

## ***One Day One Article One Week One Chapter Program in Fostering Students' Literacy: Implementation and Perception***

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### **ABSTRACT**

Literacy has been a big concern for the English Education Department. As an effort to prepare the first-year students to be literate and get ready for academic life during their study in an undergraduate program, the department enacted a literacy program, namely, "One Day One Article One Week One Chapter". The present research aims to portray the implementation and investigate the students' perception of the program. This research is qualitative by using observation and questionnaire distribution. The observation was carried out during the implementation of the program. A closed-ended questionnaire, which was developed to determine the students' perception, was administered at the end of the program to the thirty first-semester students. Based on the observation, it was revealed that the program's implementation is seen to be applicable as a regular program in the department. Based on the questionnaire, the students' reading frequency was in the sometimes category; the topic preference was mostly social; the reading source was from online and printed sources; no significant number of students did post-reading activities; and the students read anywhere. The students' perception of the program was positive in terms of reading importance and reading advantage.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The research of PISA 2018 shows that the Indonesian ranking is 74 out of 79 surveyed countries. Compared to PISA 2015, in which Indonesia got sixty-two rank out of seventy surveyed countries, the latter slightly decreased. Based on this fact, Indonesia needs to revisit the implementation of the Literacy Movement (*Gerakan Literasi*). The government's program, Literacy Movement, stipulated in *Permendikbud no. 21 of 2015 on Character Building* (Permendikbud has been running for years and does not seem to positively contribute to the improvement of literacy). Through the program, the government intends to encourage students to read books containing local stories, heroic stories,

biography, and many to build Indonesian students' character. Reading, in this case, might be accompanied by other writing activities such as summarizing, retelling and others.

In the 21st century, where we are heading, literacy is more important than ever. Those who are well-read in various fields will find life much less challenging. Reading is often cited as the starting point for achieving technological literacy. Possessing reading literacy may pave the way to acquiring additional literacies. Students face difficulties associated with the ASEAN Economic Community, which began operations in 2015, and AFTA 2020. There's a growing sense of urgency about boosting literacy rates. A lack of literacy makes it impossible to succeed in today's world. As an effort to keep promoting the freshmen's reading literacy, similar to the Literacy Movement, English Education Department introduced a program namely "One Day One Article One Week One Chapter". The major reason for designing this curriculum is to increase the freshmen's reading literacy. Preliminary findings suggest that most incoming freshmen have limited exposure to reading books online. The programme gives them readings on a range of themes, including education, politics, and social issues, with the goal of broadening their horizons and keeping them abreast of the latest developments. The program's principal objective is to facilitate the freshmen to prepare for academic life during their studies. We think that if we provide freshmen with long-term programmes that make them read on a regular basis, we can improve their reading proficiency.

The program is designated a pilot program for a limited number of freshmen. Further, the result of the research on this program would be a consideration in enacting a program on literacy improvement. There is plenty of research on reading literacy. They mostly focused on primary and secondary level students, while those who researched college students have not been so many. This preliminary research is similar to one which was conducted by Delgadova (2015). It reveals that the reading literacy of first-year university students is insufficient to deal with academic texts of intermediate level of complexity and lack analytical and critical thinking. In this research, to identify reading literacy, students were assigned to write an abstract and a PowerPoint presentation, common and frequently used linguistic genres in academic settings, to assess their ability to systematize and synthesize written text.

The current study differs from the earlier studies in that there are no post-reading assignments for the students to complete. Online articles are selected for the incoming students to read. They got the articles daily through a WhatsApp group that was created and managed by the research team. There was a wide variety of articles, not only scholarly ones. The articles are also written entirely in Bahasa Indonesia. Previous research by Abuloum et al. (2019) found that despite the preference of undergraduate students for printed books, e-books are used more frequently. Mizrachi (2014) found that reading in print enhanced comprehension for college students, and our finding corroborated that finding.

