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## **THE ROLE OF ENGLISH LITERACY IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' READING AND WRITING SKILLS**

### **Abstract**

This study aims to examine the role of English literacy in improving students' reading and writing skills through a literature review approach. English literacy is understood as a complex process that involves not only the technical skills of reading and writing but also the comprehension of meaning, critical thinking, and the expression of ideas in written form. Through the exploration and analysis of various scholarly sources from accredited national journals, scientific articles, and academic publications, it is found that literacy significantly influences the development of students' language skills across different education levels. Key findings reveal that innovative methods such as gallery exhibitions, Jolly Phonics, digital platforms like Padlet, and project-based and storytelling approaches effectively enhance students' reading comprehension and writing skills simultaneously. Moreover, the role of teachers, the use of technology, and the integration of character values into literacy practices have proven to strengthen the effectiveness of English language learning. However, challenges remain, including low student motivation and weak foundational literacy, especially at the elementary level. This research highlights the need for an integrated, adaptive, and contextual literacy approach to create more effective and meaningful learning experiences. Therefore, English literacy serves not only as a tool for academic improvement but also as a means of holistic student development.

**Keywords:** English literacy, reading skills, writing skills

### **INTRODUCTION**

English proficiency has become one of the essential competencies in education, particularly in facing the era of globalization and the rapid development of information technology. One of the fundamental aspects of mastering English is literacy, especially reading and writing skills, which serve as the foundation for comprehensive language development. English literacy is not limited to the technical ability to read and write, but also includes critical comprehension of texts and the ability to organize ideas in a structured manner. Therefore, enhancing students' English literacy has become a key priority in the learning process, both at primary and secondary education levels.

A study by Agustina and Adiarti (2021) found that English literacy activities significantly improved junior high school students' abilities to comprehend texts and express ideas in written form. This is supported by the findings of Harputra and Ramadhani (2022), which showed that storytelling using Indonesian folktales significantly increased students' interest and ability in understanding English texts. Furthermore, Fadli (2024) emphasized that school literacy programs generally have a positive impact on building a reading culture, which in turn contributes to the improvement of reading skills in a comprehensive manner. These findings reinforce the notion that English literacy is not merely about reading and writing, but rather a complex cognitive process integrated into the learning system.

However, challenges remain in implementing English literacy in the Indonesian educational context, particularly at the elementary and lower secondary levels. Kharizmi (2015) revealed that many elementary students struggle with text structure, vocabulary usage, and

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organizing ideas when writing in English. These difficulties are often caused by limited exposure to English texts and teaching methods that do not fully support the development of literacy. In this context, the role of teachers is vital. Dasor et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of teachers in initiating and guiding literacy movements in elementary schools as part of a sustainable learning strategy.

With the advancement of technology, approaches to teaching English literacy have undergone significant transformation. Mahsunah (2021) stated that post-pandemic digital literacy-based learning has opened new opportunities for delivering content in more interactive and engaging ways. Research by Amaliyah and Abustang (2021) demonstrated that digital literacy has a significant influence on English learning outcomes among elementary students in Makassar. Similarly, the use of effective learning media, as reported by Megawati (2024), has been proven to increase students' motivation and engagement in English literacy activities in a fun and sustainable manner.

Moreover, Gustina (2024) found that the application of an integrated literacy method in teaching descriptive texts had a positive impact on students' reading abilities. This suggests that the integration of teaching strategies, learning media, and literacy-based approaches can create a conducive learning environment for the development of reading and writing skills.

Based on previous studies, it is evident that English literacy plays a vital role in enhancing students' reading and writing skills. However, there remains a research gap, particularly in the limited focus on the integration of teacher roles, instructional media, and structured, sustainable literacy approaches in improving both skills simultaneously. Additionally, previous studies have often addressed reading and writing as separate domains, with little in-depth exploration of the synergistic relationship between the two within a holistic English literacy framework.

Therefore, this study presents novelty by comprehensively analyzing the role of English literacy not only as a supplementary learning tool but as a core strategy to simultaneously improve reading and writing skills. This study also integrates pedagogical, technological, and psychological perspectives to develop a literacy approach that is adaptive, innovative, and relevant to the needs of today's learners.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a literature review method aimed at conducting an in-depth examination of various scholarly sources related to the role of English literacy in enhancing students' reading and writing skills. The review was carried out using a descriptive qualitative approach, relying on content analysis of academic publications, journal articles, and other relevant documents. The research was conducted through the following systematic steps:

### **1. Identification of the Topic and Focus of the Study**

In the initial stage, the researcher identified the main topic of the review: English literacy and its influence on students' reading and writing skills. The study focused on uncovering both theoretical and empirical connections between literacy practices and the development of students' language abilities.

### **2. Searching and Collecting Relevant Literature**

The researcher gathered relevant literature from accredited national journals, institutional repositories, and Google Scholar. The inclusion criteria for the sources were: publications issued between 2015 and 2024, directly related to the topic of English literacy, and empirically addressing students' reading and writing skills.

