

The Effect of Using English Short Stories Toward Students' Ability in Reading Comprehension at the Seventh Grade in Junior High School No. 15 Jambi City

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to find out the effect of using English short stories in reading comprehension toward students' ability of junior high school No. 15 Jambi City. In order to achieve the objective of this research, the research design used quasi-experimental. This research took two classes, an experimental class and control class. VII B was experimental class that consist of 30 students were taught by using English short story, and VIII C was control class that consist of 30 students were taught by using non-English short story. This research used a test instrument, a reading test in the form of multiple-choice test with 20 items with options A, B, C, and D. The technique of data collection of this research used a test as a research instrument. The technique of data analysis of this research is calculation the students' score and analyzing the students' score using SPSS. The data was analyzed by T-test using SPSS for windows version 16.0. The difference. It is found that the value of sig was 0,004, at the significance level of 5% (0,05) and then $0,004 < 0,05$. In this research, H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected because the value of Sig < α in significant degree. ($0,004 < 0,05$) and alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted if the value of Sig < α in significant degree ($0,004 < 0,05$). The explanation above proved that there is an effect of using English short stories in reading comprehension toward students' ability of junior high school No. 15 Jambi City.

Keywords: *ability, reading comprehension, English short story*

INTRODUCTION

Language has an important role in the lives of all people around the world. Language serves as a means of communication. Communication occurs not only between two or more speakers but also between a speaker and a piece of text. There should be some interaction between students (readers) and the text.

Students hardly study the English language if they do not have the ability in the four basic skills of the English language. As a result, Indonesian students, particularly those in Junior High School, find it difficult to learn English, particularly to read the text in a foreign language. Reading ability is important for a variety of reasons. As argued by Stone (2009: 39), reading is a fundamental goal that children must master in order to be successful in school and life. It means through reading the

students can increase their vocabulary to learn the other language aspect.

Having a good reading ability will help the students to comprehend any written materials in English where they can gain access to worldwide knowledge, information, and many other valuable references to aid their studies, as well as improve their other language skills. According to Wooley (Wooley, 2011:20) "Reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. The goal, therefore, is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences".

Short stories appear to be the most appropriate literary genre choice because of their potential to help students improve the four skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—more effectively due to the motivational benefit embedded in the stories

(Pardede, 2011:1). It is related to the reason that a short story is an easy-to-understand material associated with basic reading competence and reading forms. Students will be encouraged to read short stories because they will be able to explore their emotions by interacting with the characters in the stories, and they will be motivated to continue reading.

Based on this research's experience in teaching practice, most students simply trace and guess the word in the text without understanding the purpose, details, and meaning of the text during the process of teaching and learning in the classroom, the students always read English materials lazily because they said that they don't understand English. The students were uninterested in reading and were bored when the teacher asked them to read a specific text. This issue arises because the students lack reading ability.

REVIEW OR RELATED LITERATURE

Reading Comprehension

According to Grabe and Stoller (2013:12) defined reading comprehension is the ability to understand the information in text and interpret it appropriately. When we read, we must genuinely comprehend what we are reading. As Smith (2004:13) defines that comprehension may be regarded as relating aspects of the world around us including what we read related to knowledge. Reading without understanding or comprehending the meaning of the text is a useless activity.

According to King and Stanley (1989) there are five components of reading, they are: 1) Finding factual information; 2) Finding the main idea; 3) Guessing vocabulary in context; 4) Reference; 5) Inference.

Reading Comprehension Ability

Abilities are not material objects that can be directly observed or measured. The concept of ability is abstract. Generally, we do so after observing the person engage in some activities or behaviors.

According to Didik Tuminto in Tussipa (2013:14) stated that the student's ability is the power and potential of the

students were able to make them able to complete the tests. Further Hornby (2000:2) declared that "Ability is the fact that somebody/something is able to do something". If someone has the ability then she/he is considered to be doing something effectively or it is contrary. The ability can be obtained by the way of learning and practicing continuously. Meanwhile Grabe (2009:2) stated that reading abilities also described in terms of goals for reading. There are many ways that people engage in reading, and different reading tasks call for distinct combination skills. It is important to identify these variations in reading and explain how reading comprehension represents the core ability across these different goals for reading.

Short Stories

According to Poe in Cuddon (2013:345) stated that "it is a story that concentrates on a unique or single effect and one in which the totality of influence is the objective. A short story may be concerned with a scene, an episode, an experience, an action, the exhibition of a character or characters, the day's events, a meeting, a conversation, or a fantasy".

Rust Hills (1971:1) stated that short story is a prose narrative glibly described as "shorter than a novel". Meanwhile Keegan (2003) defines a short story as a narrative, rarely over 1.000 words or below 500 words, more commonly 1500-5000 words-a single-sitting read, but with enough time and weight to move the reader.

