

THE COMPARISON BETWEEN FIELD-DEPENDENT STUDENTS AND FIELD-INDEPENDENT STUDENTS IN READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT

Sulistiana, Ari Nurweni, Muhammad Sukirlan

sulistiana44@gmail.com

Abstract

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apakah ada perbedaan yang berarti antara siswa *field dependent* dan *field independent* dalam nilai *reading comprehension*. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif yang telah dilakukan pada 32 siswa dari XI MIA2 sebagai kelas sampel di SMA Negeri 1 Kotaagung. Dalam pengumpulan data, peneliti memberikan kuisioner dan tes *reading comprehension* untuk menganalisis perbedaan nilai antara siswa *field dependent* dan siswa *field independent*. Data dianalisis menggunakan *Independent Group t-test*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai siswa *field independent* lebih baik daripada nilai *field dependent* pada lima aspek membaca. Maka, penelitian ini menyarankan guru agar lebih memperhatikan siswa *field dependent* dalam proses pembelajaran sehingga nilai *reading comprehensionnya* menjadi lebih baik.

The objective of this research was to find out whether there was a significant difference between the field dependent students and field independent students in reading comprehension achievement. This research used quantitative method which was conducted to 32 students in XI MIA2 as the sample class at SMA Negeri 1 Kotaagung. In collecting the data, the researcher used a questionnaire and reading comprehension test to analyze the different scores between field dependent students and field independent students. The data were analyzed by using Independent Group t-test. The result showed that score of that field independent students was better than score of field dependent students in five aspects of reading. Thus, this research recommended the teacher gave more attention to field dependent students in learning process, so that their reading comprehension achievement would be better.

Keywords: field dependent, field independent, reading comprehension achievement

INTRODUCTION

Theoretically, reading is one of the important skills that are needed by the students from elementary school up to the university. By reading, the students are able to get a lot of information based on what they are required in reading. Smith (1983) defines reading is a process of interpreting or understanding the text in terms of the question what the reader formulates about the text. It means that the reader will understand the text by making some questions dealing with the context.

In addition, Caldwell (2008: 4) states that reading comprehension is the process of extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Reading comprehension depends on the accuracy and speed of graphemis perception, that is perception of written symbols, control of language relationship and structure, knowledge of vocabulary items and lexical combination, awereness of redundancy, the ability to use contextual clues and recognition allusion. It involves constructing meaning from what is being read. Reading without comprehension does not have specific purpose because comprehension is important in reading process. In order to comprehend the text, a reader must actively and intentionally think about and analyze meaning while reading. Students must consider many bits of information while reading to comprehend the text such as genre, text structure, the author's purpose, and familiar and unfamiliar words. Strong comprehension encourages self-directed learning and lifelong reading.

According to writer's teaching and training experience, it was found that most of the students had difficulties in reading comprehension. The difficulties of the students covered finding main idea, finding supporting details, determining reference, determining inferences, and vocabulary. Moreover, the students also had different difficulties. It was because every student had difference characteristic.

Every student has his/her own technique to comprehend the reading test. It is because he/she has different characteristics. For example some students like to have a discussion with friends when they are reading a passage. The other students tend to be individual when they want to read a text. There are students who like to socialize with their environments and there are some others, who prefer to be alone within their surrounding. In addition, within the learning activities, there are students who prefer working on tasks in groups, namely field dependent and the other prefer working individually, namely field independent.

According to Hawkey (1982) in Ellis (1995: 115), there are four principal characteristics of field dependence cognitive style, i.e., personal orientation, holistic, dependent, and socially sensitive. Field independent also have four principal characteristics, i.e., impersonal orientation, analytic, independent, and not so socially aware.

The previous research was done by Mulyani (2011) showed that field independent students were more successful in reading comprehension achievement than field

dependent students. This may be caused by the fact that they were hard workers even if they could not find the answers they try to get the answers of the questions. It indicates that students' achievement in learning language especially English are influenced by cognitive style here focuses on field dependent and field independent characteristic.

Based on the explanation above, this research is aimed at finding out whether there is a significant difference between field dependent students and field independent students in reading comprehension achievement at the second grade of SMAN 1 Kotaagung.

METHODS

This research used quantitative method which was conducted to 32 students in XI MIA2 as a sample class at SMAN 1 Kotaagung. The students in the sample class were classified into two groups, they were field dependent and field independent students.

In collecting the data, the researcher used questionnaire that was used to categorize the students into two group and reading comprehension test. The questionnaire was developed from the field dependent/ independent checklist by Wyss (2002). The researcher used five aspects of reading comprehension test in test. According to Nuttall (1982), the five aspects of reading were determining main idea, finding spesific information, reference, inference, and vocabulary. The questionnaire consisted of 26 statements and reading comprehension test

consisted of 40 questions for 60 minutes. The data were analyzed by using Independent Group t-test.

