

The Development of English Literacy for The Fifth Semester Students of Psychology

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Abstract

The development of English in education is advancing rapidly, making English literacy skills essential for students to enhance their understanding of various subjects. This study aims to explore and analyze the development of English literacy among fifth-semester students in the Psychology study program. The research utilized a qualitative approach, specifically a case study design, conducted at a private university in South Kalimantan. The participants included one course lecturer and six fifth-semester Psychology students. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and documentation. The results of the study revealed a significant improvement in the English literacy skills of the students over the course of the semester. Two key strategies were identified as influential in fostering this development: reading comprehension and the use of online resources. It was observed that Psychology students frequently applied English terms in their daily activities, indicating their growing familiarity with the language. The implementation of these strategies yielded positive outcomes in enhancing the students' English language proficiency. By focusing on reading comprehension and leveraging online tools, students demonstrated improved understanding and usage of English terminology. This study underscores the importance of integrating these strategies into the curriculum to further develop English literacy skills among Psychology students. Such efforts can better prepare students to engage with academic materials and professional opportunities that require English proficiency.

Keywords

Development of English Literacy, English Literacy, Student of Psychology

1. INTRODUCTION

English serves as the primary language for international communication, playing a vital role in various fields such as business, technology, and science. Its dominance allows individuals from different countries and backgrounds to collaborate and exchange ideas without language barriers, making English literacy increasingly essential for students across all departments, not just those studying English. The ability to effectively use English is crucial for facilitating the exchange of information, ideas, and innovation on a global scale.

Despite the recognized importance of English literacy, there are significant challenges in developing this skill. These challenges include inadequate resources, ineffective teaching methods, and low student motivation (Jiang & Lee, 2022). Additionally, the rapid evolution of technology and learning trends has further complicated literacy development. In the modern era, literacy extends beyond reading and writing to include the ability to process, analyze, and wisely use information in various contexts. As such, literacy now requires not only a deep understanding of information but also technological skills and the ability to think critically and creatively (Alfatihah et al., 2022).

For college students, developing literacy involves more advanced and specialized approaches compared to earlier educational stages. Students are expected to have a solid foundation in reading, writing, and critical thinking, which enables them to convey ideas clearly, develop strong arguments, and be open to different perspectives. Engaging with complex texts such as academic articles, textbooks, and literature is a key part of this process, requiring higher- level comprehension and analysis (Chong & Wang, 2021). Additionally, writing is a crucial aspect of literacy development. College students are often required to produce research papers, essays, and other written assignments, which help them articulate their thoughts coherently and develop structured arguments, all while adhering to academic conventions.

Participation in discussions, debates, and presentations further enhances students' oral communication skills, enabling them to express ideas effectively and engage in academic discourse. College students are encouraged to become independent learners, taking ownership of their literacy development by seeking additional resources, such as libraries and online databases, to further improve their reading and writing skills.

Psychology students, in particular, face unique challenges in developing English literacy. During client trials, for instance, they must understand and accurately interpret English vocabulary related to psychology. This involves summarizing and analyzing test results and producing detailed reports as part of their semester examination assignments. Mastery of the English language is essential for ensuring the effectiveness and accuracy of these assessments. The ability to critically engage with complex texts and communicate effectively in various formats is crucial for psychology students, both individually and in group settings.

Research on the English literacy skills of psychology students has revealed varying levels of proficiency. A study by Smith et al. (2018) found that while most psychology students possess adequate English literacy skills, some still require improvement. Furthermore, research by Brown & Jones (2019) demonstrated that students with higher English literacy tend to achieve better academic results than those with lower skills. Lee et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of integrating English literacy training into the psychology curriculum.

to enhance students' ability to understand and analyze material presented in English.

In conclusion, this research aims to evaluate the extent to which psychology students understand English, particularly in the context of tests and materials that use the language. The next step involves conducting an in-depth analysis of the factors influencing English literacy among psychology students and identifying effective strategies to enhance their skills.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Meaning of English Literacy

English Literacy refers to reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English. According to the Indonesian dictionary, literacy is defined in several ways, firstly literacy is defined as the ability to write and read. Then literacy is expressed as knowledge or skills in a particular field or activity. The concept of literacy can be approached from a range of different fields and perspectives (Rocha et al, 2020), and one of them encompasses a range of skills, including Comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and communications.