### **3. Selection and Evaluation of Literature Quality**

The collected literature was screened based on its relevance and appropriateness to the research topic. Selected articles were evaluated based on research novelty, methodology, and content relevance. This stage was essential to ensure that the secondary data analyzed was scientifically credible.

### **4. Classification and Organization of Literature**

The selected literature was categorized into themes, such as the role of teachers in literacy development, literacy-based teaching methods, use of digital media, and the impact of literacy on reading and writing skills. This thematic classification facilitated the development of a systematic analytical framework.

#### 5. Content Analysis and Data Synthesis

The researcher conducted content analysis for each classified source. The data were analyzed to identify patterns, similarities, differences, and each study's contribution to the understanding of English literacy. Data synthesis was carried out by integrating key findings into a coherent and interconnected thematic narrative.

#### 6. Conclusion Drawing and Research Gap Formulation

Based on the synthesized findings, the researcher drew conclusions regarding the strategic role of English literacy in improving students' reading and writing skills. Furthermore, this study identified a **research gap**, particularly the limited in-depth exploration of literacy approaches that simultaneously integrate the roles of teachers, technology, and instructional strategies.

#### 7. Research Report Preparation

The final stage involved preparing a research report in the form of a scholarly article. The report was structured based on standard scientific components, including background, methodology, analysis results, discussion, conclusion, and recommendations. Each section referred to the systematic analysis of the reviewed literature.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

Based on the literature review of various studies and scholarly publications, it was found that English literacy plays a crucial role in enhancing students' reading and writing skills. The following is a summary of the key findings from the reviewed references:

#### 1. Padmadewi & Artini (2018) – *Literasi di Sekolah: Dari Teori ke Praktik*

This study highlights the importance of contextual and experience-based literacy approaches in English learning. Literacy is portrayed not merely as reading and writing activities, but as a process of critical and reflective thinking. The book demonstrates that when teachers relate literacy materials to students' real-life contexts, their reading and writing skills improve significantly.

#### 2. Ratnawati & Sulastri (2023) – *Penanaman Nilai Karakter dalam Pembelajaran Literasi Bahasa Inggris Berbasis Digital*

The findings of this study indicate that digital-based literacy instruction not only enhances reading and writing skills but also instills character values such as discipline, responsibility, and self-confidence. The use of digital media also facilitates broader student access to various types of English texts.

#### 3. Rita (2022) – *Peningkatan Keterampilan Berbahasa Inggris Menggunakan Gallery Exhibition Project*

Through the gallery exhibition model, students are trained to read multiple sources and write reports independently. The study shows that this strategy is highly effective in simultaneously improving informative writing and reading comprehension skills.

#### 4. Rofi'i & Susilo (2022) – *Kesulitan Membaca Permulaan pada Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Siswa Sekolah Dasar*

This study reveals that elementary students still face significant challenges in early English reading, particularly in recognizing phonemes, vocabulary, and sentence structure. These difficulties suggest that early literacy should be reinforced with appropriate phonetic and visual methods.

#### 5. Said & Dahlan (2025) – *Pelatihan MC Bahasa Inggris sebagai Penguatan Kemampuan Literasi Bahasa Inggris*

This study shows that practical training such as serving as an English-language MC can foster language skills, including text composition, sentence structure comprehension, and confidence in both oral reading and speech writing.

**6. Subrata & Kusripinah (2022) – *Penerapan Model Pembelajaran untuk Meningkatkan Literasi Baca Tulis: Literature Review***

This literature review reveals that literacy-based learning models such as reciprocal teaching and literacy circles are effective in improving students' critical reading and creative writing skills, especially when supported by consistent teacher guidance.

**7. Sudiarta (2017) – *Pengaruh Metode Jolly Phonics terhadap Kemampuan Membaca dan Menulis Permulaan Bahasa Inggris pada Anak TK***

The study asserts that the Jolly Phonics method is effective in enhancing early reading and writing skills among young children. Learners more easily grasp the relationship between sounds and letters, forming the basis for learning English reading and writing.

**8. Susanto, Rahayu, & Hidayat (2021) – *Pemanfaatan Aplikasi Padlet untuk Keterampilan Membaca dan Menulis Bagi Guru-Guru SMA/K***

This study shows that using the Padlet application as a collaborative medium improves teachers' ability to design English reading and writing activities. As a result, literacy activities become more interactive, creative, and relevant to the demands of digital-age learning.

**9. Talaohu, Putuhena, & Magfirah (2024) – *Edukasi Literasi Bahasa Inggris di SMPN 49 Maluku Tengah***

The literacy education program implemented in this study successfully increased students' enthusiasm for reading English texts and writing short stories. This strategy proved effective due to its hands-on support and student-experience-based approach.

**10. Wahyuni & Mardiani (2022) – *Implementasi Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (GLS) sebagai Upaya Meningkatkan Keterampilan Membaca dan Menulis***

This research demonstrates that the implementation of the School Literacy Movement (GLS) at the senior high school level promotes a consistent literacy culture. Students develop regular reading and reflective writing habits, directly enhancing their academic language proficiency.

