section on data collection and analysis, the reliability of the scores by two raters was assured with the Pearson Correlation value of .714 and the Cohen's Kappa value of .712. These two values indicate there is a significant consistency and a strong agreement between the two raters. The researcher, therefore, took the average of the scores marked by the two raters as data to explore the research questions: "To what extent do the sophomores and juniors at Van Lang University perform their writing abilities?" and "Is there any relation between reading habits and writing performance?"

**Table 10.** Descriptive statistics of participants' Writing Test Scores (SPSS 26)

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
60	13.5	36	25.07	6.76

The 60-minute writing test in which the participants were asked to write an essay on the assigned topic was administered online with the support of Microsoft Teams. The student's scores from the test were the data for their writing performance. The results shown in Table 10 present that the mean is 25.07, the highest score is 36, and the lowest one is just 13.5. Based on the Writing Rating Scale of the Vietnamese Standardized Test of English Proficiency (VSTEP), the researcher ranked the scores into four groups ranging from poor 0-15 (under A2 to A2), mediocre 16-23 (B1), good 24-33 (B2) and excellent 34-40 (C1).

**Table 11.** Descriptive frequency of participants' Writing Test Scores (SPSS 26)

Scores	Frequency	Percentage (%)
34-40	8	13.3
24-33	29	48.3
16-23	14	23.3
0-15	9	15

The findings of the analysis demonstrate that most of the participants (48.3%) have good writing performance, which means that their scores were in the range of 24-33 (B2). The number of students getting mediocre scores ranged from 16 to 23 (B1) was 14, which equals 23.3%. 15% of 60 students have poor writing ability, with scores in the range of 0-15 (under A2 to A2). The group of students getting excellent writing achievement with a range of scores between 34 and 40 contributes 13.3% to the overall population.

*The correlation between reading habits and writing performance***Table 12.** Pearson Correlation between reading habit and writing performance (SPSS 26)

No			1	2 (r <sub>A</sub> )	3(r <sub>F</sub> )	4(r <sub>M</sub> )	5(r <sub>T</sub> )	6(r <sub>P</sub> )
1	Writing performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.433**	.501**	.400**	.542**	.412**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	60	60	60	60	60	60
2	Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.433**	1	.273	-.048	.351	-.016
3	Frequency	Pearson Correlation	.501**	.273	1	.174	.252	.303
4	Materials	Pearson Correlation	.400**	-.048	.174	1	.452	-.026
5	Time	Pearson Correlation	.542**	.351	.252	.452	1	.025
6	Purposes	Pearson Correlation	.412**	-.016	.303	-.026	.025	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Bivariate correlation analysis in SPSS 26 was applied to examine the relationship between participants' reading habits and their writing achievement. The statistics displayed in Table 12 show that the Pearson Correlation coefficients between two variables, reading habit and writing performance, range from .400 (Purposes) to .542 (Time). Among 5 independent variables, the reading time has the highest obtained coefficient with  $r_T = .542$  followed by that of the reading frequency variable with  $r_F = .501$ . The correlation coefficient of the reading material is the lowest with an r-value of .400, while the others, reading attitude and reading purposes, have slightly higher obtained coefficients with  $r = .433$  and  $r = .412$ , respectively. The results indicate a moderate correlation between two independent variables: Reading Frequency and Reading time, with the dependent variable: writing performance ( $r_T = .542$ ,  $r_F = .501$ , belonging to .5-.7) at the 0.01 level. Writing performance is also positively related with reading attitude ( $r_A = .433$ ), reading materials ( $r_M = .400$ ) and reading purposes ( $r_P = .412$ ).

*Regression Coefficients***Table.13.** Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.792 <sup>a</sup>	.627	.593	4.31533	1.931
a. Predictors: (Constant), X5, X1, X3, X2, X4					
b. Dependent Variable: Y1					



Regression Coefficients using SPSS 26 reveal that Adjusted R Square is .593, which means that 59.3% of the variance in writing achievement can be predicted from reading patterns. In other words, 59.3% of the factors of reading habits in the model influence writing performance levels.

**Table 14.** ANOVA

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1690.640	5	338.128	18.157	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1005.593	54	18.622		
	Total	2696.233	59			
a. Dependent Variable: WRSCORES						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Purposes, Attitude, Materials, Frequency, Time						

The Table 14 shows that the data is statistically significant with  $F = 18.157$  and  $p = .000 < 0.01$ . This indicates that the predictors (Attitude, Frequency, Materials, Time, and Purposes) significantly combine together to impact the writing performance positively.

