Original Paper

Partnership with Librarians: A Strategy to Improve Secondary School Students' English Literacy

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Abstract

English literacy education plays a key role in establishing literate societies in the 21st century. Having teachers and librarians as professional educators and educational personnel working together, with the provision of relevant literacy facilities, helps achieve this goal. This study applies the Partnership with Librarians Strategy (PLS) by using an equivalent time-samples design to promote students' English literacy skills. Forty-five seventh, eighth, and ninth graders were randomly selected as the population for this study. Their literacy achievements were measured by using listening, reading, writing, and speaking tests before and after the teaching and learning process. The students' learning was also monitored using formative tests during the intervention. The results showed that the students' English skills improved significantly. The improvement is hypothesised to be influenced by the use of PLS as it is also statistically proven by the contribution of each literacy skill to students' English literacy total achievement, i.e., reading (63.6%), writing (22.9%), speaking (9.2%), and listening (4.3%). It is concluded that PLS makes a significant difference in English literacy learning and therefore deserves to be implemented in any English class coupled with an assessment strategy based on further classroom research to determine its potential effect.

Keywords

English literacy, teacher-librarian partnership, ELT strategy

1. Introduction

The governments of South East Asian countries have a consensus to create a free market which is called the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). It requires every member of the community to be

professional in content areas of interest and in communication. Consequently, as one of the countries in South East Asia, Indonesia encourages its citizens to use English for acquiring knowledge and communication skills. Learning English is a competitive skill with proficiency having profound implications for securing well-paid employment upon graduation from secondary and tertiary schools. In other words, people need to be functionally literate in English within the region (ASEAN, 2015).

According to the Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2006), the most common understanding of literacy is that it is a set of tangible skills, particularly the cognitive skills of reading and writing that are independent of the context in which they are acquired, and the prior knowledge of those who acquire them. Nonetheless, in this century, literacy does not merely focus on reading and writing skills, but also on the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute using materials associated with varying contexts (OECD, 2000). Literacy covers the ability to read, understand, and critically appreciate various forms of communication, including spoken language, printed texts, and digital media.

Having good English literacy skills in the 21st century is crucial for junior high school students to further their education. Unfortunately, many Indonesian secondary school students still have problems with English literacy. The World's Most Literate Nations (2016) reported that Indonesia is in the 54th position out of 61 countries. UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2015) also claimed that there are still 441,045 illiterate people aged 15-24 in Indonesia.

Furthermore, according to the Programs for International Students Assessment (PISA), using results from 2009 (OECD, 2010), Indonesian students' reading literacy score was ranked 57th of 65 countries; the score was far below the OECD average in all the recent years. For example, the PISA from 2012 showed that Indonesian reading literacy was even decreasing to 60th of 65 countries (OECD, 2014). In addition, based on the results of Programs for International Reading Literacy Studies (2011, p. 38), Indonesia ranks 42nd among the 45 countries. The results of the English Proficiency Index (EF-EPI, 2015) also showed that Indonesia was the 8th of 16 countries in Asia and the 32nd out of 70 countries in the world with an English proficiency score of only 52.91. Moreover, the condition of Indonesians' adult literacy rate has put Indonesia in the 88th place of 180 countries (UNDP, 2009). These data represent the condition of Indonesian literacy as internationally assessed using international standards in the last few years.

Concerning English as a foreign language taught in Indonesia, some considerations were taken. For example, the Ministry of Education and Culture in the Republic of Indonesia (2016) has determined that the schools must achieve the minimum criteria of an English subject standard score (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2016) for their students. Therefore, several schools in South Sumatera, including the school where this study was conducted have decided on an average minimum score of 75 as the basis for measuring student competency in any subject taught including English (Sudarmi, 2017/2018). Nonetheless, Mirizon, Diem, and Vianty (2018) recently found that the mean score of students' English comprehension of four Junior High Schools in Palembang was only 67.53, which is

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much lower than that of the required minimum standard score.

The following information was also taken into consideration and is related to students' activity using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the library as the source of knowledge. For example, in this digital era, it is easier for students to find any information they want to know just by clicking on their smart device, meaning that many students, especially the affluent ones, sometimes would not go to the library unless asked to by their teacher. Therefore, these students need to be monitored and guided by the teacher because according to Sudarsono (2006, p. 103), a well-known senior librarian from Indonesian Institution of Knowledge and Science (LIPI), the library is theoretically still one of the best places for most Indonesian pupils to increase their knowledge and use available resources to access any information easily. Nonetheless, some people question the librarians' role and the library itself, due to the availability of internet connection at schools. This question of doubt was admitted to by most of the students of senior high schools in South Sumatra, stating that they would have gone to the school library if the internet had been available and more books provided (Diem, 2012). It is believed that a good school library may in one way or another have helped students find information for their school subjects, therefore not neglecting the access to the school library collection for teaching and learning process.

