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# FREQUENCY OF PLAYING ONLINE GAME HONKAI STAR RAIL AND ENGLISH READING INTEREST: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY TO THE WHATSAPP GROUP OF PERSERIKATAN FIREFLY

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**Abstract**

The frequency of playing online games can influence students' literacy, particularly their interest in reading. This study investigates the correlation between the frequency of playing Honkai Star Rail and English reading interest among members of the Perserikatan Firefly WhatsApp group. Using a quantitative correlational design and Pearson's correlation test, data were collected from 99 respondents. The analysis revealed a positive and significant correlation **(r = 0.469, p < 0.05)** between the two variables, indicating that the more frequently students play Honkai Star Rail, the higher their interest in reading tends to be. These findings suggest that narrative-driven games can contribute to students' reading motivation and literacy engagement. In conclusion, this study provides evidence that online games, when involving rich narratives and textual interaction, may serve as an alternative medium to foster reading interest, offering valuable insights for educators and researchers in the field of language learning.

## INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, online gaming has transcended its role as mere entertainment, evolving into a dynamic platform for informal language learning across reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills. *Honkai Star Rail*, a narrative-driven role-playing game (RPG), exemplifies this shift, as its immersive storyline and quest systems necessitate frequent interaction with English-language dialogues (reading), in-game audio cues (listening), and collaborative discussions in platforms like the Perserikatan Firefly WhatsApp group (speaking/writing). This multifaceted engagement raises a critical question: how does online game, combined with digital

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social interaction, shape English reading interest while simultaneously engaging other language skills ?

Reading comprehension remains a cornerstone of academic and professional success, yet many learners struggle due to limited exposure to authentic materials beyond formal education (Grabe & Stoller, 2020:22). *Honkai Star Rail* addresses this gap by embedding rich textual input such as quest descriptions and character dialogues into gameplay, requiring players to decode, infer, and analyze written content to progress. Simultaneously, the game's voice-acted narratives and environmental audio provide incidental listening practice, exposing players to native pronunciation and intonation. These interactions align with Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which posits that language acquisition thrives on meaningful, context-rich exposure (Krashen, 2012:15) cited in (Nation, 2020:30).

The Perserikatan Firefly WhatsApp group further amplifies this learning ecosystem. Members engage in hybrid English-Bahasa discussions, debating strategies, deciphering lore, and sharing gameplay experiences. These interactions foster speaking and writing skills as participants articulate complex ideas, negotiate meanings, and co-construct knowledge practices mirroring Vygotsky's social learning theory, where peer dialogue scaffolds comprehension (Vygotsky, 1978) cited in (Duke & Cartwright, 2021:S30 ). For instance, explaining a quest's objectives in writing or clarifying plot twists via voice messages reinforces both productive (speaking/writing) and receptive (reading/listening) skills.

However, existing research disproportionately focuses on isolated skills, neglecting their synergistic potential. While studies confirm that RPGs like *Genshin Impact* improve inferential reading (Liang, 2022:1045) and vocabulary retention (Xu et al., 2021:80), they rarely account for how listening to in-game audio or discussing strategies in social groups enhances these outcomes. Similarly, research on digital communities (Thorne et al., 2021:810)

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By investigating the Perserikatan Firefly group, this study seeks to unravel how *Honkai Star Rail*'s integration of reading within gameplay and social interaction collectively shapes English reading interest. The findings aim to advance holistic understanding of digital media's pedagogical potential, offering educators and designers insights into leveraging skill engagement for language development.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Definition of Frequency Playing Honkai Star Rail

Frequency of playing refers to the regularity and duration of engagement with a specific activity over a defined period. In gaming research, this is operationalized as the number of hours per day, week, or month spent interacting with a game (Griffiths et al., 2017:310). Gentile et al. (2011:322) emphasize that gameplay frequency can significantly influence cognitive outcomes, such as problem-solving and language processing, particularly in narrative-driven games requiring sustained textual interaction.