There are some other researches, which are relevant to this research. Zasacka (2017), who investigated children's and adolescents' reading habits and attitudes, found out that students - especially lower secondary schools- willingly search the internet for information and opinion about the books they read. Another finding is that both children and adolescents are unfamiliar with electronic libraries, although it is facilitated with a lot of digital book sources. Furthermore, research was conducted by Ferrer and Staley (2016), who designed and implemented a creative reading plan in an undergraduate program. The finding shows that the reading activities successfully improved students' creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration skills. Another research closely related to the present research is conducted by Delgadova (2015). It reveals that the reading literacy of the first-year university students is insufficient to deal with academic texts of intermediate level of complexity and lack analytical and critical thinking. It also becomes one of the writers' considerations in conducting research on this topic to prepare the freshmen to be more ready for the next college years.

Reading literacy means understanding, using and reflecting on written texts to achieve one's goals, develop one's knowledge and potential, and participate in society (OECD, 2010; Thomson et al., 2013). While Olson (1992) claims that reading literacy introduces a bias in today's society because it provides

advantages to those who acquire the necessary skills. As the prevalence is used in schools, literacy provides access to literate institutions and has an impact on cognition or thinking processes (Kern & Friedman, 2009; D. Olson, 1994; Pretorius, 2000). It also shapes the way in which we think.

Today, the need for higher levels of education and skills is large and growing. Those with below-average skills find it increasingly difficult to earn above-average wages in global economies where the restructuring of jobs favours those who have acquired higher levels of education and skills. They have little hope of fully participating in increasingly complex societies where individuals are required to take on additional responsibility for different aspects of their lives: from planning their careers, to nurturing and guiding their children to navigating health care systems to assuming more responsibility for their financial future.

College students must have good reading literacy since they deal with books, research articles, and other written documents to support their college years. Renandya (2014) stated that his personal experience of studying English in the first year of his college was not easy. He has to cope with classes that are conducted in English. He did not enjoy reading graded readers until he found a series met his level. A feeling of success in representing the stories made him love reading. He read a lot and it did improve his English proficiency. Extensive reading deals with reading for pleasure, (Carrell & Carson, 1997; Davis, 1995; Renandya, 2014). (Carrell & Carson, 1997) highlight that ER involves rapid reading of large amounts of readings which focus on meaning instead of the language. In addition, Davis defines ER as a supplementary program in which the students are encouraged to read their own choices as much as possible to read pleurably, without test or mark.

According to Day and Bamford (2002), the tenets of ER are as follows: students have a say in what they read, students have access to a wide range of reading materials on a variety of topics, students read as much as possible, students read for pleasure, information, and general understanding, reading is its own reward, reading speed is typically faster rather than slower, students read independently and in silence, and teachers orient and guide students as needed.

The breadth of a reader's reading material is what sets extensive reading apart from limited reading. Narrow reading is defined as the deliberate and sustained focus on a small number of texts. It is widely held that narrow reading, also known as recreational reading, aids in language acquisition, particularly in the development of receptive and productive vocabulary (Kang, 2015). The concepts of broad reading and narrow reading are presented not as alternatives but as complementary strategies for improving pupils' literacy. As a result, the programme incorporates those two.

*One Day One Article One Week One Chapter* is a pilot program for students of the English Education Department of Universitas Muria Kudus to improve their reading literacy. The implementation of this program is that every student should read an article shared by the research team via WhatsApp Group. This is a controlled article reading that must be read. The term controlled does not mean that the students do not have the choice to read their own reading preference. "Controlled" here means ready-to-read articles selected by the team to ensure the students' continuity in reading. Mostly, the selected article is in both Indonesian and English related to education issues. In this case, it may be defined as narrow reading since the subject matter is the same that is education. Another practice of narrow reading is when one reads the same genre or the same author over quite long period (Millett, 2017; Min, 2008).

The program's goal is to aid students' education on a local level while simultaneously encouraging their literacy development on a global scale. Numerous authorities agree that pupils can improve their language skills, including vocabulary, by reading. They can improve their argumentation skills by reading widely. And without a doubt, the more they learn and comprehend, the more that will shape the way they think. Students in their first semester should participate in this programme so that they can become accustomed to reading and improve their literacy skills.

