

## **University Students' Literacy Skills Through Literature Texts**

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### **Abstract**

Literacy is a skill which owned by the students to understand analyze the information within reading and writing activities. Nowadays, Indonesia government has intensively promoted literacy activities to enhance both students' literacy skills and all citizens. Particularly, university students can be tutors to voice literacy culture which require them to perform the literacy skills inside them first and strengthen them. One of the methods the students can do is having done literature texts to develop their thinking skills and knowledge. The aim of this study was to find out the university students' literacy skills through the use of literature texts. The subject of this study was the students of Indonesian Language and Literature Study Program of FKIP Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar. The object of this study was the students' literacy skills. This study was a qualitative study, in which the data were taken from the use of test, observation and interview. It was found that the students' literacy skills were shown from their reading and writing literature texts. The students' reading skill showed the mean score of 77.2 whereas their writing skill showed the mean score of 74.8. Therefore, the university students' literacy skills could be categorized as good.

### **1. Introduction**

Knowledge is an important aspect that must be mastered for the development of one's education. The knowledge is not merely to be mastered, but also to be involved in the process of learning, and utilize it. As we know, the learning process is mostly through reading. Knowledge that develops rapidly is no longer possible to be mastered through the process of listening or transition from a teacher, but must pass through reading.

Nearly 80-90 percent of knowledge comes from reading. Reading is the process of giving meaning to the world [1]. Thus, people who love to read will lead to a generation of learning (learning society). Only by reading, individual can be changed, our thoughts and behavior also change. Reading is essentially a complex thing that involves many things, not just reciting writing, but also involves visual, thinking, psycholinguistic, and

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metacognitive activities. As a visual process, reading is the process of translating written symbols (letters) into spoken words. As a thinking process, reading includes word recognition activities, literal understanding, interpretation, critical reading, and creative understanding. Word recognition can be in the form of reading words using a dictionary. As a psycholinguistic process, reading can help to communicate and interpret messages. Meanwhile, as a metacognitive process, reading involves planning, rectifying a strategy, monitoring and evaluating [2].

Reading activities will be more meaningful when collaborated with writing, this is due to the knowledge gained from reading can generate new ideas that can be set forth in written language. Writing is a productive and expressive activity, in which the writing activity of the writer must be skilled in utilizing graphology, language structure, and vocabulary. Writing is lowering or depicting graphic symbols that describe a language understood by someone, so people can read the symbols

of the graph if they understand the language and the picture of the symbol [3].

The ability to read and write is basically needed in building critical and creative attitudes towards all life phenomena that occur in the community. The ability to read and write can be interpreted as literacy in the narrow sense [4]. It is written in written language. Literacy is the ability to use skills in processing and understanding data or information in reading and writing activities. Literacy ability is a very important initial foundation in a child's life. Children can socialize and communicate through language.

The national phenomenon is that the literacy ability of Indonesian children is very low compared to children from other countries. The results of the PISA (the Program for International Student Assessment), from 2000 to 2012, were not satisfactory. In 2000 the mean score of Indonesian students in terms of reading was 371 (international mean score was 500) ranked 39th out of 41 countries. In 2003, the mean score was 382th 39th out of 40 countries. In 2006, the mean score was is 393, it was ranked 48 out of

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56 countries. In 2009, it is improved to 402, ranked 57 out of 65 countries. In 2012, the mean score of reading was only 396, ranked 64 out of 65 countries [5].

The low literacy of students above needs to get attention from all parties not only teachers in schools. There must also be support from families and parties in the world of education. Today, the government is incessant in promoting culture literacy so that the literacy abilities of students and the community can generally be improved. One component that can help the government is students. Students can become model of children who love to read and write .. For that, students must be able to apply the literacy for themselves and foster the ability in literacy as a provision in a career and the next life. Students must have a thorough and deep knowledge and understanding of literacy. Therefore, the literacy ability of students needs to be known from the beginning so that students who have low ability can improve themselves to be more fond of reading and writing in order to improve their quality. Students can do literary literacy to develop

ways of thinking and knowledge.

Literature texts is a text that is close to student life, through which a literary text can sometimes reflect itself as if it resembles a story in the text. Students' literacy skills can be known through literary puzzles. This is seen from the ability of students to appreciate the text through reading and writing activities.

One research related to literacy, among others entitled *Mobilities of Language and Literacy Ideologies : Dual Language Graduates Bilingualism and Biliteracy* [6]. The results showed that the findings highlight that ideologies of language and literacy are neither static nor fixed, but over time, they have been molded and reshaped in a very fluid and lively process. Another research related to literacy entitled *Culturally Responsive Instruction and Literacy Learning*, Any given student, it is the exploration of cultural identity as the basis for gaining knowledge the cultural knowledge and history of one's ancestors, as well as the academic knowledge of the wider world for purposes of contributing to the well-being of one's family, community,

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and lāhui (people or nation) [7].