Information and digital literacy are important skills for all students living in the 21st century learning environments. Those who are not good at ICT and English cannot easily get information about almost anything, either digitally or from printed resources. Diem (2012) found that the availability of a library with ICT have influenced the habits and the ability of high school students in South Sumatera to read for 43%. In fact, Law No. 43/2007 about the library indicates that every school must have a library with a large enough collection and be staffed by librarians who graduated from at least junior college.

The importance of the library related to literacy learning is also becoming a priority because it has a key role in education. Sudarsono (2006, p. 298) further stated that the condition of school libraries in Indonesia have not yet fully supported the needs of teaching and learning activities. This is confirmed by the survey done by Alwi, Silvhiany, Nata, Irianto, and Fahrurozi (2008), who found that only 30% of high school libraries in South Sumatra fulfilled the national standard about libraries as required by law number 43, 2007. Although there is a similarity in terms of budget allocation, there is still a discrepancy in making a priority of libraries' function in accordance with learning necessities. Actually, the use of the library as a key source for students to enhance their knowledge could be increased through a teacher-librarian partnership. Diem (2011b) argued that "the collaboration between teachers and school librarians or experts in certain fields in utilising meaningful learning resources can promote effective learning" (p. 128).

The library plays a key role in providing a wide range of reading materials. It is one of the places where students can access learning resources. A library is the only centralised location where new and emerging information technologies can be combined with traditional resources in a user-focused, service-rich information environment that supports today's social and educational patterns of learning, teaching, and

research (Council on Library and Information Resources, 2005). In this digital era, a library provides printed and online resources. The technology may change, but librarians as professionals remain the same, continuing to organise information and help people find it. Librarians can work together with subject teachers, including teachers of English, to provide learning materials for students, giving necessary information related to learning resources they are searching.

Teachers, as facilitators with education personnel like librarians and lab assistants, can assist students in using the library to increase their English literacy skills. Sudarsono (2006) claimed that in the field of education, the roles of the library and its librarians are like that of a navigator, educator, collaborator, evaluator, publisher, and program administrator. Therefore, English teachers need to have effective communication and collaboration with librarians to find appropriate learning materials for students and facilitate their willingness to read books and use other literacy facilities in the library, increasing both their receptive and productive skills.

Sudarsono (2009) also argued that when students come to the library, they do not only read a book for information, but also ask for help from the librarians for how to find information related to specific tasks assigned by their teachers. Therefore, the librarians themselves must have the knowledge and skills needed by a diverse clientele, such as using internet and other modern media. Librarians cannot ignore media literacy in this modern era. To help students navigate the information environment in which they learn, school librarians must know how to use global information devices effectively.

As ICT grows, teachers and librarians hold the key to create powerful learning opportunities that help students function more effectively. Doiron and Aselin (2005) point out that it is a need to have the changing responsibilities of teachers and librarians in helping students become better readers, writers, and researchers. The American Library Association (2008) introduced required competencies for librarians to have. *First*, librarians need administrative skills to help teachers create teaching environments that support the needs of the instructional program. *Second*, communication skills are needed to lead and facilitate discussion that helps students to learn. *Third*, librarians require knowledge about the curriculum to assist teachers prepare complementary resources related to the appropriate learning materials for students and establish their willingness to read books and use other literacy facilities in the library, increasing both their receptive and productive skills. *Fourth*, information literacy integration skills are needed to help teachers make use of information literacy. *Fifth*, librarians need teaching skills to help them discuss what method is appropriate to use during the teaching and learning process in the library. Having these proficiencies would make the librarians good partners to teachers while providing access to available learning resources and promoting students learning. These also become the reasons why this present study involved the school librarians working together to promote students' English literacy.

The partnership between librarians and teachers could take several forms. Posner (1987) argued that there should be a three-way partnership between school librarians and teachers, including teachers of English. First, the teachers prepare the materials as prescribed by the curriculum; second, the librarians

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provide collateral materials to deepen and enrich the meaning of what is being taught; and third, the students teach both teachers and librarians, as they interpret both classroom lessons and outside readings from their personal/individual perspectives.