## 2. METHODS

The present quantitative research investigates the students' perception of *One Day One Article, One Week One Chapter* Program. The writers, with the head of the department's permission, recruited the freshmen interested in joining the program by administering a consent form. There were ninety-six students of all first semester of EED students, and thirty students of class A participated in the program as it was a pilot project.

In obtaining the data, the instruments used in this current research were a questionnaire and an observation sheet. The questionnaire was adapted from (Huang, 2013), consisting of several items to describe how first-semester students perceive the *One Day One Article, One Week One Chapter*. It is a closed-ended questionnaire with 7 items, they are: 1) the importance of reading; 2) reading frequency; 3) topic preference; 4) reading advantage; 5) reading source; 6) post reading activity; 7) reading place. A survey was distributed to thirty students of class A. Most of their English proficiencies were in the pre-intermediate level. They were quite active in the class and less confident to speak up. They were mostly from middle to lower social class status and from local and neighboring towns. The observation was conducted during the implementation of the program to record how it was going on.

The procedures of conducting this research are as the following. The first one, the department announced the program to the whole freshmen and let them who were interested in the program register themselves and fill out a consent form. They were then put in a Whatsapp group for easier coordination and communication. The team gave them an article to read every day via Whatsapp group. The team carried out a regular check whether the participants read the given articles. Moreover, they were allowed to access and read articles based on their preference. After a semester, a questionnaire was administered in order to figure out their perception of the program.

The obtained data from the questionnaires were classified using tally to find out the percentages of each choice in each item. Then the percentages were recorded to see the emerging themes. The highest to the lowest percentage were presented in chart or graphic and then interpreted qualitatively based on the references and the previous researches.

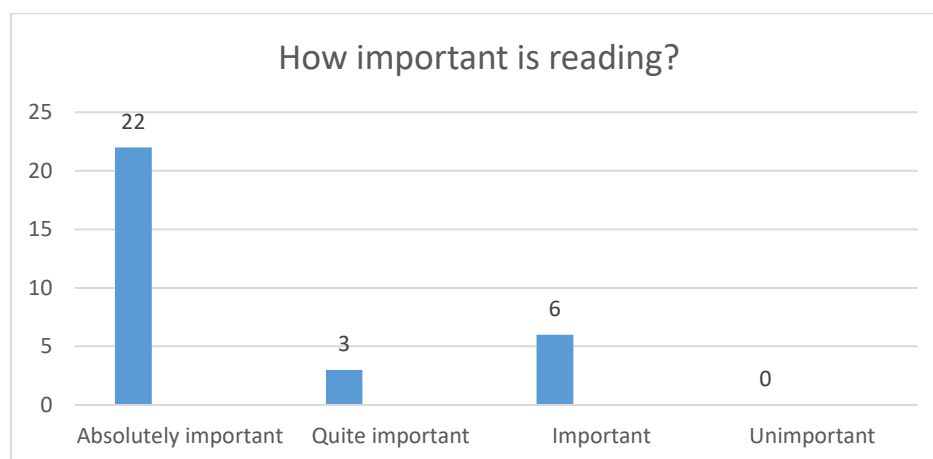
## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A questionnaire and observation were used to reveal the students' perception of the *One Day One Article, One Week One Chapter* Program. The items of the questionnaire cover the reading importance, frequency of reading, place to read, ways to find articles, kinds of article, and activities after reading, and reading advantage. The items are taken from the 2009 PISA result (OECD, 2010). This present research does not cover assessment and instrument used in measuring reading literacy since it is a preliminary research aiming at figuring out the students' perception and implementation of this program. The research results are presented below.

### 3.1 *Students' Perception of the One Day One Article, One Week One Chapter Program*

#### 3.1.1 Reading Importance

The first item of the questionnaire is the importance of reading. The result can be seen in the following figure.