RESULTS

This research was conducted to find out whether there was significant difference of students' reading comprehension achievement between field dependent and field independent students.

The researcher had chosen XI MIA 2 as the sample class. The sample class consisted of 32 students. The class was divided into two groups according to their cognitive style, namely field dependent and field independent group. In this research, the researcher gave them questionnaire in order to classify the students into two groups, i.e. *field dependent* and *field independent*. Then, the researcher gave the reading comprehension test to the students.

The tryout was given to XI MIA 3 to investigate the quality of the instruments; here the instruments are questionnaire and reading comprehension test. The try out class consisted of 32 students, but one student did not attend at that time.

Result of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was given to classify the sample into two groups, namely field dependent and field independent. It consisted of 26 items and was administered in 20 minutes. The researcher selected one class that was XI MIA 2 as the sample class. The sample class consisted of 32 students.

In scoring the students' field dependent and field independent, the researcher used *Likert scale* to measure the items of questionnaire. In Likert scale, the answers of every item from questionnaire have gradation from very positive until very negative, that is, strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. In the quantitative research, the researcher used score to analyze the answers of the questionnaire.

Based on the result of the questionnaire, the researcher analyzed the scores of the questionnaire, then grouped the sample into field dependent and field independent. The results of the questionnaire showed that there were 17 students (53%) belonging to field dependent group and 15 students (47%) belonging to field independent group.

Result of Reading Comprehension Test

The results of reading comprehension achievement were various. In this research most of the students in field independent group got high scores than the field dependent group. On the other side, the field dependent students got medium scores and some of them got high scores.

The number of the qualified items in the reading comprehension test was 40 items of multiple choice reading comprehension test with four optional alternative answers (A, B, C, and D), one was the correct answer and the others were the distracters. This test was conducted in 60 minutes. The total score of the test of the field dependent students was 1055. The mean score of the test was 62.06; the

highest score was 77.50; the lowest score was 50.00; the median was 60.00, and the mode was 60.00.

On the other hand, for the field independent students, the total score of the test was 1125. The mean score of the test was 75.00; the highest score was 90.00; the lowest score was 52.50; the median was 75.00, and the mode was 75.00. The result of reading comprehension test could be seen on the table below.

Table 1 The Result of Reading Comprehension Test

Statistics	Field Dependent Students	Field Independent Students
Total Score	1055	1125
Mean Score	62.06	75.00
Highest Score	77.50	90.00
Lowest Score	50.00	52.50
Median	60.00	75.00
Mode	60.00	75.00

Hypothesis Test

The hypothesis was tested to prove whether the proposed hypothesis was accepted or rejected. To test the hypothesis, since the data had normal distribution, the SPSS parametric (Independent t-Test) was used to analyze whether there was significant difference of the students' reading comprehension achievement between field dependent and field independent or not, in which the significance was determined by $p > 0.05$.

The result showed that that t-value was 4.181, in which the significant data based on t-table was at least 1.697. Thus, t-value was higher than t-table ($4.181 > 1.697$)

and the two tail significance showed that $p < 0.05$ ($p = 0.000$). Referring to the criteria, that is, H_1 was accepted if $t_0 > t_{tab}$ and $p < 0.05$, H_1 was accepted and H_0 was rejected because $4.181 > 1.697$ and $0.000 < 0.05$. It meant that the difference of reading comprehension score between field dependent and field independent group was significant.

DISCUSSION

This section deals with the discussion and findings of this research. The result of the research showed that there was a significant difference between field dependent and field independent students in reading comprehension achievement.

Referring to the analysis of students' characteristic to language learning, it was found that there were 17 students of field dependent and 15 students of field independent. Based on the result of the research, it was found that there was a significant difference between field dependent and field independent students in reading comprehension achievement. That finding was in line with what Mulyani (2011) had found, that is, the field independent students were more successful in reading comprehension achievement than the field dependent students. From the previous research, it had been found that cognitive style here focuses on the students' achievement in language learning especially English were influenced by field dependent and field independent.