Many researchers have studied the effectiveness of the library and librarians as a means of enabling student achievement. William and Zald (1997) found that librarians played a key role in transforming undergraduate courses, pedagogy, facilities design, and faculty development to bring information literacy into departmental curricula. Furthermore, Lonsdale (2003) proved that school libraries have a positive impact on student achievement whether measured in terms of reading, literacy, or learning in general. Frascotti, Levenseler, Weingarten, and Wiegand (2007) did a project to provide a plan that may be used to improve library use at Caritas Charles Vath College to help students be more academically successful through increased information literacy. The team developed a plan that consisted of a set of recommendations explaining how library use at that college could be improved. Chan (2008) also claimed that many studies considered the view that school library services have a positive impact on student achievement. In line with the above studies, Diem (2011b) did a study using the Partnership with Librarians (PLS) as the sub-strategy in her 3-Ls approach to fifth graders. This sub-strategy influenced students' literacy skill by 82.4% (p. 139). Therefore, in this study, PLS was used to prove whether it could also make a difference in junior high school students' English learning in one underprivileged school in Palembang.

Based on the discrepancy between theories and the facts above, this study is primarily aimed at demonstrating that having a partnership with librarians as a strategy to increase students' English literacy skills is needed, to find out (1) the effectiveness of PLS on students' total English literacy achievement (ELA $_{Total}$), and/or each English skill, including listening, reading, writing, and/or speaking; and (2) to what extent did each skill influence students' ELA $_{Total}$ after they were taught using the strategy.

2. Method

Using Quasi-Experimental method with equivalent time-samples design (Tuckman, 1978, p. 139-141), this study aimed at improving students' English Literacy. This design was used because only a single group was allowed by the school and the group's pattern of experience with the treatment using PLS was highly predetermined. The subjects of the study were 45 out of 108 students consisting of seventh, eighth and ninth graders of one state junior high school in Palembang, South Sumatera. The sample was selected by using stratified random sampling by categorising the students who were taught for only 2x45 minutes a week by the same English teacher in each grade of their regular class for into three groups based on their reading achievement, namely below average (scores 0-60), average (scores 61-75), and above average (scores 76-100).

2.1 How did PLS Operate in this Study?

This present study is a follow up study under Diem's project on students' specific comprehension skills in English (formerly presented at the AARE International Conference November 2017 in Melbourne; See

also Mirizon, Diem, & Vianty, 2018). PLS is a strategy under the approach called *Perpustakaan, Kepustakaan, dan Keaksaraan* (PKK) and designed to improve students' English literacy (Diem, 2011a). PKK is well known as the 3-Ls approach (See also Diem, 2011b). This approach makes use of *Library* and *Literature* to promote *Literacy* learning. In general, this aproach is based on the skill of Reading, which underlies the concepts of 3-Ls. It is argued that Reading is the most fundamental skill that touches upon every aspect of student's literacy education. Further, although the 3-Ls are mutually interdependent, in the typical school curriculum they are implemented sequentially, not simultaneously. Thus *literacy* precedes *literature* and *literature* precedes *library* in the educational sequence. Put differently, the use of *literature* requires *literacy*, and the use of the *library* requires that *literature* be available in the form of books, articles, and magazines—and in sufficient numbers and genres to support the educational and professional needs of a society of readers (See Diem, 2011a).

In this study, partnerships between teachers of English and librarians were established in order to form the habit of reading and learning that eventually increased students' English literacy achievement as a whole. In one hand, librarians helped the research team to provide relevant sources covering listening and reading texts for supporting English literacy teaching and learning process for 90 minutes each meeting, three times a week. Furthermore, because the four skills must be taught integratedly according to the curriculum of the school, the students were required to do some listening and reading for around 15 minutes in each session and then to discuss what they had previously listened to or read for another 15 minutes in their small group of five students. Then with our guidance, they had to write the results of the discussion by firstly generating their ideas through brainstorming since they were also taught such skills like generating and summarizing ideas. Finally, they reported the results to the whole class for the rest of their daily treatment hours after having recess for ten minutes. When students talked about the results, most of the time we encouraged them not only to reproduce what they had read/listened but also interpreting ideas from the texts pertaining to their own situation. It was believed that the gains observed in the students were due to the treatment.

In the other hand, we as teachers/researchers always informed the librarians of the real needs of the students in relation to the materials needed to be discussed in the English literacy skill curriculum in every meeting during the treatment. It should be noted that there was always discussion of the materials among librarians, teachers, and students.

In summary, how PLS worked in the present study followed the process where: (1) teachers prepared various formal materials as stated in the curriculum; (2) librarians provided additional materials to internalize what was taught; and (3) students responded to the lessons and/or reading materials from their own perspectives, either orally or in written.