Being English literate enables individuals to effectively communicate, access information, and participate in various aspects of society where English is used as a primary or secondary language. Akram et al, (2020) state that "teacher and student encounter several obstacles that hinder them in acquiring effective English learning" Teachers and students encounter several obstacles that hinder them in acquiring practical English literacy. When it comes to acquiring adequate English literacy, both teachers and students may encounter various obstacles. Therefore These obstacles can hinder the learning process and make it challenging to achieve proficiency.

Each student has a unique learning style, and teachers must cater to these individual needs. For non-native English speakers, language barriers can pose a significant challenge. Understanding and expressing themselves in English may take time, leading to slower progress in acquiring adequate English literacy. However, addressing diverse learning styles can be challenging and require additional time and resources. More resources, such as textbooks, learning materials, or access to technology, can help effective English literacy instruction. They may find providing comprehensive and engaging lessons challenging without proper resources. Students with limited exposure to the English language outside the classroom may need help developing their language skills. Lack of opportunities to practice and immerse themselves in English can hinder their progress.

Moreover, students may need more support and motivation to stay engaged and committed to learning. Lack of encouragement or a supportive learning environment can hinder progress in acquiring adequate English literacy. To overcome these obstacles, teachers must employ effective teaching strategies

catering to diverse learning styles. Providing ample opportunities for practice, incorporating real-life examples, and utilizing technology can enhance the learning experience. Also, fostering a supportive and motivating environment inside and outside the classroom can help students overcome challenges and stay motivated. Collaboration between teachers, students, and parents is crucial in addressing obstacles and promoting effective English literacy acquisition.

2.2 The Benefit of Mastery English Literacy For The Student

Mastery of English literacy offers benefits for students. Rahman et al. (2022) state that "the usage of multiliteracy in Indonesia provides potential benefits, such as the growth of pupils' literacy levels." It significantly contributes to their academic success by enabling them to comprehend textbooks, classroom instructions, and research materials. Strong reading and writing skills empower students to excel in various subjects and perform well on exams. Then, proficiency in English enhances students' communication skills, allowing them to express their thoughts, ideas, and opinions effectively. This proficiency enables them to confidently engage in discussions, debates, and presentations.

Moreover, mastering English literacy opens doors to expanded opportunities for students. It provides access to global job markets, facilitates studying abroad, and enables the pursuit of higher education in English-speaking countries. Additionally, English Literacy grants students access to a vast amount of information, as most online resources, research papers, and educational materials are available in English. It also promotes cross-cultural understanding and fosters appreciation for diversity, as students can engage with English literature and interact with people from different backgrounds. Lastly, mastering English literacy enhances critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills, contributing to personal development and self-expression.

2.3 Strategy to develop English Literacy

To achieve English literacy proficiency, it is essential to adopt effective strategies that can help individuals improve their English literacy skills. According to Smith & Jhonson (2020) strategy to improve English literacy is comprehensive language learning program that could be focuses in reading, writing, listening, and speaking skill this program could include interactive and engaging activities.

1. Immersion

Immersing oneself in the English language through various mediums such as watching English movies, listening to English music, and reading English books is a highly effective method for enhancing vocabulary, comprehension, and pronunciation skills. By exposing oneself to authentic English content, individuals can familiarize themselves with different accents, idiomatic expressions, and

grammatical structures. This immersive approach not only helps in expanding one's vocabulary but also improves overall understanding of the language. Additionally, regular exposure to English media can aid in refining pronunciation skills by mimicking native speakers' intonation and speech patterns. Overall, immersing oneself in English-speaking environments is a valuable strategy for language learners seeking to enhance their proficiency in English.

2. Consistent Practice in Improving English Literacy

Establishing a consistent daily routine that includes dedicated time for reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English can significantly contribute to improving language proficiency. By allocating specific time slots for each language skill, individuals can focus on honing their abilities in a structured manner. Reading English materials helps expand vocabulary and comprehension, while writing practice enhances grammar and sentence structure. Engaging in speaking activities, whether through self-practice or conversations with native speakers or language exchange partners, allows for practical application of learned skills and boosts confidence in communication. Furthermore, actively listening to English content, such as podcasts or audiobooks, aids in improving listening comprehension and accent recognition. By incorporating these activities into daily practice, individuals can make steady progress in developing their English communication skills and overall language fluency.