According to Atwell (2002:21) there are five structures of short story, they are: 1) Create a narrative lead: show the main character in action, dialogue, and correction, 2) Introduce the main character, 3) Introduce the setting: the time place, and relationships of the main character's life, 4) Introduce and develop the problem the main character is facing, 5) Develop the plot and problem toward a climax: e.g. a decision, action, conversation, or confrontation that shows the problem at its height.

The Advantages of Using English Short Stories in Learning

The short story is a modern type of prose. According to Al-Dersi (2013), short stories can help students learn while also being more enjoyable. Because a short story will entertain the students while also providing them with information. The teacher, on the other hand, attempted to teach the students about language, life, and culture through the use of a short story. Using anecdotes will help students develop their vocabulary. So long as the students are paying attention to the teacher.

According to Arigol (2001 as cited in Hismanoglu, 2005) listed the following advantages for pedagogical advantages of short stories over other literary texts: 1) Short stories make the students' reading task easier because it is simple and short, 2) Give learners a better view of other people and other cultures, 3) Requires more attention and analysis, 4) Offers a fictional and interesting world, 5) Helps students to be more creative and raise the critical thinking skills, 6) Raise cultural awareness, 7) Reduce students' anxiety and helps them feel more relaxed, 8) Is good for multicultural contexts because of its universal.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was categorized a quantitative research design. This research used a quasi-experimental design with two groups: experimental and control. Nunan (1992: 41) mentions that quasi-experiment is a quantitative-research that has both pretest and posttest and experimental and control groups, but no random assignment of subjects. A pre-test is given before treatment, and a post-test is given after that to assess the effectiveness of the treatment. Only the students in the experimental class will teach using a short story during the reading process as the research's treatment.

This research has two variables. Using English short stories is the independent variable here, while reading comprehension is the dependent variable. The research purpose

is to determine the effect of using English short stories in reading comprehension.

According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2012:144), sampling is the process of selecting a group of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were chosen.

This research chose the sample by using simple random sampling, also known as random sampling, namely class VII B and VII C. The instrument used in this research is a reading comprehension test. According to Ary in Winda (2012:32), the test is a series of stimuli presented to an individual to elicit responses from which a numerical score is assigned. In this research, the instrument is a reading test, namely pretest and posttest. The instrument in this research is adapted from the internet with the sources that listed in the appendix in this research.

The experimental and control classes were given a pre-test and a post-test. First, this research would give pre-test, this test to check their understanding about reading comprehension. To post-test, the test to know they increase their reading comprehension or not. The provided test consists of an objective (multiple-choice) test with 20 items with options A, B, C, and D.

The data collection procedure in this research consists of three steps, the following below is the steps: 1) Pre-test, 2) Treatment and 3) Post-test

To analyze the data of the effect of using English short stories toward students' ability in reading comprehension obtained from the test:

1) To correct answers for students' reading test using a formula below:

$$Scoring = \frac{Total\ Correct\ Answer}{Total\ Number\ of\ Items} \times 100$$

(Depdiknas, 2006)

2) To classifying the students' reading test level using categories table below:

Table 2
The Students Test Level

Score	Category
81-100	Very Good
61-80	Good
41-60	Fair
21-40	Weak
0-20	Poor

Source: Heaton (2008:30)

3) Then, the score of the post-test from both groups were tested by using t-test formula. The following t-test formula is used to determine whether the differences between pre-test and post-test values are significant:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{SS1 + SS2}{n_1 + n_2}\right) \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}\right)}}$$

Note:

- t : Test of significance
- \bar{x}_1 : Mean score of the experimental group
- \bar{x}_2 : Mean score of the control group
- SS1 : Sum square of the experimental group
- SS2 : Sum square of the control group
- n1 : Number of students of the experimental group
- n2 : Number of students of the control group

Where : $SS1 = \sum x_1^2 - \left(\frac{\sum x_1^2}{n_1}\right)$

$$SS2 = \sum x_2^2 - \left(\frac{\sum x_2^2}{n_2}\right)$$

(Gay, 1981: 327)

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research are based on the research question, which was to know the effect of the using English short stories towards students' reading comprehension at SMP N 15 Jambi City. This research was carried out from the end of March to the end of

April 2022 and took place at SMP N 15 in Jambi City.

This research collected data using multiple-choice objective tests on 60 students. This research determined that the level of significance in this study was 5% (0,05). The experimental class and the control class were taught with different materials and techniques in teaching reading. The experimental class was taught news item text using English short stories material, whereas the control class was taught without English short stories material. This research involves VIII B and VIII C which consist of 30 students in each class.

In the experimental class, there are 30 students scores taken for the pre-test and post-test data. The pre-test result showed that the mean score of data was 55.67. From the pre-test result, it could be seen the highest score pre-test was 95, obtained by one student. Meanwhile, the lowest score was 35, obtained by two students. Those scores were obtained before the students got the treatment. While, in the post-test, the mean post-test was 65.67. The highest score was 100 obtained by one student and the lowest score was 20 obtained by one student. Those scores were obtained after the students got the treatment using authentic material in reading.