The English proficiency of the students of the school involved at the beginning of this study was below average (mean score< 60). Nonetheless, the school had a good collaboration partnership with the public library and also a special library in town to cope with the lack of library collection owned. This especially supportted the treatment conducted during the study. The school principal had agreed to provide a special

corner with an English collection containing about 315 children's and young adults' books in English, which were selected by teachers as researchers, in addition to the school's own regular library collection. The collection of this corner is one of the interlibrary-loan programs between the school and a special library and or the public library in Palembang. The collection was used as teaching and learning resources in PLS and was managed by the qualified librarians as the teaching partners.

The students' English literacy was measured using tests before and after the intervention. The reading comprehension test, using an Informal Reading Inventory Test by Stark (1981), was given prior to the study to find out students' reading comprehension level. Then, English literacy skill tests consisting of listening, reading, writing, and speaking were given before and after the intervention using PLS as the pre- and post-tests. The pre-test and post-test for listening and reading were exactly the same to see how much progress was made by the students after the three-month intervention. Each meeting of the intervention focused on integration of both receptive and productive skills and after every eight meetings, the students were also given a formative test on the skills taught to see their progress. It is admitted that the pre-test–post-test control group design should have been used to see if the gain in the students' ELA was truely caused by PLS. Unfortunately, the school only allowed the intervention to be done in one group and one classroom due to time being the last semester for students finishing the junior high school program (for 9th graders) and or their final semester to be promoted to higher grade (for 7th and 8th graders). Therefore, the equivalent time-samples design was used in this study. Despite one weakness of using this design is in the area of external validity, according to Tuckman (1978, p. 141), this design also has strengths. One strong point is that it is good in controlling for history and therefore it must be used in situations which maximize its strengths.

Listening and reading skills were tested using the same test consisting of 32 questions. The questions covered the main idea, detail, sequence, inference, cause and effect, and vocabulary. The listening test was in the form of a listening script read to the students followed by questions to measure students' listening comprehension. Software *ReadPlease2003* was used to transform the passages and the questions into native speaker's voice. The students were given multiple choice questions (A, B, C, and D) to choose after each passage was read to them.

Then, the reading test aimed at measuring the students' comprehension was given**.** Students were asked to read the texts and answer the questions about the same aspects as they did in the listening test in which they could choose the right answer. Next, a writing test was given, asking the students to write a short narrative text. The story should consist of generic structures of narrative text covering four aspects of writing narratives, namely *focus/exposition, organisation/plot, narrative technique*, and *language,* as stated in the Common Core State Standards Narrative Writing Rubrics (Turnitin, 2012).

Finally, a speaking test was given to the students to retell what they had written in the writing test. Their speaking ability was videotaped and assessed using a speaking rubric for storytelling skills, including *familiarity with the story, vocabulary and grammar, pronunciation and fluency, vocal expression*, and *body language* (NET Working, 2012). Meanwhile, for data analyses, paired sample t-tests were used to

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see the mean difference between pre-test and post-test of students' ELA $_{Total}$ and between one formative test to another. Additional multiple regression analyses were also used to scientifically detect only the extent to which the contribution of each skill to ELA $_{Total}$ and each aspect of each skill to the total achievement of each skill in order to suggest for the teachers what aspects of each skill to emphasize when they use PLS.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1 Findings

a. Descriptive Statistics

The findings show the students' total English Literacy Achievement (ELA $_{Total}$) and each of its English skill achievement. Both Tables 1 and 2 present the distribution of the students' scores before and after the intervention. Before intervention, 100% of the students' ELA $_{Total}$ is below average (mean=47.62) with the mean score of each skill is as follows: *reading* (46.46), *listening* (39.17), *writing* (57.07), and *speaking* (47.79). After the intervention, the ELA $_{Total}$ is still at an average level (mean=71.39), where 18% are at an above average level, 80% are at an average level, and 2% are still at a below average level (See Table 1). The mean score of each skill is as follows: *reading* (79.58), *writing* (73.24), *listening* (68.41) and *speaking* (64.35) (See Table 2).

At formative tests (FT) 1, 2, and 3, students' mean scores of each skill also improved significantly, as follows: *reading* (46.46 at the pre-test to 51.11 at FT1, 60.89 at FT2, 71.89 at FT3, and 79.58 at the post-test); *listening* (39.17 at the pre-test to 41.67 at FT1, 49.22 at FT2, 60.44 at FT3, and 68.41 at the post-test); *writing* (57.07 at the pre-test to 59.42 at FT1, 61.90 at FT2, 65.49 at FT3, and 73.24 at the post-test); and *speaking* (47.79 at the pre-test to 50.91 at FT1, 53.49 at FT2, 58.01 at FT3, and 64.35 at the post-test) (See Table 4).

