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Improving Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement Through Reciprocal Teaching at Universitas Bina Darma

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IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH RECIPROCAL TEACHING AT UNIVERSITAS BINA DARMA

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Abstract: Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apakah ada perbedaan dalam kemampuan membaca mahasiswa Teknik Komputer Universitas Bina Darma yang diajar dengan menggunakan metode Reciprocal Teaching dan dengan menggunakan metode Konvensional. Sampel dalam penelitian ini adalah kelompok eksperimen yang diajarkan menggunakan pengajaran timbal balik dan kelompok kontrol yang diajarkan menggunakan metode konvensional (metode tanya jawab). Analisis data dalam penelitian ini dengan menerapkan analisis statistik. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan cara memberikan pre-test dan post test. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa yang diajar dengan metode Reciprocal Teaching mengalami peningkatan dalam kemampuan membaca daripada mahasiswa yang diajar dengan menggunakan metode konvensional.

Keywords: Reciprocal Teaching, Konvensional dan Kemampuan Membaca.

Abstrak: The objectives of this research were to find out whether the second semester Computer Engineering students who were taught by using Reciprocal Teaching method show significant different achievement in reading comprehension compared to those who were taught by using conventional method and to see the effects of independent variables (gender and group) to the dependent one (post test). The samples in the experimental group were taught using reciprocal teaching and those in control group were taught using conventional method (question and answer method). The data were collected by means of pretest and posttest scores of reading test. In analyzing the data, the statistical analyses were applied. In conclusion, the result of the study showed that the students of the experimental group and the control group made improvement in their reading achievement. However, the students taught by using reciprocal teaching made better achievement than those who were taught by conventional method.

Kata kunci: Reciprocal Teaching, Conventional, and Reading Comprehension.

1. PENDAHULUAN

Reading plays an important role to help people develop their knowledge and broaden their horizon. Reading in foreign language i.e. English, is an important skill that should be mastered by university students in Indonesia. California Task Force (2002:4) informs that the ability to read is crucial to the success of all students, and it is essential to succeed in society. Meanwhile, Krishnamoorthy (2002:1) states that reading is one of the greatest pleasures, and reading also enhances many skills, e.g. thinking,

language ability, and power of imagination. In addition, Trelease (2001:1) expresses in words that reading is a fundamental task that must be mastered by every student in order to be able to functionally compete in society. Reading is fundamental for learning; unless a student learns to read, he or she will face severe obstacles in life.

Some facts reveal that reading ability that Indonesia students have is so low that it indirectly states that Indonesian students have a problem in reading. Hayat (2001:1) judges that Indonesian students can only read without being

able to correlate the reading they have just read with knowledge they have. Furthermore, Wasliman (2003:2) asserts that reading score of Indonesian students in East Asia, as reported by the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement, stubbornly remains flat with the score 51.7, furthermore Indonesian students are just capable of mastering 30% of reading materials, and find difficulty in reading items that are in form of commentary requiring cognitive process.

In relation to the above problem, the researchers were encouraged to improve the quality of teaching and learning reading comprehension by trying an appropriate method of teaching and learning.

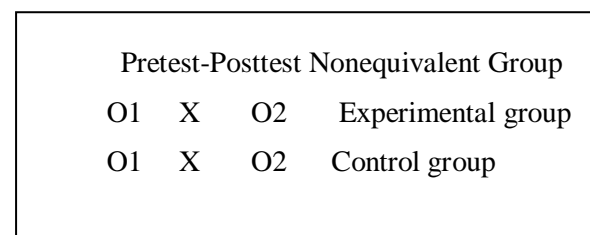
Next, the researchers were interested in applying Reciprocal Teaching (RT) in order to develop the students' reading comprehension. This kind of current methods of teaching, which was the creation of Palisncar and Brown (1986), is in some ways of a compilation of four comprehension strategies: summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting.

It is believed that this method is a useful way to teach reading comprehension as Izquierdo (2004) states that this approach not only can be used to reinforce comprehension in ESL/EFL reading classes but also can be used as a useful tool in increasing student – talking time.