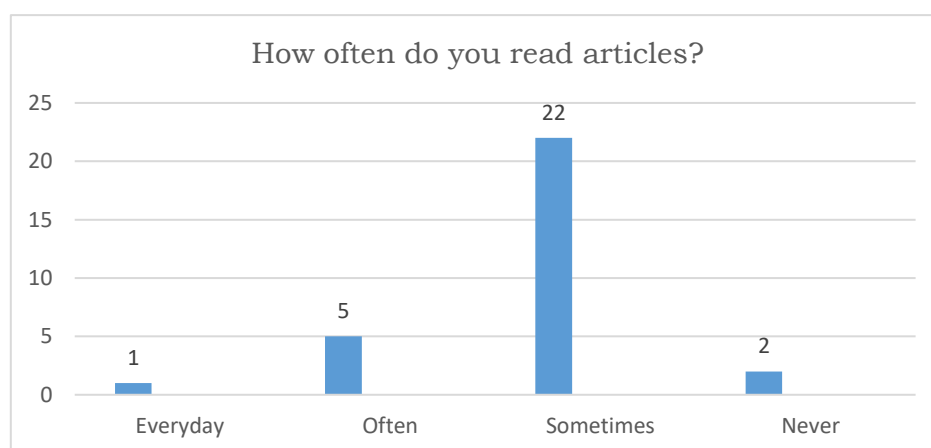


**Figure 1.** The importance of reading

The figure above shows that 71% of respondents confirmed that reading is absolutely important, 9% said it is quite important and 20% thought it is just important. None said unimportant. It means that all respondents believe that reading is necessary. As adult learners, the concept of reading importance should have been clearly understood. Munita (2019) researched on teachers and the findings show that teachers claimed that personal reading is as a part of teacher education process in the language and literature teaching. With a different level of research subject, Merga and Mat Roni (2018) reveals that children who did regular reading may develop reading engagement in which reading valuing is an essential part of reading motivation. It is closely related to the reading frequency. The greater reading frequency may lead to the higher motivation in reading. The urgency of reading may be seen as a journey in which people commonly believe that the more people read, the more they do not know and the more they need to read and realize the importance of reading.

### 3.1.2 Frequency of Reading

The second item of the questionnaire is how frequent students read articles. The figure below clearly illustrates the result.



**Figure 2.** Reading frequency

As can be seen in Figure 2 above, the majority of students (73%) occasionally make choices while reading articles. Only a tiny fraction of respondents (0.3%) reported daily article reading. Only 16% of respondents indicated they never read articles, while 0.6% stated they did so on a regular basis. The low number of students who regularly read articles suggests that this is the case. This conclusion seems at odds with the one that showed that all respondents valued reading, but that this value was not

reflected in their actual reading behaviour. Nearly three quarters of respondents agreed that reading is important. However, almost the same share of pupils, around 70%, only read sometimes. It's evidence that they haven't paid attention to how they spend their time reading. Even though they know the value of reading, most incoming freshmen do not read extensively. This infrequent reading could eventually lead to illiteracy.

Less frequent reading is correlated with lower levels of literacy. A parent's encouragement of a child's love of reading is a common factor in the development of a lifelong reader. The reading habits of children are sometimes heavily impacted by their parents. When parents value reading highly, there's a good chance their kids will, too. Geske and Ozola (2008) argue that parents' education and the frequency with which they read aloud to their young children in the preschool years are strong predictors of their children's eventual reading proficiency. Students that excel in reading literacy tend to come from reading-oriented households, where both parents value reading. This conclusion suggests that the department should make it easier and more encouraged for first-year students to read. They will find it much less of a challenge to become literate if they have access to a variety of books or graded readers. However, the cost can be prohibitive for certain people (Suk, 2017). The most effective method is to make use of no-cost resources on the internet like <https://letsreadasia.org>, <https://er-central.com>, etc.

### 3.1.3 Topic preference

The next item is about the topic preference. The result is shown in the following figure.