## Discussion

English literacy plays a vital role in shaping students' language competence, particularly in reading and writing. Literacy is not merely a technical ability to recognize letters and words, but it also involves the capacity to understand, analyze, and organize information within a linguistic context. In English language learning, reading and writing skills serve as the foundational pillars for the development of effective communication. Padmadewi and Artini (2018) argue that school-based literacy should be built comprehensively—from theoretical understanding to contextual and relevant practical implementation. Reflective approaches to literacy can foster critical thinking skills and encourage students to write in a well-structured manner.

The implementation of various literacy strategies has been proven to significantly improve students' reading and writing abilities. Agustina and Adiarti (2021), in their study at SMPN 7 Purwokerto, demonstrated that systematically designed English literacy activities enhance students' understanding of text structures and expand their vocabulary. This is supported by Gustina (2024), who applied an integrated literacy method to seventh-grade students, showing positive outcomes in descriptive text reading skills. Integrated literacy, which combines reading, writing, and discussion activities, helps students develop language skills holistically.

The teacher's role is undeniably a key factor in the success of English literacy programs in schools. Dasor, Mina, and Sennen (2021) emphasize the importance of active teacher involvement in fostering literacy culture in elementary schools. Teachers serve not only as facilitators but also as literacy agents who can create a learning environment that supports reading and writing development. Similarly, Harputra and Ramadhani (2022) confirmed that

storytelling using Indonesian Folk Tales increases students' interest and comprehension, while also stimulating their writing skills.

However, major challenges persist in implementing English literacy, especially at the elementary level. Rofi'i and Susilo (2022) noted that beginning reading difficulties remain a significant barrier for young learners. These challenges are commonly caused by limited phonics awareness, restricted vocabulary, and low learning motivation. Therefore, phonetic methods such as *Jolly Phonics*, as discussed by Sudiarta (2017), offer an effective alternative in equipping children with basic English literacy skills from an early age.

The importance of adapting to technological advancements is also crucial in reinforcing literacy. Mahsunah (2021) stated that post-pandemic digital literacy has opened new spaces for English learning. Integrating digital media into the learning process not only increases access to reading materials but also encourages students to be more active and creative in writing. In this context, Amaliyah and Abustang (2021) found that digital literacy has a significant impact on elementary students' English learning outcomes, especially in enhancing reading and writing skills simultaneously.

The use of learning media also plays a crucial role in optimizing English literacy. Megawati (2024) demonstrated that interactive media enhances student motivation and facilitates the development of reading and writing competencies. For instance, the use of applications like *Padlet* in English learning, as reported by Susanto, Rahayu, and Hidayat (2021), has been proven to improve students' collaboration and creative writing skills.

Moreover, project-based learning models such as gallery exhibitions have also shown positive outcomes. Rita (2022) revealed that students involved in such projects are more capable of writing structured reports and comprehending English reading materials. These activities not only enhance academic skills but also cultivate critical thinking and written expression.

Experiential-based practical training also contributes to improving English literacy. Said and Dahlan (2025) reported that English MC training for students not only enhances speaking skills but also strengthens reading and speech-writing abilities with appropriate language structures. This highlights the importance of practical, application-oriented approaches in English literacy.

Furthermore, English literacy learning contributes to character building among students. Ratnawati and Sulastris (2023) found that integrating character values into digital literacy strengthens discipline, responsibility, and self-confidence. Thus, literacy development fosters not only language proficiency but also well-rounded, character-based individuals.

Structured literacy efforts are also evident in programs such as *Gerakan Literasi Sekolah* (GLS). Wahyuni and Mardiani (2022) emphasized that consistently implemented GLS programs can build a strong reading and writing culture in schools, resulting in students with solid literacy skills, particularly in reading comprehension and reflective writing.

Findings from Talaohu, Putuhena, and Magfirah (2024) further support the notion that systematically and sustainably implemented literacy programs can enhance students' reading and writing skills while boosting their engagement in English learning. Likewise, Subrata and Kusripinah (2022) emphasized through their literature review that literacy-based instructional models can be adapted to different educational levels and student characteristics to maximize learning outcomes.

Overall, this discussion highlights that strengthening English literacy is essential to improving students' reading and writing skills. The success of literacy programs depends not only on the methods used but also on teacher involvement, the use of technology, character-oriented approaches, and integrated learning strategies. Through a comprehensive and innovative approach, English literacy becomes not only a tool for learning but also a platform for developing 21st-century competencies in students.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the literature review findings, it can be concluded that English literacy plays a significant role in enhancing students' reading and writing skills. Through appropriate

approaches such as technological integration, innovative instructional methods, and active teacher support, students' literacy skills can develop comprehensively—both academically and in terms of character formation.

## RECOMMENDATION

There is a need for sustainable and adaptive English literacy learning strategies, incorporating digital media, contextual approaches, and consistent teacher training to ensure more effective and relevant improvement in students' reading and writing skills in line with current educational developments.

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