3. Vocabulary Expansion

Expanding vocabulary is a crucial aspect of language learning, and utilizing various tools such as flashcards, vocabulary apps, and online resources can be highly effective in this endeavor. By actively engaging with these resources to learn and review new words and phrases regularly, individuals can gradually build a rich repertoire of vocabulary. It is also beneficial to practice incorporating these newly acquired words into sentences to reinforce understanding and usage. This practice not only helps in memorizing the meanings of the words but also enhances the ability to use them correctly in context. By consistently exposing oneself to new vocabulary and actively practicing its application, language learners can strengthen their language skills and become more proficient in expressing themselves effectively in English.

4. Reading Comprehension

Engaging with a diverse range of English texts, including books, newspapers, articles, and blogs, is a valuable method for improving language skills. It is advisable to begin with materials that align with one's current proficiency level and progressively move towards more challenging texts to expand vocabulary and comprehension. Taking notes while reading, summarizing key points, and discussing the content with others can deepen understanding and retention of the material. These active learning strategies not only reinforce language skills but also encourage critical thinking and analytical abilities. By

consistently exposing oneself to a variety of English texts and employing effective study techniques, individuals can enhance their language proficiency and develop a deeper appreciation for the nuances of the English language.

5. Writing Practice

Consistent practice in writing English is essential for the development of language skills. Starting with basic sentences and gradually progressing to more intricate structures is a recommended approach to building proficiency. By regularly engaging in writing activities such as maintaining a journal, composing essays, or participating in online writing communities to solicit feedback, individuals can refine their writing abilities and expand their vocabulary. Through practice, learners can improve their grammar, sentence construction, and overall coherence in written communication. Additionally, receiving constructive criticism from peers or mentors in writing communities can offer valuable insights for improvement. By incorporating these strategies into their routine, individuals can effectively enhance their English writing skills and become more confident and proficient writers over time.

6. Language Exchange

Improving speaking and listening skills in English can be effectively achieved through the practice of finding language exchange partners or participating in language exchange programs. By actively engaging in conversations with native English speakers, language learners have the opportunity to enhance their pronunciation, fluency, and overall communication abilities. Interacting with native speakers allows individuals to receive immediate feedback on their language usage, helping them identify and correct any errors in real-time. Moreover, conversing with native speakers exposes learners to authentic language usage, colloquial expressions, and cultural nuances, thereby enriching their language proficiency. Through regular interactions with language exchange partners, individuals can build confidence in speaking English, improve their listening skills by tuning into different accents and speech patterns, and ultimately enhance their overall communicative competence in the language.

7. Utilize Online Resources

Taking advantage of online resources, including language learning websites, apps, and interactive exercises, can greatly aid in improving English literacy skills. These platforms offer a wide range of tools such as grammar lessons, vocabulary drills, and language practice activities that can supplement the learning process effectively. Consistency and perseverance are key factors in the development of English literacy skills, and by incorporating these strategies into a dedicated practice routine, individuals can make substantial progress in their language proficiency. By regularly engaging with these online resources, learners can reinforce their understanding of English grammar rules, expand their vocabulary, and enhance their overall language comprehension. Additionally, the

interactive nature of these platforms allows for practical application of learned skills, making the learning experience more engaging and effective. Overall, utilizing online resources in conjunction with a consistent practice routine can lead to significant advancements in English literacy skills.

2.4 Development in English Literacy For Student

Development in English Literacy for college students is a crucial aspect of their academic and personal growth. As college students, further honing their English literacy skills becomes essential for success in their chosen fields. College students are exposed to complex texts and academic discourse through advanced coursework, research papers, and presentations (Zareva & Alla, 2020). This exposure helps them develop higher-level reading comprehension skills, critical thinking abilities, and the capacity to analyze and synthesize information effectively.

Additionally, college students engage in extensive writing tasks, which enhance their written communication skills, including grammar, vocabulary, and organization. Proficiency in English literacy enables college students to engage in meaningful discussions, debates, and collaborative projects with peers and professors (Yang et al., 2023). It also prepares them for future career opportunities, as many professional fields require strong English language skills. Overall, developing English literacy in college students empowers them to excel academically, communicate effectively, and navigate the demands of their chosen professions.

2.5 Previous Study

Based on the background above, English literacy development involves gradually progressing skills and knowledge acquisition (Martinez & Jeannette, 2020). English literacy proficiency refers to the level of mastery and competence an individual has in reading, Writing, speaking, and understanding English. It encompasses various skills, including vocabulary, grammar, Comprehension, and Communication.