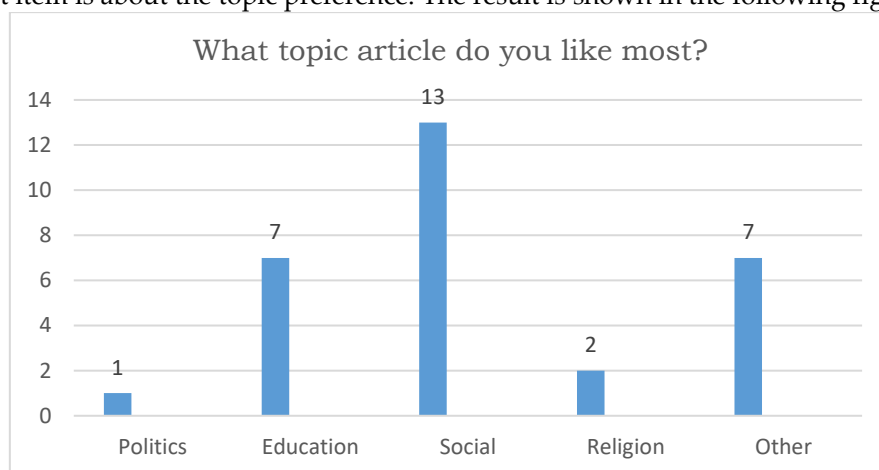


Figure 3. Topic preference

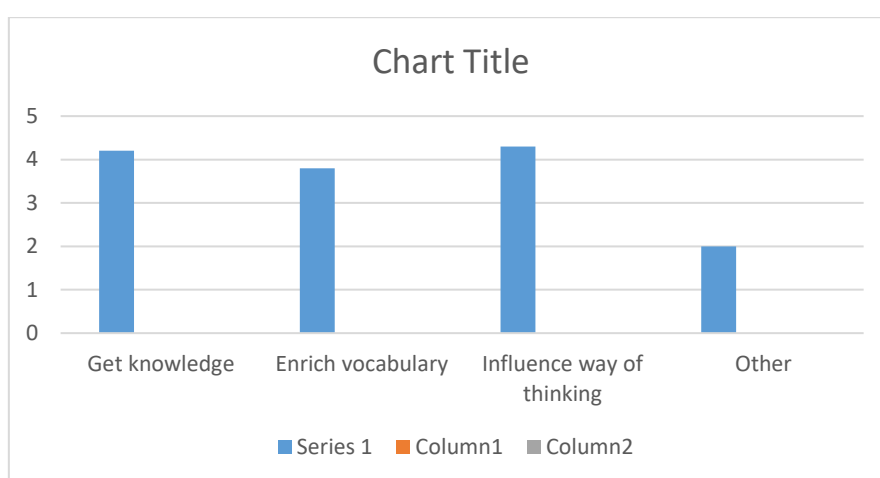
Figure 3 shows that respondents' reading preferences are quite broad. Almost half of the people who took the survey said that social issues were their preferred topic to read about. While only 23.3% of students say they enjoy reading educational materials for pleasure. Six percent indicated they enjoy reading religious materials, while three percent said they prefer political ones. Twenty-three percent have said they enjoy reading the works of others. The majority of people prefer social topics, as seen by this percentage. A similar proportion of students read general interest, but only a minority read books on religious or political topics. Since these individuals are studying to become teachers, it is natural for them to be interested in educational topics. From a psychological standpoint, they seem to place a lot more weight on articles of this nature. Education and social are dual tracks, with the former often preceding the latter. The subjects of religion and politics are generally avoided. There may be a number of students who are particularly interested in religious studies due to the university's setting in a religiously conservative community. To put it bluntly, nobody likes politics. Few students even bother to read news about politics.

Galyani-Moghaddam and Taheri (2021) assert that the books borrowed by individuals aged 12-18 were primarily novels, adventure stories, and fantasy literature that had no direct relevance to their academic curriculum. Additionally, it has been observed that males and females have distinct reading

preferences. Griva et al. (2012) similarly found substantial disparities in reading preferences between male and female pupils. The female students had a stronger inclination towards 'human-interest' narratives, whilst the male students demonstrated a preference for comics and action-oriented fiction. Currently, the research does not encompass the preferences of both males and females. Additionally, the selection of books or texts in the questionnaire may differ from the previous study. However, a commonality exists in that the students' preferences are not influenced by their academic major. The participants consist of student instructors, with social rewards taking precedence over educational outcomes.