**Table 15.** Coefficients in regression linear analysis (SPSS, 26)

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-9.237	3.845		-2.421	.019
	Attitude	2.135	.650	.311	3.283	.002
	Frequency	1.442	.688	.196	2.097	.041
	Materials	1.774	.621	.278	2.855	.006
	Time	2.017	.835	.249	2.415	.019
	Purposes	2.785	.684	.359	4.071	.000

a. Dependent Variable: WRSCORES

As displayed in Table 15, all five variables: Attitude, Frequency, Materials, Time, and Purposes, significantly contribute to the equation for predicting writing performance with p values .002, .041, .006, .019, and .000, respectively, which are smaller than 0.05. Additionally, all the Standardized Coefficients, Beta, in the table are all positive numbers, which show a positive correlation between the independent variable: reading habit and the dependent variable: writing performance. The standardized coefficient of Reading Purposes is the highest one ( $\beta_P = .359$ ), followed by Reading Attitude ( $\beta_A = .311$ ) and Reading Materials ( $\beta_M = .278$ ).

### *Qualitative analysis*

#### *The structured interview*

The data obtained from the structured interview was analyzed with descriptive statistics analysis, SPSS, 26.

**Table 16.** Interviewees' attitudes toward reading

What is your attitude towards reading habits?	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
Rewarding	3	12%	Positive
Interesting	7	28%	Positive
Relaxing	6	24%	Positive
Difficult	3	12%	Negative
Boring and tiring	3	12%	Negative
Time-consuming	3	12%	Negative

Table 16 describes 15 interviewees' opinions about reading habits. Most of the respondents (64%) take a positive attitude toward reading. Specifically, 28% of the interviewees described reading as an interesting activity they remained for a long time. The students also claimed that reading was rewarding (12%) since the activity brought good effects to their life, helping them relax (24%) and update news about the world. However, some students adopted a negative attitude toward reading when expressing that reading was time-consuming (12%). A few students (12%) asserted that they felt bored and tired from frequently reading for a long time, although they knew reading was beneficial for their study and their life. Other respondents affirmed that sometimes it was difficult to maintain reading habits, especially when they were distracted by other entertainments.

#### **What usually attracts your attention when reading?**

Most of the interviewees (85%) strongly affirmed that the content of reading materials was the primary factor that held their attention to the very end. They focused on the content to obtain knowledge or updated information or sharpen their imagination or get a fresh perspective on life. Apart from the content, lexical items and complex structures were also the factors getting respondents' focus. 50% of the interviewed students claimed that they usually took notes of less-common words, idiomatic expressions, colloquialism, or complex structures from the reading texts. Some other students (30%) affirmed that content was the only concern when reading, while the other 20% revealed they were only attracted to the lexical items or structures in the texts. Few students (nearly 14%), however, expressed their reluctance to read when stating nothing like the content, the vocabulary, or the structures of the texts kept their attention, but the pressure to pass the exam really did.

**Table 17.** Frequency of going to the library

How often do you go to read in the library?	Frequency	Percentages
2 or 3 times a week	1	7%
Once a week	2	13%
Once or twice a month	2	13%
Preparing for exam	3	20%
Never	7	47%

Regarding the frequency of going to read in the library, nearly half of the students (47%) admitted that they had never gone to the library to read. They explained their preference for reading at home due to the comfortable reading environment with a spacious reading room and

refreshments. Besides, they liked reading e-books with friends and discussing the contents with them verbally, while in the library, they had to comply with rules and keep silent. Twenty percent of the respondents stated that they just went to read in the library once they were preparing for exams since the quiet learning atmosphere in the library completely suited their needs. Five out of fifteen students (33%) formed a habit of going to read in the library. Three respondents (20%) said that they went to the library weekly: one kept a habit of going there 2 or 3 times per week, and the others went there once every week. Two other students (13%) claimed that they had the habit of coming to the library once or twice a month.

