

INCREASING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH TASK-BASED APPROACH

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Abstract

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apakah ada peningkatan signifikan pada prestasi pemahaman membaca siswa setelah diajar menggunakan pendekatan berbasis tugas. Populasi dari penelitian ini adalah siswa tahun pertama SMKN 2 Bandar Lampung yang terdiri dari 15 kelas dan satu kelas diambil sebagai kelas sampel. Sampel ini dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik random sampling. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kuantitatif dan menggunakan desain one group pretest- posttest. Skor rata-rata pretest adalah 51,43 dan skor rata-rata posttest adalah 78,43, jadi peningkatannya adalah 27,00. Nilai signifikan (2-tailed) adalah $p=0,000$, dimana $p<0,05$, hal ini menunjukkan bahwa hipotesis satu diterima. Dari lima aspek dalam membaca yang diamati, mengidentifikasi ide pokok merupakan yang paling meningkat dan siswa memiliki respon positif setelah diajar menggunakan pendekatan berbasis tugas. Maka disimpulkan bahwa pendekatan berbasis tugas secara signifikan dapat meningkatkan prestasi membaca pemahaman siswa.

The objective of this research is to find out whether there is significant increase of students' reading comprehension achievement after being taught using task-based approach. The population of this research is the first year students of SMKN 2 Bandar Lampung consisting of 15 classes and one class is taken as the sample class. The sample is selected by using the random sampling technique. This is a quantitative research and one group pretest- posttest design was employed. The mean score of pretest is 51,43 and mean score of posttest is 78,43, so the increase is 27,00. The significant (2-tailed) value was $p=0.000$, where $p<0.05$, it showed that the hypothesis was accepted. From five reading aspects being observed, identifying main idea was the most increased and students had positive respond after being taught using task-based approach. It was therefore concluded that task-based approach could significantly increase students' reading comprehension achievement.

Keywords: *reading aspects, reading comprehension, task-based approach.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of language skill that students should master. There are several definitions of reading proposed by several experts. Principally, it is a process to get the idea from reading text. It is about understanding written texts (Bernhardt, Kamil, and Pang, 2003). In line with the statement above, Callahan and Clark (1988) define reading as an active process in which people to attempt to extracts ideas, concepts, thoughts, or images from the pattern of words set forth on the printed page. Other linguist, Finocchiaro and Bonomo (1973) state that reading is bringing and getting meaning from the printed or written materials. After getting the idea from reading text, readers correlate the information from the reading text to what the readers already know or readers' background knowledge (Eskey, 1986). Then, well comprehension of a reading text will arise.

In teaching reading, most of teachers emphasize on explanation and definition of text, then asks students to do the excercises by answering questions based on the text given. There is a lack of guidance to comprehend the text, while the idea of reading comprehension is getting the idea of the reading text. Therefore, the crucial thing of teaching reading is leading the students to engage their mind in the text.. Then, by comprehending the text well the students can get new information. In other words, they learn new knowledge, that is studying.

The teacher should try to understand the students' need. The teacher must fullfil students' need while still straight to teach based on the curriculum guideline. As the example, when a teacher teaches English in the classroom and the students do

not understand the subject, the teacher should not continue teaching. He or she has to take a part to enjoy the teaching learning activity, by creating some fun activities in learning English and relating to students' real life. For the purpose of the research, task-based approach was applied in teaching reading, because it can bring the students to the real situation and get the knowledge. Task-based approach brings the teaching learning process into real-world situations (Ellis, 2003), so students can connect the lesson into their real life and it will make students to have better comprehension.

Furthermore, task-based approach focuses on meaning rather the form, therefore it will be a challenge for the teacher to choose, sequence, and implement tasks in ways that will combine a focus on meaning with a focus on form. Teaching classroom using task-based approach is the activities which make the students enjoy in learning to get the knowledge of the subject. In reference to the statements described above, the writer would like to know whether there is significant increase of students' reading comprehension achievement after being taught using task-based approach or not.

The focus of the research was on the implementation of task-based approach in reading comprehension. Moreover, in order to help the students to comprehend the English text well, the writer used five reading aspects, they were: identifying main idea, understanding vocabulary, identifying specific information, finding Inference and finding reference (Nuttal, 1985).

METHODS

The research was conducted based on the one-group pretest- posttest design, a pra experimental design. In this research, the writer had one experimental class only.

This design referring to Setiyadi, (2006) is represented as follows:

T1 X T2

T1 : Pretest

X : Treatment, The writer conducted three times treatment in this research.

T2 : Posttest

Population of this research was the first year students of SMK Negeri 2 Bandar Lampung. There were fifteen classes which each class consisted of 25 to 35 students. Then, one of those classes was chosen as the experimental class, it was class X TKR 2. The experimental class was selected using simple random sampling.