Another study also considering about gender and preference. The preference in this study was divided into preference to read entertainment and to read information. In terms of reading competence, the former is predictive of having better literary text competence. However, the latter is believed to have a positive effect in both informational and literary texts (Thums et al., 2021).

### 3.1.4 Reading Advantage



**Figure 4.** Reading Advantage

The second item is reading usefulness; whether or not students get benefit from the passage they read. Figure 3.4 above shows that the choice to get much advantage and influence way of thinking has similar results. Students said that they get as many as 58.6% and there is 41.4 % of students who reported that the benefit of reading is influencing their way of thinking. It means that students think that those two advantages dominantly affect their thought. Another benefit of reading they got is enriching their vocabulary.

Based on the data, the advantages of reading according to the freshmen in sequence influence their way of thinking, get more knowledge, improve vocabulary, and others. The Influential way of thinking seems interesting since it is firstly taking place among other benefits, and the previous research did not reveal this item. The items that are commonly revealed are vocabulary mastery and general knowledge. Many educators believe that reading can improve reading comprehension, vocabulary, general knowledge, and cultural awareness. In addition, empirical studies have revealed the benefits of reading for pleasure including vocabulary acquisition, motivation to read, reading fluency, and literacy development.

Pietilä and Merikivi (2014) claim that students who read daily at their free time have larger receptive and productive vocabularies, and perform stronger vocabulary skills than those who are not. Similarly, Scott and Elaine (2016) carried out a survey to the students who joined an intermediary reading program at Vaal University of Technology. One of items is how the students perceived on the improved vocabulary and reading speed and understanding benefits. The result reports that a number of learners believed their vocabulary was increased and they gained understanding of the benefits of reading during the program.

### 3.1.5 Articles Sources

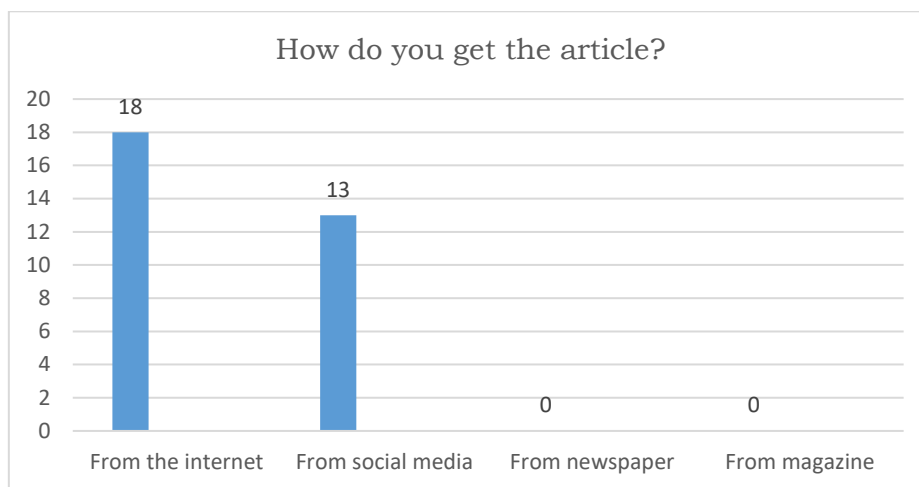


Figure 5. Ways to find articles

Figure 5 describes how students find articles they read. Even though there are four alternatives, the respondents answer only two options. The first way is through the internet (58.6%) claimed that they got the articles from the internet, and 41.6% students said that social media provides the texts they read. In this research, the item of the question related to the issue is ways of getting articles to read. The choices were internet, social media, newspaper, and magazine. Unsurprisingly, the freshmen used only two resources, internet and social media. None of them found articles from newspapers or magazines. In line with the preference of the internet rather than printed sources, Olsen et al. (2013) reveal that higher education students prefer to read from the internet. However, the students still show preference for print on paper as the best medium for academic purposes. Aharony & Bar-Ilan (2018) revealed that students prefer printed academic learning materials over electronic one. In addition, Artelt, Schiefele, and Schneider (2001) found that metacognitive knowledge, decoding speed, and the number of books at home (as an indicator of family background) have specific and large effects on online comprehension.