Table 1. Score Distribution of Students' English Literacy Achievement $_{Total}$ Based on Pre-test and Post-test (N = 45)

Score Interval	Level Category	Pre-test			Post-test		
		Freq.	%	Mean	Freq.	%	Mean
	English Literacy Achievement $_{Total}$						
76 – 100	Above Average	-	-	-	8	18%	77.42
61 – 75	Average	-	-	-	36	80%	70.05
0 – 60	Below Average	45	100%	47.62	1	2%	60.25
Total		45	100%	47.62	45	100%	71.39

Table 2. Mean Score of English Literacy Achievement of Each Skill (N = 45)

English Skill	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Listening	39.17	68.41
Reading	46.46	79.58
Writing	57.07	73.24
Speaking	47.79	64.35

Before the statistical analyses were conducted, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Levene's test were given to find the normality and the homogeneity of the data respectively. The results show that all the data of ELA $_{Total}$, and of each skill, including reading, listening, writing, and speaking, are both normal and homogenous.

b. Statistical Analyses

Students' ELA Based on Paired Sample T-test

The paired sample T-test results show a significant difference between students' pre-test and post-test scores of ELA $_{Total}$ and each of its literacy skills (See Table 3).

Table 3. Students' English Literacy Achievements Based on Paired Sample T-test

Variables	Mean score		Mean Difference Between	t-value	Sig
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test and Post-test		
ELA Total	47.62	71.39	23.77	56.21	.000
Listening	39.17	68.41	29.24	33.73	.000
Reading	46.46	79.58	33.12	31.68	.000
Writing	57.07	73.24	16.17	11.39	.000
Speaking	47.79	64.35	16.56	36.94	.000

The results show that the mean difference between pre-test and post-test of ELA $_{Total}$ is 23.77, with the t-value of 56.21 and the significance value of .000. In addition, for each of the students' literacy skills, the mean differences are as follows: listening (29.24), reading (33.12), writing (16.17), and speaking (16.56).

Students' ELA Progress Based on Formative Tests

In addition to the pre-test and the post-test, three formative tests were given to the sample students during the teaching and learning process to monitor their progress. Each formative test was given after eight meetings. A paired sample t-test was also applied to see the significant difference of reading, listening, writing, and speaking achievements during the intervention.

Based on Table 4, the results show that all paired sample t-tests have a significant difference with p=.000 level of significance. In other words, students' reading, listening, writing, and speaking achievements are improved at every observation (test). Students show only a little progress in the first formative test because they were still trying to adapt the initial teaching and learning process using the Partnership with

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Librarians Strategy. At the beginning of the intervention, some examples of narrative text were introduced, read, and discussed with other students and librarians, and the students could start writing and retelling their own composition of narrative text. The result shows that in the first formative test, students make noteworthy progress in all four skills, but the highest progress is found in speaking and writing skills with the t_{value} 14.2 and 11.2, respectively.

Table 4. Students' English Literacy Achievement Based on Formative Tests

Variables	Mean					Mean Difference					t- value and sig				
	Pre	F1	F2	F3	Post	Pre-F1	F1-F2	F2-F3	F3-Post	Pre-Post	Pre-F1	F1-F2	F2-F3	F3-Post	Pre-Post
Reading	46.46	51.11	60.89	71.89	79.58	4.65	9.78	11.00	7.69	33.12	6.79	12.3	11.7	13.1	33.7
											.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Listening	39.17	41.67	49.22	60.44	68.41	2.50	7.55	11.22	7.97	29.24	8.20	12.4	12.4	12	33.7
											.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Writing	57.07	59.42	61.90	5.49	73.24	2.35	2.48	3.59	7.75	16.17	11.2	9.2	8.7	8.9	11.4
											.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Speaking	47.79	50.91	53.49	58.01	64.35	3.12	2.58	4.52	6.34	16.56	14.2	3.8	6.9	15.9	36.9
											.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

After the first formative test, the students had more exposure to reading and listening activities. They were asked to listen carefully to a story played via audio recording and asked to mention some information which they heard during the listening time. After that, they were given a reading text which was similar with the text that they just listened to for them to discuss in the group to find out if what they understood through listening was in line with what was read through the printed text. The results of the second formative test show that the students made noteworthy progress in all four skills, but this time the highest progress was in listening and reading skills with the t_{value} 12.4 and 12.3, respectively.

