THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TASK BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN IMPROVING THIRD GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN SMP 2 PAJANGAN

By NOER DODDY IRMAWATI

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TASK BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN IMPROVING THIRD GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN SMP 2 PAJANGAN

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ABSTRACT

This research conducted to find out the effectiveness of Task Based Language Teaching in improving third grade students' reading ability in SMP 2 Pajangan. The type of the research study is a quasi-experimental research. This research is classified into experimental research. The data got from pretest and post test from the control group and experimental group. The experimental group taught by using TBLT and the control group taught by using conventional method. Instrument that used in this research to collect the data is a reading comprehension test. The data were analyzed by using SPSS program. The mean value of students' reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching was 18.87 and the mean value of students' reading comprehension skills by using conventional teaching method was 16.79. Based on those mean values, it can be said that the students' reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching was better than the students' reading comprehension skills by using conventional teaching method, so the use of Task Based Language Teaching was effective to improve the students' reading comprehension skills.

Keywords: Effective, Third Grade Students, Experimental, Reading Ability, Reading Comprehension, TBLT

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A. Background of the study

Reading is really important for students of junior high school since they will be faced with the final examination in which the students deal mostly with texts during the test in that exam. For such a reason, students are demanded to have abilities to understand many kinds of texts such as descriptives, procedures, narratives, recounts, and reports either formally or informally. They are also expected to be able to get the message of the texts. Indeed, the students need reading comprehension skills so that they can do the test on the final examination well. In fact, a research on reading comprehension in Indonesia has revealed that students comprehension on reading is low and far from satisfactory. Most of the students in junior high schools have not reached their understanding on reading. As a result, their scores on final examination are not really good. That is why it is important for students to have good comprehension in reading, so that they can pass the final examination successfully.

The students of SMP 2 Pajangan especially third grade students have low motivation in reading. It is reflected by their incapability in finding the main idea. They also get difficulties in getting meanings of difficult words. Besides, students cannot relate the information from one paragraph to another. Sometimes, they just read a text and when

they have to tell about the text, they know nothing. It means that students do not know exactly how to comprehend texts. Consequently, they get nothing in reading as they find difficulty in grasping the information of texts. Second the teacher uses conventional method in teaching reading. However, the activities during the teaching a learning process reflect that the method has not been done maximally. Instead of letting the students be active in the teaching and learning process, he dominates the whole session. As a result, there is a lack of interaction between the teacher and students. The teaching activity is also boring as the teacher controls the classroom and the activity fully. The last, there is a fact that group work is rarely conducted by the teacher. The students usually do the activity individually. They do not want to have discussion with other students because they are not accustomed to that. When they have difficulties in comprehending a text, they tend to be silent. They are reluctant to discuss the text with their friends.

As a matter of facts, there must be suitable method for teaching reading in which students can explore their idea to achieve their reading comprehension. Achieving good comprehension in reading is not a simple thing. It requires the use of strategies. One of the strategies that can be applied is Task Based Language Teaching abbreviated as TBLT. By applying TBLT, all students can be accustomed with the task. Considering the problems above and the advantages of applying TBLT as a technique in improving students' reading comprehension, the researcher feels necessary to conduct research on improving students' reading comprehension using TBLT in SMP 2 Pajangan. It is also expected by the researcher that TBLT can give a good impact on the students' reading comprehension.

B. Theoretical Review
1. Review of Related Studies

The research conducted by Nazenin Ruso (2013) shows that implementing a TBL approach in EFL classes creates variety for the students. Moreover it enhances their learning, since TBL tasks encourage student involvement and lead to significant improvements regarding their language performance. The research participants suggest that they do not like teacher-directed lessons where they cannot find enough opportunities to express themselves in the target language.

The research conducted by Mahdieh Shafipoor (2015) shows that the first experimental group received task-based instruction and for the second experimental group, task-trusted teaching approach was applied. The results of the data analyses turned out that task-trusted teaching approach was superior to task-based teaching in teaching reading to EFL learners.

The research conducted by Hui-Ling Tu (2014) shows that Communicative competence expects language learners to use their L2 for different purposes; to vary language usage based on settingor participants; to produce various textual forms; and to communicate despite limited vocabulary. This expectation creates practical opportunities for task-based language teaching (TBLT) utilizing pair work, role play or group work, and project work activities to facilitate Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) through cognitively demanding situations. TBLT is characterized by classroom language activities which engage learners and derive overall language skills improvement from the cognitive process such as problem-solving (for example: listing, classifying, and sequencing). Certain types of classroom activity may generate individual speaking or group interaction in an EFL classroom setting. One such activity "Lost on the Moon", adapted from the popular "N.A.S.A. Survival" task-based survival game, is suggested for students to reach

consensus and encompasses active participation essential to group cohesion in a hypothetically hostile environment.

The research conducted by Mohammad Bagher Shabani (2014) shows that the researcher used independent samples t-test and paired samples t-test to analyze the collected data. The data analysis using paired samples t-test showed that teaching reading comprehension in both group was influential. The data analysis using independent samples t-test revealed that the subjects in TBLT group performed better on the reading comprehension post-test than CBLT group. It means that TBLT has been more effective than CBLT in teaching reading comprehension to Iranian ESP learners.