### **If you are busy with other activities, will you find some time to read every day?**

It is reported that five interviewees (33%) strongly affirmed that they were willing to spend some time reading every day despite being busy with other affairs as they maintained the habit of reading for 30 minutes to one hour daily. They claimed that reading short stories or magazines before bedtime could quickly get them to sleep while reading right after wake-up could raise high morale for a new day. Forty-five percent of the respondents affirmed that they rarely read when they were swamped with other activities like doing homework, preparing for exams, or taking part-time jobs. If the affairs were not so challenging or they had some intermission to break, they would read for updated news or relaxation. The other 22% of the participants expressed their unwillingness to read if busy. They explained that they needed time and undivided attention for the work they were focusing on since finishing the task was their main concern at that time.<sup>2</sup>

### **How many English documents do you read in one month besides the coursebooks?**

The reading materials in which most respondents have a keen interest are academic or major-related documents and fiction books. More than half of the interviewees (53%) claimed that they finished at least one book per month, while 20% even said that they read 2 or 3 books a month. They were interested in different kinds of documents ranging from reference books, science journals, and research papers to short stories and novels.

Regarding the frequency of reading non-fiction books, 40% of the interviewees affirmed that they did not have a habit of reading non-fiction documents. They only read when they were forced to or when they were under pressure to pass the exams. The other 60% claimed that they completed one non-fiction book every semester, and the subjects that caught their attention were history, fine arts, crimes, economy, and science.

### **Do you form a habit of reading slogans, labels, ads, or subtitles written in English?**

The majority of interviewees (80%) strongly agreed that slogans, goods labels, ads, or subtitles written in English easily captured their attention. The explanation was they were impressed with the special use of English in slogans or ad titles. Others asserted that they could learn structures and lexical items or practice translation and pronunciation. The remaining 20% were neutral in mentioning that they occasionally noticed these short chunks, but the other time they might not be interested in these words.

### What genre of books are you interested in? Why?

The collected data reported that 63% of the respondents prefer reading fiction documents rather than non-fiction ones. Short stories or novels are two genres that interviewees normally spent time reading as they could sharpen their imagination, develop their perspectives, and fulfill their wishes. Thirty percent of the students have a preference for non-fiction documents, including fine arts, history, economy, and science. Only one out of 15 students (7%) claimed that he did not concern about the kind of reading materials, and he performed the action of reading books without thinking much about the favorite genre.

### Will you read books recommended by your teachers?

The responses obtained from the interview demonstrated different perspectives on the suggested documents. Forty-seven percent of the interviewees claimed that they were willing to read documents recommended by their teachers, including references, journals, or research papers to get deeper insights and better performance, while 33% affirmed that they rarely read external documents. These five students explained that they focused on coursebooks and just read other documents to find related information. The other 20% admitted they had never read any books suggested by their lectures since they thought they could pass the courses without further reading.

### What are your purposes for reading?

**Table 18.** Interviewees' reading purposes

What are your purposes for reading?	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Relaxation	3	12%
Acquiring knowledge and getting news	8	32%
Learning and exams	10	40%
Understanding others' perspectives	2	8%
Develop imagination	2	8%

As shown in Table 18, interviewees affirmed their primary purposes (40%) for reading were doing assignments, writing essays, and preparing for the exams. The purposes of acquiring knowledge and getting updated news were also common. Thirty-two percent of the respondents agreed that reading could get them informed and knowledgeable. The other students claimed that their purposes for reading were to relax (12%): reading could help them reduce stress, get to sleep more quickly and keep balance in life. Eight percent of the interviewees read to develop their imagination and get new ideas quickly. The other 8% hoped to understand other people's viewpoints when they performed frequent reading activities. They explained that reading could develop their critical thinking, sharpen their thoughts, and broaden their perspectives.

### Do you think there is a correlation between reading habits and writing performance? In what way does reading habit affect writing achievement?

The obtained data from the interview demonstrates that most of the respondents (80%) strongly believed that there was a significant correlation between reading habits and writing performance. According to these 12 students, the habit of reading could enhance their lexical

resources, get them to come up with ideas easily, and provide samples of how essays were organized. Therefore, they could use a wide range of vocabulary, elaborate valid points with lots of ideas, and organize their pieces of writing cohesively and coherently. On the contrary, the other 20% of the interviewees claimed that they were neutral in determining the influence of reading habits on writing achievement. They affirmed that their main purpose for reading was to relax; as a result, they did not often pay attention to lexical terms or text organization. Additionally, they believed their writing scores could improve if they spent time practicing. Two other students also affirmed that their writing performance was better thanks to the teacher's instructions, comments, and frequent practice.