Based on the discussion above, therefore, the researcher was encouraged in doing a study related to second semester Computer Engineering students' reading comprehension achievement at *Universitas Bina Darma*. The researcher applied RT in order to help students improve their reading comprehension skills.

2. METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The researcher applied an experimental method in this study. The researchers put the sample into two groups. The first was experimental group and the second one was the control group. As Richards et al. (1993: 100) states that experimental method is an approach to educational research in which an idea or hypothesis is tested or verified by setting up situation in which the relationship between different subject or variables can be determined. In this study, the researchers applied one of the quasi-experimental designs i.e. the pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design. According to Best and Khan (2003), quasi designs are fair better than pre-experimental studies in that they employ a means to compare groups. With this design, both a control group and an experimental group is compared, however, the groups are chosen and assigned out of convenience rather than through randomization. The design will be shown in the following diagram:



O1 : Pre test

O2 : Posttest

X : Treatment

The design was implemented in the form of the actual teaching to the sample students that

were grouped into two; experimental group students (group I) and control group students (Group II). These two groups of students are placed in two different classes. In this case, the researchers applied the reading method defined as Reciprocal Teaching in the teaching and learning activity to the experimental group students (group I) and applied another reading method defined as conventional method (Question and Answer) to the control group students (group II).

The researcher conducted the experiment for fourteen meetings (including pre-test and post-test). Each group was taught twice a week and it took 100 minutes per-meeting. The followings are the steps taken by the researcher in applying Reciprocal Teaching in teaching reading comprehension. They are: 1) Put students in groups of four (*If it is not possible, a student can have more than one role*); 2) Distribute one note card to each member of the group identifying each person's unique role: summarizer, Questioner, Clarifier and predictor; 3) Have students read a few paragraph of the assigned text selection. Encourage them to use note-taking strategies such as selective underlining sticky-notes to help them better prepare for their role in the discussion; 4) At the given stopping point, the summarizer will highlight the key ideas up to this pointing the reading; 5) The questioner will then pose questions about the selection: unclear parts, puzzling information, connections to other concepts already learned, motivations of the agents or actors or characteristics etc; 6) The clarifier will address confusing parts and attempt to answer the questions that were just passed; 7)

The predictor can offer guesses about what the author will tell the group next or, or if it is a literary selection, the predictor might suggest what the events in the story will be; 8) The roles in the group then switch one person to right, and the next selection is read. Students repeat the process using their new roles. This continues until the entire selection is read.

Surely, the researchers taught the students how to summarize, ask questions, clarify, and predict.

3. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

The findings of the data obtained through the reading comprehension test (pretest and posttest) in this study were analyzed by using t-Test formula and multiple regression analysis. There were three kinds of t-Test formula which were used in this study: 1) One Sample Statistics, 2) Paired Sample Test, and 3) Independent Sample Test. The t-test was used to examine more closely the group differences and multiple regression analysis was carried out to explore other possible factors that might affect the outcome of the experiment.

To find out the students' reading comprehension achievement in the pretest and posttest of both the experimental and control group, the researchers used paired sample statistics and paired sample test formula, then to find out the mean difference of the reading comprehension achievement between the students in the experimental group and the control group, the independent sample test formula was applied.

In this study, the researchers hypothesized that the female students in experimental group would get better scores than those in the control group. However, it turned out that there was only one female student in the experimental group and no one in the control group. Therefore, gender and group would not give significant contribution to the experiment.

The following table shows the paired sample statistics of the students' reading comprehension achievement of experimental group.

Table 1. Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	41.5000	18	4.88997	1.15258
	Post-test	47.3333	18	5.16777	1.21806

Table 2. 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	Pre-test	-	2.25	.53	-6.95	-	-	17	.000	
	Post-test	5.83333	571	168	507	4.71	10.159	972		

Based on the statistical findings of the experimental group, the pretest mean score was 41,5 and the standard deviation is 4,89. Meanwhile, the posttest mean score was 47,33 and the standard deviation is 51,17, so the gain obtained is 5,83. There was evidence that the reading scores increased. The distribution of the students' score in the experimental group can be

seen in appendix a. It could be seen that the t obtained for the experimental group was -10.972, with significance level of .000. Since the t-obtained was more than t-table (0,0025:17=2.110 and the significance level was $p < 0.05$ so H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted (see the the hypotheses in chapter two). It means that there was a significant difference in students' reading achievement after they were taught through reciprocal teaching.