### 3.1.6 Activities after reading

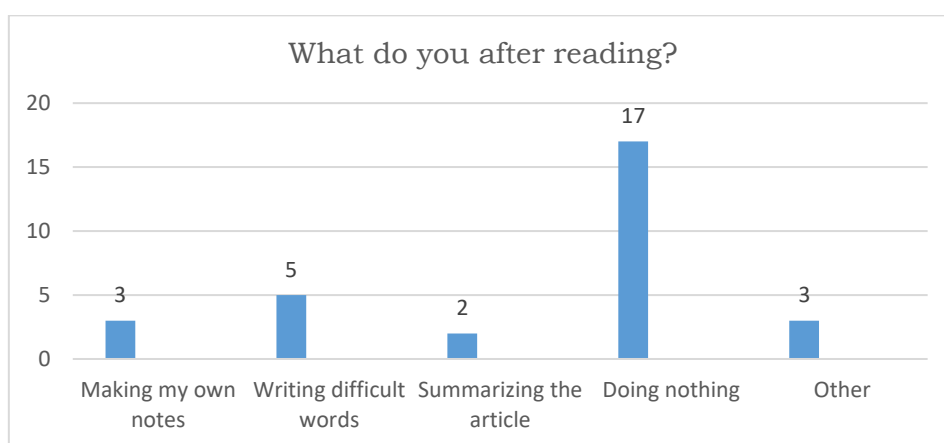


Figure 6. Post-reading activity

Many people learn English using four language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. According to the respondents, after they read, some activities follow afterwards. 54.8% who said that after reading, they do nothing, 16.1 % said that they write difficult words that exist in the text, 0.97% reported that they make notes based on the text they read, and 0.6% said that they summarized articles or texts.

Although reading in this research is likely extensive reading, the students might do post-reading activities. It is revealed that half of the respondents agreed that they did nothing. Few students write difficult words, make notes, and make a summary. Waring and McLean (2015) state that the characteristic of pleasure reading is there is no pen in a hand. Based on this fact, it can be said that the activity in the pilot project of one day one article one week one chapter belongs to extensive reading (ER). The nature of ER is reading for enjoyment. They read what they want to read based on their interest as Renandya (2014) said that extensive reading is reading a huge amount of materials for pleasure. However, other scholars argued for further reading activities. Fatimah et al. (2022) said claimed that it is necessary to teachers to provide enjoyable post-reading activities to encourage students to keep reading. In this context, a post-reading activity could be possibly added to the program implementation, an activity that is easy to do but meaningful.

### 3.1.7 The place to read articles

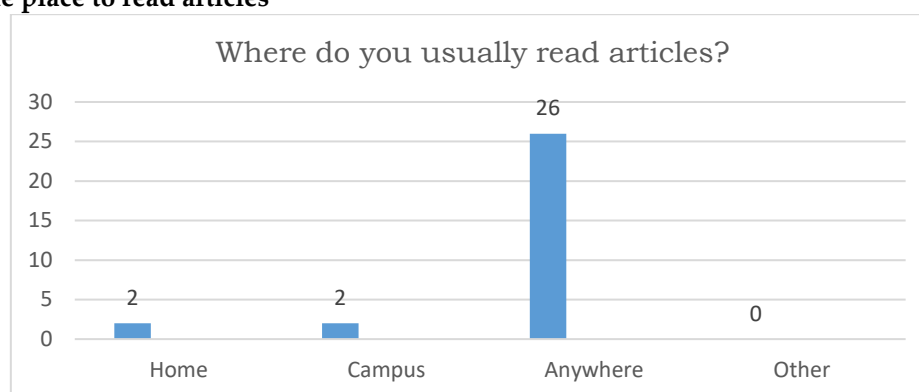


Figure 7. Place to read articles

The figure above shows that the place of reading activity does not refer to any single place. Students generally do not think that this activity should be done at campus or at home, but anywhere. There are 86.7% of respondents said that reading can be done anywhere, not only at campus (0.7%) but also at home (0.7%).