## Discussion

### *Question 1: What are the reading patterns of EFL students at Van Lang University?*

The present study discovered the reading patterns of ELF students at Van Lang University in five aspects: reading attitude, reading frequency, reading materials, time spent on reading, and reading purposes. The findings of the study revealed that EFL students at Van Lang University perform the habit of reading to achieve their purposes. The primary purpose of the reading activity was to acquire knowledge and get updates on the world (M=4.22). Reading for learning was also the common purpose of EFL students at Van Lang University (M=4.15). Additionally, students read to enhance their lexical resources and to learn how to write (M=4.05). Students decided to build up good reading habits as reading could help them understand other viewpoints (M=3.93) and deal with stress (M=3.75)

The findings of this research completely match the results of the study by Balan, Katenga and Simon (2019), who affirmed that the main purpose of reading was to learn new things and to gain knowledge. The results support Akabuike and Asika's findings (2012), who believed that students purposely read to pass the quizzes and exams. These findings confirm the results of other studies such as Owusu-Acheaw (2014), Clark and Rumbold (2006), and Pham (2021) with the statement that students conduct the activity of reading when they get bored and when they need a recreation to deal with stress.

The results of the research describe that most Van Lang EFL students have positive attitudes toward reading habits. Sixty percent of the participants claimed that reading is rewarding and interesting (M = 3.73) since the activity brings good effects to their life, helping them relax (24 %) and update news about the world. These findings resemble the study by Lukhele (2013), who revealed that students who had good reading had excellent English proficiency. These results, however, contradict Akabuike and Asika (2012), who found that students in Anambra State University had a negative attitude toward reading when they considered reading a boring, time-consuming, and difficult activity.

Regarding the types of reading materials, the findings demonstrate that most students (76.7%) prefer to read articles, journals, or short stories rather than comic books (M=3.85). The data from the structured interview support the findings. Students had a preference for learning a

wide range of vocabulary, well-formed structures, and how to organize sentences cohesively, which comic books with short phrases could not demonstrate. They also firmly agreed that they usually read English books on their majors or books recommended by their teachers ( $M=3.53$ ). These results match with the finding of the study by Oriogu et al. (2017), who affirmed that the majority of students were willing to read textbooks of their specialization and books assigned by the professors.

The present study finds that nearly half of the participants (47.5%) were willing to find some time to read despite being tied with other activities. The notion was clarified with the statement that most participants had a habit of spending 30 minutes to one hour reading daily ( $M=3.73$ ). The data from the interview also describe a positive tendency in Van Lang EFL students when 53% of the respondents claimed that they read at least one book a month. Excellent-score students even affirmed they finished 2 or 3 books in one month. These findings demonstrate similarities with those of the study by Erdem (2015), who asserted that nearly half of students in Ankara University and Erciyes University read one book a month, and more than 20% finished two or more books a month.

*Question 2: To what extent do the sophomores and juniors at Van Lang University perform their writing abilities?*

In terms of writing performance, the findings revealed that 13.3% of 60 samples have excellent writing scores, and 48.3% have good writing ability. The other 23.3 % get mediocre writing scores, while 15% have poor writing skills. With a standard deviation of 6.76, students' writing scores varied. The results of the present study demonstrate that the writing performance of EFL students at Van Lang University is mediocre, with a mean of 25.07. This means that most of the participants get a level of B2 for their writing performance based on the Writing Rating Scale of VSTEP. Meanwhile, the English Outcome Standard for English Linguistics and Literature majors is normally IELTS 6.5+ or CEFR C1 or VSTEP C1. Undoubtedly, the writing performance of English majors at Van Lang University did not match the norm. That 30% of the participants of this study were sophomores, who did not finish all writing courses, could account for the result. Additionally, a total lack of a required certificate in English Learning Outcomes (ELO) of the Foreign Languages Faculty at Van Lang University contributes to the finding. Therefore, it is obvious that to reach the normal English Outcome Standard, Van Lang EFL scholars must improve their writing skills.

*Question 3: Is there any relation between reading habits and writing performance?*

Bivariate correlation analysis in SPSS 26 was implemented to measure the effects of reading patterns on writing performance. The results demonstrate that all the five reading factors: reading attitude, reading frequency, reading materials, reading time, and reading purposes have a positive correlation with writing ability ( $r_A=.433$ ,  $r_F=.501$ ,  $r_M=.400$ ,  $r_T=.542$ ,  $r_P=.412$  respectively). These findings support the study by Linuwih and Winardi (2020), who affirmed that students' reading habits have a positive and significant effect on their writing skills. The present study confirms that students' reading time is the most significant factor affecting their

writing achievement ( $r_T=.542$ ), followed by students' reading frequency ( $r_F=.501$ ). This notion is also in line with the conclusion discussed in the research by Harl (2013). He affirmed that students who read constantly would be able to write well thanks to deeper insights into how to write.