In this study, Ali et al. (2023) stated highlighting English vocabulary skills involves the ability to use words appropriately and creatively in lessons and practice in the field. This includes understanding the meaning of words, using words that are appropriate in context, and the ability to enrich vocabulary with new words. By honing these skills students can improve their literacy skills

According to Noviana *et al.* (2022), Proficiency in English Literacy can range from primary or elementary levels where individuals have a limited understanding of the language, to advanced or fluent levels, where individuals can communicate effectively and confidently in various contexts. In this stage, young learners are exposed to spoken language and develop foundational skills such as

phonemic awareness (recognizing and manipulating individual sounds in words) and vocabulary building. They also start to understand basic concepts of print, such as left-to-right directionality. Therefore, students develop more advanced decoding skills, fluency, and reading comprehension. They learn sight words, apply phonics rules, and engage in guided reading activities.

According to Al-Jarf and Reima (2021), Write essay and writing instructors expressed their spelling and punctuation. In this study writing skills progress as students learn to form sentences, use punctuation, and express ideas coherently. They expand their vocabulary, understand complex sentence structures, and analyze texts critically. Writing skills advance further, including writing essays, reports, and creative pieces with clarity and coherence.

English literacy proficiency is a continuous learning process (Nosirova & Dilnova, 2023), and individuals can continue to improve their skills through practice, exposure to the language, and formal language learning programs. They engage with various texts, including literature, academic articles, and technical materials. Writing becomes more sophisticated, emphasizing organization, argumentation, and effective communication.

Therefor, English literacy development is a continuous process that supports individuals to develop their English proficiency. Factors such as exposure to English, educational support, and personal motivation can influence the pace and depth of literacy development.

4. METHOD

The research used a qualitative approach that used an interview as an instrument in collecting data. The interview distributed offline in one of private universities in Banjarmasin in Psychology study program. The participants is one lecturer and six students from a batch 2021. Researchers used three methods, such as data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing as a tool to help in analyzing data. The results of the interview will be described using analysis of interview and documentation to find out the results of the answers of students that have been obtained.

5. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

After conducted interviews, it found that the strategies to develop english literacy for the fifth student of psychology. That was reading comprehension and utilising online resourch. this was according to Smith and Jhonson (2020) strategy to improve English literacy was comprehensive language learning program that could be focuses in reading. widely used by student and lecturer while learning english in the class. While the strategies used by lecturer, student were explained, and their pronouncation was deemed effective during reading. However, as the researcher found at the field, this strategies used not just once or twice but every

found english sentences. This was according to Zareva and Alla (2020) college student are exposed to complex texts and academic discourse through advanced coursework, research paper, and presentation. The reader component was used when looking for the keyword of online resourch. Reading international journals with the vocabulary taught was mastering the contents of the article that was ordered to the task. These factors and strategies positively impact impact on the development of students' English literacy.

English was widely used in learning materials and media in Psychology study programs. Several factors that helped improve students' English literacy were assignments to search for international journals, watch English videos, read reference books, and talk in English with friends. Most journals, test kits and other materials written in English. However, classroom instruction more often used Indonesian. Then reading activities in English were implemented through psychological terms which spoken together in class. Writing activities, such as writing papers or assignments, were less applicable.

Lecturers used various methods to train students' understanding in their English for psychology comprehension skills, such as discussions, questions and answers, and reading together. Some lecturers translated material from English to Indonesian to ensure student understanding. And tasks related to English include searching for and reviewing international journals, presentations and interviews in English.

1. The factors that Influence to the Development of English Literacy

Based on interviews with various sources regarding the development of English literacy for fifth-semester students majoring in Psychology at the Muhammadiyah University of Banjarmasin, several factors and strategies were identified that influence the development of their English literacy. Then, based on interviews that have conducted, as a student DSA said:

”As for the use of English itself, in psychology, because the knowledge comes from outside, automatically the material is richer in English from **journals and most of the test tools** are in the form of English **as a learning media.**”
(Participant DSA, Offline Interview June 06,2024).

English was prevalently in psychology due to the abundance of knowledge available in English-language journals and the widespread use of English in test tools.

In addition the lecturer also stated same thing in the interview conducted by researcher. As stated by Miss AF:

”the activity of **reading journals and literature** in English as well as **writing papers** using psychological terms helps students to expand their vocabulary and **understanding of English.**” (Participant AF, Offline Interview May 23,2024).