*Honkai Star Rail*, a role-playing game (RPG) developed by HoYoverse, exemplifies this dynamic through its immersive, text-heavy design, featuring English-language dialogues, quest descriptions, and lore. Games of this nature, as Xu et al. (2023:80) note, provide "incidental linguistic input" through repetitive exposure to contextualized vocabulary and narrative structures, potentially fostering second language acquisition. In this study, frequency is measured via a self-reported questionnaire where participants detail their weekly gameplay hours, enabling an assessment of its correlation with reading interest. The game's reliance on textual comprehension for progression such as decoding character motivations or strategizing based on quest instructions positions frequent players in a unique environment for language exposure (Gee, 2020:92). Overall, The main reason for choosing this title is to emphasize the critical role of gameplay frequency as a measurable factor influencing language learning outcomes, specifically english reading interest within the context of playing *Honkai Star Rail.*

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### Definition of Reading Interest

Reading interest is a multifaceted construct that reflects an individual's intrinsic motivation, emotional engagement, and sustained willingness to interact with written texts. It goes beyond simply liking to read; rather, it involves a genuine curiosity, enjoyment, and value placed on reading, which in turn drives voluntary and frequent engagement with a variety of texts. According to Schiefele et al. (2016:30), reading interest is shaped by personal relevance, positive reading experiences, and the perceived usefulness of reading in everyday life. This interest not only encourages readers to select texts that align with their preferences but also sustains their attention and effort even when faced with challenging material.

Guthrie et al. (2019:18) highlight that students with high reading interest are more likely to employ deep comprehension strategies, such as making connections, asking questions, and reflecting on meaning, which contributes to greater reading achievement and academic success. Furthermore, reading interest is influenced by both individual and contextual factors, including self-efficacy, access to engaging materials, and supportive social environments. In educational settings, fostering reading interest is essential for cultivating lifelong literacy habits, as it motivates learners to explore diverse genres, develop critical thinking skills, and participate actively in knowledge-building communities. Ultimately, reading interest serves as a driving force that not only enhances reading proficiency but also enriches personal growth and intellectual development.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Design

This study employs a quantitative method with the correlation design to investigate between gameplay frequency (X) and reading interest (Y). Grounded in Creswell (2012:338) correlational research refers to a non-experimental method used to identify and measure the degree of association between two or more variables, where the researcher does not manipulate any of the variables under study. Instead, the variables are observed as they naturally occur to determine

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whether a statistical relationship exists between them, the design operationalizes gameplay as a source of "comprehensible input" through *Honkai Star Rail*'s narrative-driven texts. A structured questionnaire adapted from Gentile et al.'s (2011:322) measures weekly gameplay hours, types of in-game texts engaged with (e.g., dialogues, item descriptions), and participation frequency in the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp group.

**Population and Sample**

According to Creswell (2018:142), a population refers to "the entire group of individuals or objects to which the research findings will generalize." For this study, the population comprises all active members of the *Perserikatan Firefly* WhatsApp Group, a digital community of *Honkai Star Rail* enthusiasts who engage in English-mediated discussions about gameplay, strategies, and narrative analysis. This group was selected due to its members' consistent exposure to in-game English texts and their participation in collaborative language practices, aligning with Gee's (2020:92) concept of "affinity spaces" where shared interests drive learning.

Creswell (2018:155) define a sample as "a subset of the population selected to represent the broader group in a study." This research employs purposive sampling, a method where participants are chosen based on predefined criteria relevant to the study's objectives (Etikan et al., 2016:2). The criteria include :

1. Active participation in *Honkai Star Rail* gameplay (≥5 hours/week).
2. Regular engagement in WhatsApp group discussions (≥3 posts/week).
3. Willingness to complete questionnaires given.

From the population of 549 active group members, 99 participants meeting these criteria will be selected. This sample size ensures a balance between depth of analysis and feasibility, as recommended by Creswell (2014:207) for correlation studies. The purposive approach allows the researcher to focus on individuals whose experiences directly reflect the correlation between gameplay frequency and reading interest, thereby enhancing the validity of findings (Bryman, 2016:184).

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**Table 1. Population and Sample of the Research**

| GROUP | POPULATION | SAMPLE |
|---|---|---|
| Perserikatan Firefly | 549 | 99 |

**Research Instrument**

This study employs a quantitative correlation approach to investigate the relationship between *Honkai Star Rail* gameplay frequency and English reading interest, utilizing questionnaire adapted from Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010:6) framework for digital engagement surveys, the questionnaire assesses gameplay habits and reading interest.