The results obtained from Regression Coefficients analysis using SPSS 26 reveal that 59.3% of the factors of reading habit could explain the variance in writing performance. The findings match the results of the study by Linuwih and Winardi (2020), who reported that the influence of reading habits on writing skills was 82.3%. The Standardized Coefficients Beta displayed that students' reading purpose significantly affects their writing performance ( $\beta_P = .359$ ), followed by Reading Attitude ( $\beta_A = .311$ ) and Reading Materials ( $\beta_M = .278$ ). The findings show similarities with those of the research conducted by Balan, Katenga and Simon (2019), who claimed that the purpose of reading has a significant correlation with academic results, including writing scores. The study complements Grabe's theory (2003) with a conclusion that students who willingly undertake intensive reading of magazines, newspapers, and books can improve their writing performance.

In summary, the statistics from Pearson Correlation and Regression Coefficients analyses display a moderate correlation between students' reading habits and their writing skills. Among the five factors creating a good reading pattern, the amount of time spent on reading and reading purposes have the most significant impact on writing achievement.

## Conclusion

The research on the effects of reading habits on writing performance was conducted with the analyses of quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the online survey, the writing test, and the structured interview. The study results showed that students perform the action of reading to achieve their own purposes ( $M=4.020$ ), including getting knowledge and updates, learning and examination, recreation, and understanding others' perspectives. Most of the students had positive attitudes toward reading habits when maintaining a habit of reading for 30 minutes to one hour daily (60%,  $M=3.73$ ) and finishing at least one book a month (53% of the interviewees). The participants also had an interest in extensive reading of short stories, journals, or books more than comic ones to learn how to write ( $M=3.85$ ). Most learners supported the idea that they were willing to read books to their specifications and ones suggested by their lecturers ( $M=3.53$ ).

Descriptive statistics on the writing scores from the test delivered to 60 participants describe that the writing scores of Van Lang English majors varied from excellent performance to poor writing skill (standard deviation =6.76). With a mean of 25.07 ( $Max=40$ ), it is concluded that the writing performance of EFL students at Van Lang University is at a mediocre level.

Based on Pearson Correlation and Regression Coefficients analyses, it can be determined that there is a moderate correlation between reading habit and writing performance, with  $r$  obtained from 0.4 to 0.542. Students' reading purposes and the amount of time they spend on reading are

the two factors that significantly correlate with writing achievement ( $\beta_p = .359$ ,  $r_T = .542$ ). Additionally, with an adjusted square R-value of .593, the study affirmed that 59.3% of the factors belonging to the reading pattern influence the writing scores. Obviously,  $H_a$  is accepted, and  $H_o$  is rejected. The research supports the assumption that Van Lang EFL students' reading habits positively affect their writing performance. The more the students read, the better their writing scores are.

### *Limitations*

There remained some limitations of the present study. The participants were limited due to the pandemic Covid-19. As a result, the findings could not prove that the reading patterns and writing scores were similar to the whole population. The structured interview was delivered online, so some students might not feel comfortable and confident being recorded. Hence, sometimes their answers were not clear enough to be considered. Another limitation was that some participants belonging to group K26 still was not familiar with the online test and encountered some difficulties in performing the test. Therefore, to some extent, there were few papers that could not reflect students' writing abilities.

### *Suggestions*

Future studies should investigate factors that influence students' reading habits. It is necessary to figure out what leads to various reading patterns so that teachers can find effective incentives to help students develop good reading habits. Additionally, research papers in the future should explore the effects of lecturers' instructions on students' writing performance since some studies confirmed that in-class instructions have an impact on students' writing achievement. Future researchers can also research the genre of essays most likely affected by reading patterns.

The study's results emphasize that students' reading habits significantly influence their writing performance. The lecturers, hence, should have plans to increase EFL students' interest in reading and arouse their awareness of forming good reading habits. Moreover, a welcoming reading environment with a quiet and comfortable reading room, the availability of unlimited book resources in the library, and frequent book reviews could enhance students' interest in reading.

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## Biodata

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