The used of material containing psychological terms in English was very

influential. This material included reference books, journal articles, and test tools which were often in English. The main aim of using English was psychology terms in English become familiar to students. Then, students were often asked to write papers and read journals in English, although writing completely in English was not always done. In addition, although some lecturers did not use special methods to improve English literacy. As student PRS stated:

“There's no way to train it, but there's a way to **ask and answer** how to understand English terms. There are friends who speak English in class who are like saying words in English and the lecturer often use **abbreviations** English and also from **book or journals**, maybe that's all.” (*Participant PRS, Offline Interview June 06, 2024*).

Therefor encouragement to read journals and literature in English as well as discussions about material in English, helped students understand and mastered these terms. This was said by student FRN:

“Just the material, it's rich in terms and usually asked to **look for a journal**, it doesn't have to be in English, but just find one in English, and also give a presentation reading the meaning of **psychology terms** in English.” (*Participant FRN, Offline Interview June 06, 2024*).

In influencing the development of English literacy skills for psychology students. One significant factor was the practice of reading English journals, their lecturers advised them to read lots of English journals. Which exposed students to specialized terminology and concepts within the field of psychology. By engaging with these materials, students can enhance their understanding of complex psychological theories and research findings, thereby improved their overall English literacy proficiency. Additionally, focused on mastering special English terms specific to psychology enables students to communicate effectively within the discipline and navigate academic texts with greater ease. By incorporating these factors and strategies into their learning process, psychology students could strengthen their English language skills and excel in their academic pursuits.

So, in this study the researcher found the factors that influenced the development of english literacy the fifth semester student of Psychology was reading english journals and understanding special english terms of Psychology.

2. The Strategies in Developig English Literacy for The Fifth Semester Student of Psychology

Based on interviews conducted by researcher two strategies was used for develop english literacy student of psychology. As stated by Miss AF:

” There are two **reading comprehension** and **utilizing online resources** from English language journal literature.” (*Participant AF, Offline Interview May 23, 2024*).

The used of strategies such as reading comprehension and use of online resources has proven to be effective. Lecturers encouraged students to read and

discussed English language material together, as well as used literature from English language journals to improve understanding. In this way, expanding vocabulary through learning special terms in psychology became an important method. By frequently used these terms in learning materials, it was easier for students to remember and understand the context of their use. As student FRN stated:

“Yesterday there was a psychology assignment from Miss AF, a journal was distributed, the journal was in English so we had to **translate it** first.” (*Participant FRN, Offline Interview June 06, 2024*).

Apart from that, learning media such as PowerPoint and practical tools in English also helped. Although instructions were not always given in English, but the media used often in English so students remain familiar with the language. This was said by student MDM:

“In psychology, there is always English in the material for the **test media**, almost all of it is in English, for instructions are in English but it **depends on the material being taught**, not full in English.” (*Participant MDM, Offline Interview June 06, 2024*).

Then the assignments given by lecturers which contain English elements also played an important role. Assignments such as making videos explaining psychology concepts in English, although frequent helped students practice using English actively.

And then, some students had difficulty understanding complex English terms. The proposed solution was used a translator application or discussed with friends to understand these terms. This was said by student PRS:

“I don't really speak English but I know what it means. For example, English journals are really problematic, fortunately there is a **translation application**.” (*Participant PRS, Offline Interview June 06, 2024*).

Apart from that, the absence of a special method from lecturers to teach English was an obstacle. The solution was to read more journals and English language literature independently. However, the development of English literacy in fifth semester Psychology students was influenced by the use of English language materials, reading and writing activities, as well as interactions with lecturers. This literacy development can be enhanced through various strategies such as reading comprehension, use of online resources, vocabulary expansion, and English language assignments. Despite obstacles in understanding terms and specific teaching limitations, existing solutions helped students in improving their English literacy effectively.

6. CONCLUSION

In accordance with the explanation above, it can be concluded there were two important things that researcher found in this study:

1. The factors that Influence to Development English Literacy was learning materials in English reading journals and understanding special english terms of Psychology. This help students accept learning challenges. As the researcher found at the field increasing language skills to interact more often with English language material, students can improve their English language skills
2. The strategies that develop english literacy the fifth semester student of psychology were reading comprehension and utilize online resourch widely used by student and lecturer while learning english in the class. While that strategies used by lecturer, student has been explained and their pronouncation deemed effective during reading. However as the researcher found at the field this strategies used not just once or twice but every found english sentences. After this strategy was used, students' English literacy development improved based on the strategy above, as evidenced by its use in research papers and presentations in their learning activities.

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