To maximise the teaching and learning process, the students were exposed to all four skills proportionally. Then the students were given the third formative test by asking them to listen to the audio recording, read the text, write their own narrative text, and retell it in front of their friends. The results of the third formative test show that the students' scores in the four skills increased with the highest score on listening and reading skills. However, in the post test, the results revealed that all the students' scores in the four skills increased with the highest score on speaking and reading skills with t_{value} 15.9 and 13.1 respectively.

In summary, the students' English literacy achievement either as a whole or individual skill shows considerable progress in every formative test, as presented in Table 4 above.

Contribution of Students' Each Skill Achievement Based on Regression Analyses

Stepwise regression analysis was firstly used to determine how much each skill contributed to ELA $_{Total}$. Among the four literacy skills, the reading skill gave the highest contribution (63.6%) to students' ELA $_{Total}$. Meanwhile, the contribution of writing skill was 22.9%, followed by the speaking skill at 9.2%, and the listening skill at only 4.3%. Table 5 displays this data. Moreover, regression analysis stepwise was again done to see the amount of contribution of each aspect of each skill to its total in the group. Based on Table 5, all six aspects of reading contribute significantly to students' reading skill achievement. The contributions of the six aspects are as follows: inference (54.7%), main idea (25.7%), cause and effect (6.8%), detail (5.1%), vocabulary (4.9%), and sequence (2.8%). For listening, six aspects which give significant contribution to listening skill achievement $_{Total}$ are inference (46.5%), main idea (26.4%), detail (9.9%), cause and effect (6.8%), vocabulary (4.0%), and sequence (6.4%). For students' writing skills, four aspects give significant contributions, but organisation has the highest contribution (87.3%). The three other contributions are given by narrative technique (8.4%), focus/exposition (2.8%), and language (1.5%). Finally, the contribution of each aspect of speaking towards speaking skill $_{Total}$ is as follows: pronunciation and fluency (90.1%), familiarity with the story (3.7%), body language (2.9%), vocabulary and grammar (2.6%), and vocal expression (0.8%).

Table 5. Contribution of Each Literacy Skill to ELA $_{Total}$ and Its Each Aspect to Each Literacy Skil Based on Regression Analyses (N= 45)

Variables	Model	$_R2$	$_R2$ Change	Sig. F Change
ELA Total	Reading	.636	.636	.000
	Reading, Writing	.865	.229	.000
	Reading, Writing, Speaking	.957	.092	.000
	Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening	1.000	.043	.000
Reading Skill	Inference (Inf.)	.547	.547	.000
	Inf., Main Idea (MI)	.804	.257	.000
	Inf., MI, Cause and Effect (C/E)	.872	.068	.000
	Inf., MI, Cause and Effect, Details (Det.)	.923	.051	.000
	Inf., MI, C/E, Det., Vocabulary (Voc.)	.972	.049	.000
	Inf., MI, C/E, Det., Voc., Sequence (Seq.)	1.000	.028	.000
Listening Skill	Inference (Inf.)	.465	.465	.000
	Inf., Main Idea (MI)	.729	.264	.000
	Inf., MI, Details (Det.)	.828	.099	.000
	Inf., MI, Det., Cause and Effect (C/E)	.896	.068	.000
	Inf., MI, Det., C/E, Vocabulary (Voc.)	.936	.040	.000
	Inf., MI, Det., C/E, Voc, Sequence (Seq.)	1.000	.064	.000

	Organization (Org.)	.873	.873	.000
Writing Skill	Org., Narrative Techniques (NT)	.957	.084	.000
	Org., NT, Exposition (Expo.)	.985	.028	.000
	Org., NT, Expo, Language and Convention (Lang. & Conv.)	1.000	.015	.000
	Pronunciation & Fluency (Pron. & Flue.)	.901	.901	.000
	Pron. & Flue., Familiarity with the Story (Fam. w/Story)	.938	.037	.000
	Pron. & Flue., Fam. w/Story, Body Language (Body Lang.)	.966	.029	.000
Speaking Skill	Pron. & Flue., Fam. w/Story, Body Lang., Vocabulary and Grammar (Vocab. & Gram.)	.992	.026	.000
	Pron. & Flue., Fam. w/Story, Body Lang., Voc. & Gram, Vocal Expression (Vocal Exp.)	1.000	.008	.000

3.2 Discussion

That the students' ELA $_{Total}$ is a little bit on the above average level (mean=71.39) is not yet satisfactory since the English standard score of most of the state schools in South Sumatra, including the one where this present study took place, is 75.00 (Sudarmi, 2017/2018). Nonetheless, based on the results of the mean difference of each skill between pre-test and post-test of this study, PLS is proven to be an effective strategy in improving students' ELA because no student in this study is categorised as below average in his or her achievement. Instead, more than half of the students are on the above average level, and only some are on an average level. Moreover, the students also achieved a significant increase in each of the four literacy skills.