Furthermore, the instrument in this research was reading comprehension test in the pretest and posttest. The pretest was administered to find out students' reading comprehension before the treatments. Subsequently, the students got treatments by using task-based approach. Eventually, a posttest was administered to find out the students reading comprehension after the treatments. After getting the data from both pretest and posttest, the researcher analyzed the result of both pretest and posttest to see the significant increase of students' reading comprehension achievement.

RESULT

The writer held five meetings to get the data. The first meeting the writer conducted the pretest. After getting the pretest, the writer conducted the treatment in three meetings. In the last meeting the writer conducted posttest.

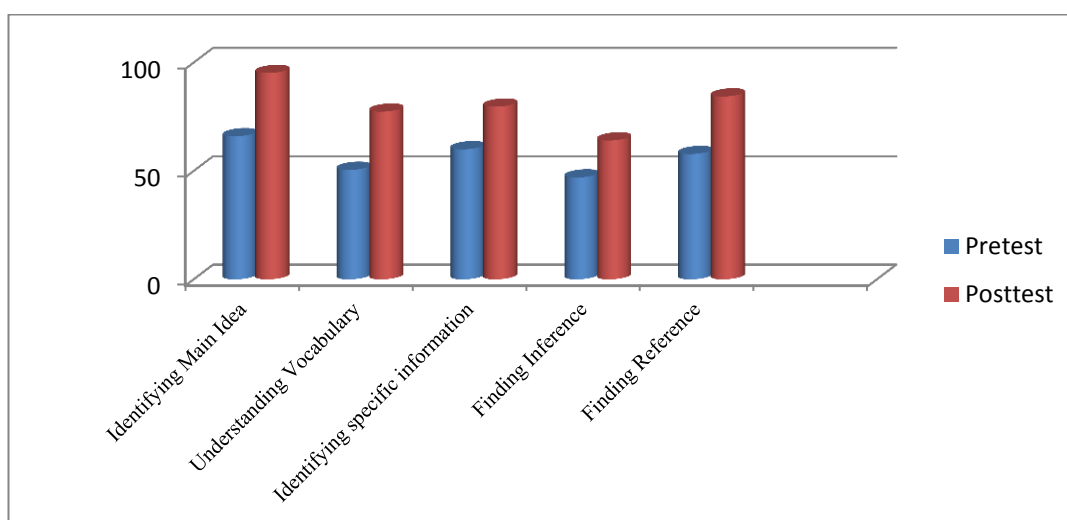
The purpose of conducting the pretest was to identify students' reading comprehension achievement before the treatment. There were 25 items of objective reading test with five optional alternative answers for each (A, B, C, D, and E), one was the correct answer and the rest were the distracters. The testees of the pretest were 28 students of class X TKR 2. The total score was 1440; the highest score was 76 and the lowest score was 24. The median score of pretest was 50 and the mode was 48. The mean score of pretest was 51,43.

After implementing three times treatment, the posttest were administered to know the students' reading comprehension score whether there was a significant increase after being taught by using task-based approach. The item of posttest was exactly the same as the pretest. There were 25 items of objective reading test with five options of alternative answers. The total score of the posttest was 2196, the highest score was 88 and the lowest score was 60. The mode of posttest was 84, the median was 80 and the mean was 78,43.

The mean of the pretest that was 51,43 increased to be 78,43 in the posttest. Comparing those two means of pretest and posttest, there was an increase 27,00 point. Besides the increase of mean in reading comprehension achievement, the

researcher also found other findings. These findings were related to the /increase of each sub skills of reading comprehension which are identifying main idea, understanding vocabulary, identifying specific information, finding Inference and finding reference (Nuttal: 1985).

The Graphic of figure 2 below shows that identifying main idea increased 29,2%, from 66% students who answered correctly in the pretest to 95,2% in posttest. Then, understanding increased 26,8%, from 50,5% in pretest to 77.3% in posttest. Furthermore, identifying specific information increased 19.68%, from 60% in pretest to 79.68 % in posttest. Then, finding inference increased 16,8%, from 47,2% in pretest to 64.% in posttest. The last, finding reference increased 26.5%, from 57.81% in pretest to 84.37% in posttest. The result of increase of each sub skills is shown on the graphic below:



Furthermore, Hypothesis test was used to prove whether the hypothesis proposed by the researcher was accepted or not. The hypothesis of this research was that there was significant increase of students' reading comprehension achievement

after being taught using task-based approach. In order to prove whether the data was increased or not, Repeated Measures T-test was used. It was used in comparing the data of T-test which was called as t-ratio and t-table as the criteria level of significance. If t-ratio higher than t-table it means there is significant increase.

From table below, it can be seen that the result of T-test computation that was processed using SPSS 17, t-ratio can be seen higher than t-table ($11.439 > 2.052$) and with the level of significance $p < 0.05$ and sig. 2-tailed was $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). It meant that there was a significant increase in students' reading comprehension achievement after the students were taught using task-based approach.