In reading, the students usually read anywhere. It is 87% out of students read anywhere, and only a few percentages of students read at home and campus. It is correlated to the students' reading preference which is the internet. For the internet is accessible anywhere and anytime, they do not need a special place to read. Whenever they have time they would read. A successful extensive reading program will allow for at least some reading to take place in class, as the writers have suggested elsewhere (Macalister, 2008). The freshmen have already bear in mind that reading is important for their daily and campus life. Yet, it does not significantly affect their reading habits. They realize its importance but are not aware of their reading habits. It has been figured out that the freshmen prefer reading education and social topics rather than religion and politics. They read articles by accessing the internet and social media. Therefore, there is no special place to read. They read everywhere they want to. It is because of the flexibility of mobile phones which its internet connection is fully supported. It is very acceptable not to do any kind of activity after reading. By reading, they are benefited that they experiencing different ways of thinking, acquiring more vocabulary, and getting more knowledge.

### 3.2 The Implementation of One Day One Article One Week One Chapter Program

The program *One Day One Article One Week One Chapter* was initiated to run at the English Education Department of a private University in Kudus, Indonesia, as a department concern to the freshmen who still adapted to the new academic environment. Since the situation changed, it was considered critical to systematically build a good reading habit for them, primarily scientific texts. Therefore, the program was initially ruled to be a class of first-semester students of EED. The

implementation consists of two stages, namely, preparation and the implementation or the execution of the program.

In the preparation stage before the program was implemented, the department informed class A, which was chosen as the pilot program participant. Then the writers made a WhatsApps group as a media of communication as it is the easiest and the most practical one. The writers as the program administrators, added all students of class A in the WhatsApp group. The purpose and the target of the program were informed to make them well understood and encouraged to participate actively.

The primary phase involves the execution of the programme, specifically the reading activity. The team often shared texts on a wide range of themes, including education and contemporary concerns in the field of education. The pupils engaged in the reading exercise autonomously, without any guidance from the professor. Regarding time availability, the students have the freedom to view the shared articles at any point throughout the day. Upon completing their reading in the group, they would provide affirmation or a checklist. The post-reading activity was poorly constructed, as the researchers aimed to avoid overburdening the students with excessive assignments that could potentially demotivate them from reading. Hence, the post-reading activity in this programme was discretionary, and it is acknowledged that only a few students participated in it.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The data indicate a positive perception among freshman participating in the One Day One Article One Week One Chapter programme. Put simply, this programme deserves to be maintained. By implementing this programme, the Department implemented comprehensive reading strategies and fostered reading proficiency in order to simultaneously motivate the freshmen to develop improved reading habits. It would be beneficial to provide assistance for their academic pursuits in the coming years. This programme is exclusively designed for lengthy reading practise, allowing students to read according to their own preferences. They have the freedom to choose topics, read at their own pace, and decide whether or not to engage in post-reading activities. It would be beneficial to expand the scope of the next programme to include a larger number of students, maybe encompassing students from several cohorts. Once a well-established and efficient system is in place, it will serve as a strong incentive for students to engage in more reading, potentially leading to an improvement in their reading literacy skills. Attaining reading literacy requires continuous dedication from students, the department, and the government. The department has responded to the bad outcome of PISA 2018 by adopting this programme. More precisely, the department has actively participated in endorsing the government's initiative, the Literacy Movement. Additionally, it is imperative for the department to meticulously develop a programme that specifically caters to enhancing reading literacy. This is crucial in order to fulfil the expectations set by both the department and the government. Given that the research relied on a single instrument for data collection, it is recommended that future researchers employ other instruments such as observation, interviews, or tests. A greater number of participants in various academic settings can lead to more profound and perceptive conclusions.

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**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare there is no conflict of interest in conducting the research.

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