After classifying the students in field dependent and field independent group the researcher got the result of reading test as mentioned in the previous section. The

researcher found that field independent students were more successful in reading comprehension. The students who had field independent were more able to comprehend the text. The students who belong to field independent group tend to have higher score than field dependent group. According to Hawkey in Ellis (1995: 115) field independent person had four principal characteristics, i.e. impersonal orientation, analytic, independent, and not so socially aware. Field independent students tend to be more independent in doing the exercise so that had better concentration in answering the test. They knew exactly where they got the main idea with a little piece of information. In getting the main idea of the text, the students found out the information from piece and began to sum up the main idea. They were also analytical in thinking in answering reference. They read the passage carefully at the previous sentences to find out the answers of the questions about reference. Besides that, they focused and concentrated easily when they were doing reading comprehension test, so that they could answered the questions well.

In relation to the statement above, it had been proved that field independent students had a good score in reading comprehension achievement. In this research, there were 15 students belonging to field independent group with the mean score was 75. The students of field independent were analytic, independent, and they could easily concentrate on the text. It made them successful in reading comprehension test.

According to result of reading comprehension test, the researcher could see that the differences can also be seen in each aspect of reading, i.e. identifying main idea, identifying supporting details, making inference, identifying reference, and understanding vocabulary. The result showed that there was five aspects in reading comprehension test. For the first aspect is identifying main idea, there were 15 students who had field dependent characteristic. In this aspect there were 10 items. The field independent students found out the information from piece to get main idea from the text. For the example, in question number 7 “What is the letter about?” there were 15 students who answer it correctly. It could be concluded that the field independent students more effective to answer the question in identify main idea.

The second aspect was identifying supporting details. Field independent students read text with a little part of the text to answer question, so they did not get high score in supporting details. For example, in question number 28 “The steps below should be done after insert the SIM card, except ...” there was 6 students who answer it correctly. The third aspect is making inference. There were 12 students who answered correctly in question number 6 “What is the purpose of this text?”.

For the next aspect is identifying reference. There was 7 questions in this aspect.. For example in question number 33 “... the University of Witwatersrand and got his law degree...” there were 6 students who answered correctly. Identifying reference was lowest aspect in field independent. The last aspect is understanding vocabulary. All of the students in the field independent group could answer

correctly in question number 39 “Nelson Mandela won the election and became president of South Africa.” (last paragraph) “The synonym of the underlined word is”

On the other hand, the researcher found that the field dependent students like to discuss with other people when they were doing something. In other word, they like to communicate more with their surrounding by asking question to other persons. According to Ellis (1995: 115) field dependent person had four principal characteristics, i.e. personal orientation, holistic, dependent, and socially sensitive. The field dependent students tend to be holistic. They may not have ability to summarize different bits of information into one. To answer the question in reading comprehension achievement, they must look at the set of information from all angles. They also find difficulty in focusing on something because they were easily able to be disturbed. It might also influence them in reading comprehension test. In this research, there are 17 students belonging to the field dependent group with the mean score was 62.06.

Based on the result of reading comprehension text, it can be stated that the differences can also be seen in each aspect of reading. The highest aspect in field dependent was identifying supporting details and the lowest aspect was indentifying reference. Identifying supporting details was the highest aspect because field dependent students read the text in detail, they spent their time to read the text in order to choose the correct answer. For example question number

9 “Where did Sam spend his holiday with his family?” There were 15 students who answered correctly.

The reason why the field independent students were better in those five aspects of reading lies in their way of doing the reading test. The researcher found that the field independent students read analytically than field dependent students read in detail. Field independent students can minimize the time than field dependent students in reading and answering the questions. Eventhough the field dependent need more time to think than answer the correct option.

The difference shows in reading comprehension score of field independent students were higher than field dependent students. It indicated that there was a significant difference of reading comprehension and student’s ability in learning language. In the other words, the cognitive style of the students influenced their ability in language skill especially in reading comprehension. This finding could possibly influence the result of the research that was a significant difference between field dependent and field independent students in reading comprehension achievement. In the other sides, field independent students more successful than field dependent students in reading comprehension.

In short, both field dependent and field independent have their own potential in learning language. By considering overall the students’ score of reading comprehension, it can be concluded that field independent students have better achievement than field dependent students in reading comprehension test.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the data analysis, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference of the students' reading comprehension achievement between the field dependent and the field independent. This can be identified from the significant difference of students' achievement in field dependent and field independent group from the significant two tailed of the reading test was Sig. (2-tailed) $< \alpha$ ($p < 0.05$). The result of computation showed that the Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.000. In other words, the field-independent students was better than the field-dependent students in reading comprehension achievement.

SUGGESTION

Based on the findings, it can be suggested that, (1) the English teachers should pay more attention of the students' cognitive style, that is, field dependent and field independent in teaching learning process since according to the results of this research and previous study, (2) the researcher suggests that the teachers need to understand the characteristic of each student so that they can help the students create suitable atmosphere in the class activities in order to make minimum differences on reading comprehension achievement

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