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	skor posttest - skor pretest	27.00000	12.49000	2.38039	22.15689	31.84311	11.439	27	.000

DISCUSSION

Based on the reseach result, it was found that there was an increase of the students' reading comprehension after three times treatment were done. It was significant increase, where $p < 0.05$ ($p = 0.000$), which was based on hypothesis testing, it proved that H_0 of this research was rejected and H_1 of this research was accepted. So it means that there is significance increase in reading comprehension achievement after the students are taught using task-based approach. The increase

of the gain (27,00) strengthened previous statement. In line with this, Zhou (2006) had succeeded to increase his students' score by using task-based approach.

While from five reading aspects, the highest increase was identifying main idea, it was 30%. In the pretest, students who can answer correctly of identifying main idea sub skill was 66% then it increased to be 96%. The writer suspected that the perfect increase of this reading sub skill was caused by the students had well understanding about how to identify main idea and the simplicity of the text. It can be seen from sub skills in the pretest percentage, identifying main idea is the highest. Moreover, students' skill of identifying main idea increase after the treatment, it is showed by the percentage in the posttest 96 % answered correctly.

Viceversa, finding inference was the lowest increase, the difficulty should be finding the information that was not mentioned explicitly in the text. Inference is needed in order to make a sense of the ideas of the text. This skill of finding inference takes an important role in comprehending a text, as Suparman (2012) states that to comprehend explicitly stated information, the readers need conscious knowledge of the language and background knowledge of the topic under discussion. Furthermore, the result of written exercise showed the most of students' faced confusion and unability to answer correctly and exactly.

After conducting three meetings, it showed that the students enjoyed to work in a group or pair to other students. It gave chance to each student in group or pair to discuss and exchange knowledge. In other words, learners can communicate and

collaborate during activities. Furthermore, it showed positive interdependence among students, motivated each other to stimulate their thinking, helped students to respect each other, encouraged weaker students to optimize their skill and brought smart students to assist other to identify gaps in their understanding. Then, that situation created active and discard monoton situation by working with partner. Those explanation above clarifies that interaction by working in group is important to give primary attention to task require students' interaction with each other (Pica, Kanagy & Falodun, 1993).

The next advantage is task-based approach demanded on students-center, so in every meeting students were offered more oportunties for students to release their creative mind, allows for more meaningful communication, and often provides for practical skill building. Moreover, it supported by one of task- based approach feature it is manipulation of information and not merely of language form (Nunan, 1989). This allowed them to use all the language they know. Furthermore, as the tasks were likely to be familiar to the students, students were more likely to be engaged, which may further motivate them in their language learning and establish well comprehension.

In this research, while task-based approach has some advatages, it also brought some weaknesses, too. They are the noisy and indisipline in the classroom environment. While students did their tasks, they needed to interact with teacher and also students and for this reason it created noise and it was hard for teacher to accomodate discipline. Next, teacher had to tell the task, provided all students to

understand and did the task in an appropriate way. Moreover, to accommodate students' creativities in doing the task, it was also time consuming. These all requires a lot of time.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In line with the results of the research and discussion previously presented, the researcher draws the conclusion that task-based approach can be used to increase the students' reading comprehension achievement especially for helping them to understand every sub skill, those five sub skills are: identifying main idea, understanding vocabulary, identifying specific information, finding Inference and finding reference. It has been proven by the gain of each sub skill. From those five sub skills, the highest increase is identifying main idea, viceversa the lowest increase was finding inference. Moreover, the gain of the students' mean score increase 27,00 score point. The hypotesis testing showed, that sig. 2-tailed was $p=0.000$ ($p < 0.05$) and t-ratio was higher than t-table ($11.439 > 2.052$). From those statements before, it can be concluded that task-based approach can increase the students reading comprehension achievement significantly.

Regarding the conclusions stated previously, the researcher would like to propose several suggestions as follows:

- a. English teachers are recommended to apply task-based approach as one of the ways in teaching especially reading because it can help the students to comprehend the text by applying it in the real life situation.

- b. To overcome difficulty in finding inference, it will be better for the teacher to make student to have more practice in finding inference and equip the students with some vocabularies that might be used.
- c. Teacher should make highly good preparation before applying it in order to make the process works well. Referring to these two criteria of task, presence of a work plan and connection ro real-world (Ellis, 2003)
- d. Teachers are suggested to be more creative and innovative in making various kinds of interesting task, in order to make the students more active and encouraged to learn. Then, in making a good task teacher should consider students' ability, so that they can do the task well.
- e. The other researcher , who are intended in using task-based approach, can replicate it by considering the time allocation and management for the treatment. It is absolutely needed because in the teaching learning process teacher have to teach the material and lead students to do the task even practice how the task work, furthermore students need much time time allocation to do the task in their group.

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