Although each skill has a significant improvement, the increased achievement of the students is somewhat different in each skill in which, for example, among the four English literacy skills, the students' reading achievement is much higher than those of the other skills. This achievement is probably due to the activities done prior to the teaching and learning activities in the classroom during the implementation of PLS. Researchers almost always had a discussion with the librarians about selecting the narrative texts that were appropriate for the students to read. By doing so, the researchers, as teachers, and the librarians managed to choose the most appropriate materials which matched with the demand of the curriculum and the availability of teaching materials found in the school library. In addition, with the school library having collaboration with the Chit Chat Library as mentioned earlier, the students were very excited whenever the new books were displayed. They did not only read the books in the school but also wanted to check them out to read at home. The availability of the special corner consisting of two stacks with three shelves full of English books, including children's story books and other relevant titles for junior high school students, which were substituted with new titles every two weeks, could support the students in learning English. During the teaching intervention using PLS, the students always loved to study English in the library by wanting to select the new English books to read during their recess time

and after reading them they could not wait to talk about their book during the book talk or poetry recitation and listen to friends talking about their stories as well. By listening to friends, they could also know about the books or poems which they did not have a chance to read by themselves. This atmosphere had exposed them to various English genres, helping them become more familiar with the collection available at the special corner of the school library. Consequently, they were likely to be motivated to read and eventually get access to a lot of information from reading the available texts. This could be seen from the library circulation desk record which showed that more and more sample students checked out books from month to month during the treatment. This undoubtedly could increase their reading achievement. In line with this, Burgin and Bracy (2003) found that there is a link between larger collections and student achievement. Larger collections consisting of English books, which are provided by the school library, could help the students have an eagerness to read and may have increased their reading achievement as well.

In this study, the students also seemed to be more enthusiastic when their library had just received interlibrary-loan books from other libraries in town, such as South Sumatera Public Library, and displayed those multiple genres of new reading materials. This is proven because after school hours, they were in a hurry queuing to enter the library, putting their bags on the racks, and going directly to the new borrowed books display. Students were so motivated to use the books in their library that they engaged themselves in reading activities. This condition confirmed the findings of Diem's study (2012, p. 5) that the use of libraries is influenced by the existence of key features of libraries, such as special acquisitions or the procurement of library materials that are relevant and updated, sufficient length of service-time, and the provision of information and communication technology.

Furthermore, the results of stepwise regression analysis which show that reading is the one which also gives the highest contribution to the students' ELA $_{Total}$ is in line with Lonsdale's (2003) findings that school libraries have a positive impact on students' achievement, whether measured in terms of reading scores, literacy, or learning in general. Therefore, by applying PLS, some aspects of reading, such as inference, main idea, cause and effect, and detail, provide the highest contribution to the students' reading skill. This is possibly due to the teaching and learning reading process, which required the students to read the text aloud to their peers or to read by themselves silently. Very often, with the help of the researchers, students discussed the text thoroughly together, starting from trying to catch the main idea of each paragraph, finding details of the story, such as character(s), plot, moral lesson, or anything interesting in the story, and doing questions-and-answers as to whether or not they had ever read a similar story to the one discussed. During the discussion, students sometimes came across unfamiliar words that caused problems for them when trying to fully understand the text. Nonetheless, since students were studying in the library, they had access to use a dictionary whenever it was needed, and they also had a chance to ask the librarians about the story they were reading. This learning experience has given students a special impression. The new knowledge they acquire remains in their mind for a long time. Therefore, when aspects of reading skills are considered, inference, main idea, cause and effect, and

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detail gave the highest mean difference and the biggest contribution to reading achievement. Why the sequence has the least contribution toward reading as a total could be due to students' negligence to pay attention to it; they would probably rather focus more on main ideas and inference as much as possible to understand and learn the moral lesson of the story.