In connection with the foregoing, the researchers conducted a study entitled "University Students Literacy Skills through Literature Texts". The purpose of this study was to determine the literacy skills of students through literature texts.

## **2. Method**

This research is a qualitative descriptive study. There are 3 important elements in qualitative descriptive namely identification, classification and interpretation [8]. The subjects in this study were students of the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program FKIP Unmas Denpasar, and the object of this study was the ability of student literacy. The data collection in this study was carried out by tests, observations and interviews. The test was conducted to determine the literacy skills of students (reading and writing). Reading aspects were viewed from intonation, vocals, sentiments, and expressions when students read literary stories. Writing aspects were reviewed from the topic, choice of words, suitability of the contents with the topic,

and sentence. Observations were carried out systematically by observing student behavior in learning activities to obtain data about the steps taken in literacy [9]. Interviews were conducted with unstructured interview guidelines, because the questions asked contained only the outline [10]. Interviews were conducted to students who received the highest and lowest scores to find out the obstacles felt in literacy.

## **3. Finding and Discussion**

The researcher assessed students' skills to read literature texts, in this case the selected literature texts were fairy tales. First, students read and understood one of the tales that were considered interesting. The selection of literature texts in the form of fables was motivated by the fact that students as prospective teachers must be able to make a story come alive and meaningful. The assessment aspects that become criteria in reading fairy tales were intonation with the highest score of 25, vocal with score of 25, an inspiration with the highest score of 25, and expressions with the highest score of 25.

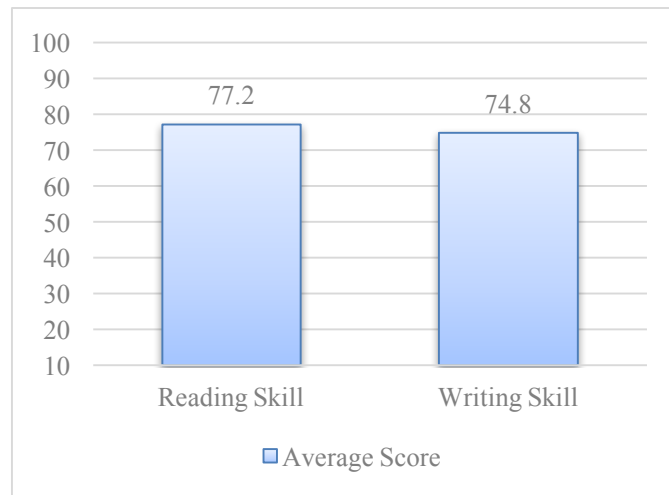
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The results of students' reading ability showed that the mean score of reading ability of students was 77.2 with good category. There were 4 (12.9%) students who have got 60, 11 students have got 70 (35.4%), 13 students have got 80 (41.9%), and 2 students have got 90 (6.4%).

Students' ability to write is seen from the ability to write literature texts, where the literature texts chosen were short stories. Students wrote short stories according to the theme or topic chosen by students. The aspects assessed in writing short stories include: the topic chosen has got maximum

score of 25, word choice has got the maximum score of 25, the content fit the assignment has got the maximum score of 25, the sentence use has got the maximum score of 25.

The results of students' writing skills showed the mean score of 74.8 and was categorized into sufficient, 6 students has got 60 (19.3%), 14 students has got 70 (45.1%), 11 students has got 80 (35.4%). From the results of students' reading and writing skills it can be concluded that the mean score of students literacy skills was 76 with good categories.



Graphic 1. The Average Score of the Students' Literacy Skill  
Information :  
Average reading skill 77.2

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Average writing skill 74.8

**Interview Result**

Interviews were conducted after conducting the reading and writing skills test. Researchers came into students who got the highest and lowest scores with a reasonable attitude so that students did not feel they were being interviewed. The researcher begins by asking students' interest in literature and the intensity of students reading literary works. The student who got the highest score answered that he likes reading short stories. the student liked short stories because short stories made them feel as if they were experiencing an event in the short stories. This made the students felt confident and quickly understood and mastered the characters in the tale. The short stories that were usually read were found in newspapers and magazines. Interviews were also conducted for students who received the smallest grades, the results of the interviews showed that the students did not really like reading literary works. it happened because when reading the fable the student was not able to imagine the characters well. Likewise in writing activities, it was

recognized that it was very difficult to determine the topic and chose the right words in the writing. The results made the student feel that his ability was limited because they did not like to read.

**4. Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the mean score of students' literacy ability through literature texts is 76 with good categories. The mean score of students' reading ability is 77.2, while the mean score of students' writing ability is 74.8. The interview showed that students' interest in reading, especially literature texts, will affect their ability to understand literature and also write literary works.

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