Normality Test

The normality test was used to determine whether the data in this research were normally distributed or not. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used in this research to determine normality, and the calculation was done with the SPSS 16.00 version for the Windows program.

The significance values of the pre-test and post-test in the experimental class are 0.635 and 0.671. The significance value of the data above is higher than 0.05 (0.635 > 0.05) and (0.671 > 0.05), and for the control class, it is 0.770 and 0.372, it appears that the significance value of the data above is higher than 0.05 (0.770 > 0.05) and (0.372 > 0.05), implying that the both of research data is normally distributed.

Homogeneity Test

The homogeneity test was used to determine whether or not the data used in the study had the same variance. The Levene test was used to determine homogeneity in this study, and the calculation was accomplished using the SPSS 16 version for Windows program.

The significance values of the homogeneity test are 0.742 and 0.625. The acceptance criteria for the homogeneity test are higher than 0.05. In the data above, the significance value is higher than 0.05 ($0.742 > 0.05$) and ($0.625 > 0.05$), indicating that the homogeneity test criterion is accepted, or that the test is homogeneous.

Hypothesis Test

The t-test was used to determine the effect of using English short stories on students' reading comprehension ability. Calculation of the correlation coefficient using SPSS for windows version 16.

Based on the calculation, it is found that the value of sig was 0,004, at the significance level of 5% (0,05) and then $0,004 < 0,05$ then, H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected because the value of $\text{Sig} < \alpha$ in significant degree. ($0,004 < 0,05$). Alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted, because the value of $\text{Sig} < \alpha$ in significant degree ($0,004 < 0,05$). Thus, it proved that there is an effect of using English short stories in reading comprehension toward students' ability of junior high school No. 15 Jambi City.

Furthermore, this research began by administering a pre-test to both the experimental and control class. There is no new treatment in the teaching-learning process for the control group. They were given the usual treatment. Students could not enjoy learning reading because they have to read the text. The teacher used a monotonous method in the teaching-learning process by using an English textbook.

In the experimental class, there is a treatment in the teaching-learning process. This research began by explaining reading comprehension and English short stories.

Following that, this research gave them to read English short stories and asked them about English short stories. The second step is teach reading comprehension through the snowball throwing method. The material is about the English short stories *Bawang Putih and Bawang Merah* and *The Fox and the Grapes* and trying to find which is factual information, the main idea, guessing vocabulary, reference, and inference, as well as the moral message from the English short stories. After receiving treatment, the students were more eager to learn about reading comprehension, and they also gained new vocabulary from the English short stories. In the last activity, this research administered a post-test to both the control and experimental groups.

According to the results of the analysis, students who were taught using English short stories improved better than those who were not. The post-test was used to assess the improvement in the control and experimental groups following treatment. The post-test was used to assess the improvement in the control and experimental groups following treatment.

After analyzing the data, the mean pre-test score for the experimental class was 55.67 and 55.83 for the control class. The difference between classes was 0.16 point. The post-test result was 65.67 for the experimental class and 53.57 for control class. The difference in both classes was 12. The experiment was a success. The explanation above proved the score between the two classes are significant. As a result, it can be concluded that using English short stories has a significant effect on reading comprehension.

Then the data was analyzed by T-test using SPSS for windows version 16.0. Based on the calculation of the statistical analysis, it is found that the value of sig was 0,004, at the significance level of 5% (0,05) and then $0,004 < 0,05$. In this research, H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected because the value of $\text{Sig} < \alpha$ in significant degree. ($0,004 < 0,05$) and alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted if the value of $\text{Sig} < \alpha$ in significant degree ($0,004 < 0,05$).

The results showed that there was a significant difference in teaching reading comprehension using English short stories instead using without English short stories. It is demonstrated by the fact that the mean score of the students in the experimental group is higher than the mean score of the students in the control group. Therefore, can be concluded that using English short stories has a significant effect on reading comprehension.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this research this research concluded that:

- 1) According to the statistic calculation that was analyzed in the research findings, this research concluded that teaching reading comprehension using English short stories has a more significant effect on students' scores than the students' scores in the class taught by the other material.
- 2) The students' ability in comprehending English short stories improved after they were taught reading comprehension by using English short stories. It was shown in their tests score in which the post-test result was higher than the pre-test score. The mean of the pre-test result was 55,67 while the post-test was 65,67 In short, using English short stories was successful to increase the students' ability in reading comprehension.
- 3) The analysis of the students' scores using the t-test formula supported the result. The calculation showed that H_0 (null hypothesis) was rejected because the value of Sig (0,004) < α in significant degree (0,05) or the alternative hypothesis was accepted. It means that there was the effect of using English short stories in reading comprehension toward students' ability of junior high school No. 15 Jambi City.

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