**Data Collection Technique**

To examine the correlation between *Honkai Star Rail* gameplay frequency and English reading interest, data will be collected via a Google Forms questionnaire structured around the two blueprint indicators. The instrument, adapted from Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010:6) framework for digital engagement surveys, includes total 52 Likert-scale items (1–5) divided into 28 & 24 items. The questionnaire integrates direct quotations from in-game texts to contextualize vocabulary recognition tasks, aligning with Nation's (2020:45) emphasis on incidental learning.

**Data Analysis Technique**

To analyze the correlation between *Honkai Star Rail* gameplay frequency and English reading interest, this study employs Pearson's correlation coefficient (Pearson's *r*), a statistical measure assessing the strength and direction of linear relationships between two variables (Field, 2018:232). Quantitative data from the Likert-scale questionnaire will be coded numerically (1–5 scale) and analyzed using SPSS 27 software. For instance, responses to the Likert-scale items are quantified as follows :

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**Table 2. Score of Likert Scale**

| Scale | Score |
|---|---|
| Strongly Disagree | 1 |
| Disagree | 2 |
| Neutral | 3 |
| Agree | 4 |
| Strongly Agree | 5 |

The formula will determine whether increased gameplay frequency (Variable X) correlates with higher reading Interest (Variable Y). The classification of correlation coefficient results using Pearson's formula is adopted by Vasantadjaja (2020) in Nur Aisyah Karim (2024:28) as follows :

**Table 3. Score of Pearson Correlation**

| | |
|---|---|
| .70 or higher | A solid positive relationship |
| .40 to .69 | Strong positive relationship |
| .30 to .39 | Moderate positive relationship |
| .20 to .29 | Weak positive relationship |
| .01 to .19 | No or negligible relationship |
| 0 | No relationship (zero correlation) |
| -.01 to -.19 | No or negligible relationship |
| -.20 to -.29 | Weak negative relationship |
| -.30 to -.39 | Moderate negative relationship |
| -.40 to -.69 | Strong negative relationship |
| -.70 or higher | A solid negative relationship |

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## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

To examine the relationship between the two variables, namely Frequency of Playing Honkai Star Rail and Reading Interest, a Pearson product-moment correlation test was conducted. This test was selected because both variables were measured on an interval scale, and the assumptions of normality and linearity had been met.

**Table 4. Bivariate Correlations of Frequency of Playing Honkai Star Rail & Reading Interest**

**Correlations**

| | | Frequency of Playing Honkai Star Rail | Reading Interest |
|---|---|---|---|
| Frequency of Playing Honkai Star Rail | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .469** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | <,001 |
| | N | 99 | 99 |
| Reading Interest | Pearson Correlation | .469** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | <,001 | |
| | N | 99 | 99 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The positive correlation coefficient indicates a direct relationship between the two variables. This means that the higher the Frequency of Playing Honkai Star Rail, the higher the Reading Interest of the respondents, and vice versa. Referring Pearson's formula adopted by Vasantadjaja (2020) in Nur Aisyah Karim (2024:28), a correlation coefficient of r = **0.469** falls within the range of **Strong Positive Relationship**.

With a sample size of N = 99 respondents, these findings suggest that playing *Honkai Star Rail* and reading interest are meaningfully related. However, while the correlation is statistically significant, it should not be interpreted as a causal relationship. Instead, the results demonstrate that the two variables tend to vary together in a moderately positive direction.

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These findings support the alternative hypothesis (Ha) stating that there is a significant correlation between the two variables. However, it is important to note that although the correlation is statistically significant, it does not imply a causal relationship. The results highlight that the variables tend to vary together in a moderately positive direction.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the bivariate correlation analysis using Pearson's correlation test, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between *The Frequency of Playing Honkai Star Rail* and *Reading Interest* among *Perserikatan Firefly* Whatsapp Group Members. The correlation coefficient obtained was **r = 0.469**, with a significance value of **p < 0.05**, indicating that the correlation is positive and significant. This means that the more frequently members engage in playing *Honkai Star Rail*, the higher their reading interest tends to be. Conversely, a lower frequency of playing the game is associated with a lower level of reading interest.

The strength of the correlation can be categorized as a **Strong Positive Relationship**, since the coefficient value lies between **0.40** and **0.60,** implies that although the relationship between the two variables is **strong**, it is still meaningful and worth further consideration. This result suggests that the activity of playing narrative-driven online games like *Honkai Star Rail* might contribute to fostering members curiosity, engagement, and willingness to interact with texts, which eventually enhances their reading interest.

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