Listening is the second skill which had the highest mean difference between pre-test and post-test. This is due to the teaching and learning process for receptive skills in which students were asked to listen to the audio recording or listen to the teacher reading aloud the narrative texts that were about to be discussed that day. Before students listened to an audio recording or to the teacher, some questions related to the text were given to recall students' prior knowledge and lead them to the topic about to be presented. This technique is in line with that of Bueno, Madrid, and McLaren's study (2006), in which they sequenced a listening activity into pre-listening and other listening stages. In the first stage, the context was established. It was the place where the teacher tried to build in students' motivation, whereas students did some activities for preparing them for listening. In the following stage, students did the assigned tasks. Furthermore, the teacher asked students to make some notes related to the issues that they had listened. After listening to the recording or to the teacher reading aloud the narrative text, students were asked to discuss together what they had listened to. By discussing together what was listened to, they knew whether what they understood were the text meant. If students knew that they were right or wrong, they must have learned something from the listening session. By applying these patterns, it was proved that students' listening ability was improved. Based on the findings, the highest contribution in the listening aspect was inference. It happened because during the listening activity, students were asked to write some information about what they listened to and discussed it with the teachers. The questions and answers session provided by the teachers gave the students the true information about the text discussed, especially the implied message. Unfortunately, although listening reached the second highest mean, the differences between the pre-test and the post-test, the result of the stepwise regression analysis showed that listening gave the least contribution which affects students' English Literacy $_{Total}$.

Furthermore, with a mean score of 64.34, students' ability in speaking remains one of the most challenging tasks. Being required to retell the narrative text that they wrote under pressure in front of their friends, students seemed to lack confidence. They were still in doubt expressing their ideas in English, although they somewhat knew what they wanted to say in their mother tongue. This fact is in line with the finding of Ur's study (1996) that inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, and mother-tongue interference are among the speaking problems faced by most of the students. Similarly, Littlewood (2007) also confirmed that a foreign language classroom can create inhibition and anxiety. Therefore, during the speaking activity, students tended to read the text without making the necessary contact to the audience. Nonetheless, what is surprising is that there is still an increase in the mean difference score between pre-test and post-test in speaking achievement. It is not without reason. It is probably due to the influence of some other aspects measured, like pronunciation and familiarity with the story, which receive the highest contribution to students' speaking achievement.

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That writing also has the smallest mean difference between pre-test and post-test, assuming that the students put more efforts to one aspect over the others in developing their ideas into a text, whereas according to Richards and Renandya (2002), students need to internalise the complex skills, like generating, organising, and translating ideas into readable text at the same time. That is why writing remains the most challenging task for the students because they have not internalised all skills needed proportionally in their composition. Therefore, writing had the least improvement; however, it is the second skill which gives the highest contribution to students' English literacy achievement in general. This is possibly due to the students' mastery in the organisation aspect of the text, which also leads the students to be more familiar with the development of the story during oral presentation. Therefore, their achievement in speaking as the result of the familiarity of the story also reached the highest contribution. Another reason that caused the speaking and writing achievement to get the high contribution was both the teachers and the librarians guided the students with an explanation related to the narrative text starting from the generic structure to some examples of the stories. In relation to such activity, Doiron and Aselin (2005) claimed that a comprehensive guide with the changing responsibilities of teachers, including English teachers and librarians, in helping students become better readers and writers is badly implemented in the teaching and learning process.

Finally, why do *language and convention* aspects give the least contribution towards writing skill? This is possibly due to the emphasis given during the learning process of how to write a narrative text, students merely focused on the pattern and format of writing. It is admitted that the students were not given sufficient attention to the use of appropriate English. Instead, the focus was only on the students' understanding of expressing their ideas.

In summary, regardless of the weaknesses of the methodology and implementation, it is apparent that PLS could still be effective in improving secondary school students' English literacy.

4. Conclusion

PLS is proven to be one of the effective strategies in English literacy learning. This strategy could create a positive and interactive learning environment through identifying the learning needs of students, discussing instructional materials, and promoting interactive learning activities. In addition, it has opened possibilities for librarians and teachers of English to work collaboratively while helping students to be literate in English in this century. Therefore, some suggestions are offered to EFL teachers, students, and future researchers. EFL teachers can consider using PLS as one of the strategies to improve students' English receptive and productive skills. They could also train students to make use of available facilities at school and to communicate with the librarians, who later can help students gain knowledge. Through PLS, students would become more accustomed to reading, listening, writing, and speaking in English integratedly, and, at the same time, utilising whatever facilities are available at school or in the society to support students learning English. In addition, future teacher-researchers and practitioners could do a classroom action research as a follow up study to see the potential effect of PLS but with appropriate designs.

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Acknowledgement

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