The following tables show the paired sample statistics of the students' reading comprehension achievement of control group.

Table 3. Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	43.1667	18	4.84161	1.14118
	Post-test	45.0000	18	4.93487	1.16316

Table 4. 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	Pre-test	-	2.81	.66	-3.23	-.43	-2.7	17	.013	
	Post-test	1.83	279	298	210	457	65			

Based on the statistical finding of the control group, the pretest mean score was 43,17 and the standard deviation is 4, 84. Meanwhile, the posttest mean score was 45 and the standard deviation is 4,93, so the gain obtained is 1,83. The distribution of the students' score can be seen in appendix a. It could be seen that the t-obtained of the control group was also more that

t-table (0,0025:17)=2.110 and the significance level was $p < 0.05$. However, compared to the experimental group, the gain obtained of the experimental group is much higher than that of the control group. To examine the significant difference of the students' pretest and posttest in the experimental group and the control group, the statistical analysis of group statistics and independent sample test were used. The following tables present group statistics of the mean achievement of the students' pretest and posttest in the experimental and control group.

Table 5. Group Statistic

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Gain Exp.	18	5.8333	2.25571	.53168
Control	18	1.8333	2.81279	.66298

Table 5 shows that the mean of gain in reading comprehension achievement of the students' pretest in experimental group was 5.8333 and the mean of gain in reading comprehension achievement of the control group was 1.8333.

Table 6 shows the t-obtained by the students of the experimental and the control group after taking the posttest.

Table 6. Independent Samples Test

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Gain	Equal variances assumed	.195	.661	4.707	34	.000	4.00000	.84984	2.292	5.708
	Equal variances not assumed			4.707	32.8	.000	4.00000	.84984	2.292	5.708

From the above tables, it could be seen that the mean of gain in reading achievement of the experimental group is higher than the mean of gain in reading achievement of the control group i.e. $5.83 > 1.83$. Then, since t-obtained is higher than the t-table ($4.707 > 2.110$) and the value of two tail significance (0.000) is lower than the value of significance level ($p < 0.05$), the research hypothesis (H1) "There is a significant difference between reading comprehension achievement of students who were taught through Reciprocal Teaching and that of those who were taught through Conventional Method (Question and Answer Method)" is accepted.

Looking at the findings of the research, it can be seen that the experimental group and the control group made some progress in their reading achievement. The improvement in reading and writing of the experimental group was shown by the score gains between the pretest scores and posttest scores. The scores gained by the experimental group in reading and writing after the treatment was 105 while that gained by the control group was 35.

The findings obtained from the research also showed that either the experimental group or the control group made achievement in reading. However, the students taught using reciprocal teaching had benefited more in their reading achievement compared to students taught using conventional method. This was proved by the difference in gain mean score. The experimental group got higher mean score than the control group i.e. $5.8 > 1.8$.

During the experiment, the researchers observed that the activities in reciprocal teaching had gained students' attention and motivated them to involve more in teaching and learning process. Although they still made many mistakes when they performed (e.g. when asking and answering questions or giving summary), they showed their eagerness in the activities. Some students were passive at the beginning of the class, but after some meetings they began to get interested in involving themselves in group activities.

Although the result of the research gives some benefits to the development of the students' reading skills, the researchers have to admit that this research was not fully perfect. This was mainly caused by limited time the researchers had. Therefore, if further research of the same kind is conducted in the future, the researchers suggest that the prospective researchers do a research with larger samples and longer period.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study and the interpretation drawn in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the teaching of reading using reciprocal teaching for the second semester students of Computer Engineering seems to have given benefits to the development of their reading skill. In the reciprocal teaching, the students were put in group and each group consisted of four students with four roles. With the role they had, they were encourage to be active during the activities and this resulted in a significant improvement in reading achievement.

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