The research conducted by Thaweesak Chooma (2013) shows that the ability of English skills has played an important role of reading. As the result of this, the Thai government, especially academic institutions have awaked. Therefore, this study investigated the effect of TBL to enhance English reading skills for Thai undergraduate students. The hypotheses of English reading abilities were tested by using an English reading test and self-assessment form. According to the score analyses, the mean scores of the learners' English reading abilities on the pre-test and post-test were compared. This study indicated that the mean score of the post test was higher than the mean scores of the pre-test significantly. From the survey of the students' attitudes on TBL, it could be found that use of task-based learning could motivate students to learn and make them to be happy with their learning because of Task-based learning. However, the content was not suitable for their level, the teacher must analyze the curriculum and students' need.

2. **Review of Related Theories**

2.1 Teaching and Learning English

Teaching and learning are important activities conducted together in the classroom. Brown cited Kimble and Garmezy's opinion (1995: 7) teaching is showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand. Based on this statement, teaching is a process of helping someone or students to learn and develop their skills and knowledge through the activities in the classroom that are supported by the teacher's instructions.

Hornby (1995: 1225) states that teaching is to show somebody how to do something so that they will be able to do it themselves. Based on this statement, teaching is an activity that is done by someone to give information to the students because they are able to do it themselves. It means that teaching is done to help the students to learn some subject matters through some activities of learning.

2.2 Reading Comprehension

According to Spratt, Pulverness, and William (2005: 21) reading is an activity in which readers respond to and make sense of a text being read connected to their prior knowledge. The activity is done by the readers as they want to get information and knowledge from the text. In the process of getting information and knowledge, the readers try to connect what they read in the form of written language to what they have already known about the text. Making sense of a text is done by understanding meaning of words, sentences, and even a text. Reading can also be defined as the process in which readers learn something from what they read and involve it in academic context as a part of education (Grabe, 2009: 5). Learning happens when there is a change in mind from an unknown thing to the known one. As

reading is included in learning, the readers try to grasp the texts being read by interpreting, synthesizing, evaluating, and selecting the important information.

Grabe (2009: 15) states that:

Reading is the strategic process in that a number of the skills and processes used in reading call for effort on the part of the reader to anticipate text information, selecting key information, organize and mentally summarize information, monitor comprehension, repair comprehension breakdowns, and match comprehension output to the reader goals.

Comprehension can be defined as the process of constructing meaning from a connected text involving the word knowledge (Pang, 2003: 14). By having such skill, the readers combine their background knowledge with the additional information from a text, draw the meaning of words, and connect it to construct meaning.

Snow (2002: 11) defines reading comprehension as the process of extracting and constructing meaning involving the written language. In line with Snow, Johnson (2008: 110) states reading comprehension as the use of strategies in reading in retrieving information and constructing meaning of texts done by the readers. Strategies that are used by the readers may be different from one another. It depends on the readers' aim in reading comprehension.

Hence, reading comprehension can be defined as the process in which the readers construct meaning from a text being read connected to the background knowledge they have.

2.3 The Process of Reading Comprehension

As it is mentioned above, reading comprehension is the process of getting knowledge and information by using comprehension skills connected with the prior knowledge of the reader. Understanding the process of reading is closely related to the way how the readers construct meaning from a text. The ways of constructing meaning may be vary based on the readers' reference. According to Hudson (2007: 33-57) and Brown (2001: 298-299), there are three types of reading processes. Those are presented below:

a. Bottom-up processing

Bottom-up processing views the process of reading as phonemic units. The readers construct meanings by scanning from letters to letters. It is continued by recognizing the words from one to another. The process is furthered by associating among phrases, clauses, and sentences. Finally, it is processed into phonemic units representing lexical meaning and attains some comprehension of the text. This process mainly focuses in a linier processing which allows the readers' ability in recognizing words into mental lexicon.

b. The top-down processing

In top-down processing, the process of reading is seen as the process happened inside of the readers. Hudson cited Godmans' opinion (2007: 37) the readers involve their knowledge of syntax and semantic to create meaning of a text. On the beginning of the process, the readers make some prediction of the text. It is followed by taking samples which will be confirmed or not to the predictions having made. These are the process in which meanings are created by transforming the text. In the end of the process, the readers do some correction on the predictions.

c. Interactive processing

Interactive processing points the process of reading as the interaction between the information of a text with the readers' prior knowledge. This process combines the two previous processing for example the bottom-up and top-down processing. As the process of reading happen, the readers arouse what they have on their background knowledge connected with the written information in the text. So, in interactive process, the readers both recognize words and predict the implied information in creating meaning.

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that there are three types in the process of reading. Those are bottom-up processing dealing with recognizing the words, top-down processing using the readers' background knowledge, and interactive processing combining words recognition and background knowledge of the readers. Those approaches help the readers in reading comprehension.

2.4 Teaching reading comprehension

Teaching is an activity in which the teacher guides and facilitates learning, gives a chance for the learners to learn, and sets the condition for learning (Brown, 2000: 7). Guidance is done by leading the students to do activities in the effort of getting knowledge. The teacher can help the students in gaining the knowledge by giving facilities such as tasks.

Teaching reading comprehension can be defined as a guidance that is done by the teacher to make learners reach their reading comprehension on texts using a certain technique. The teacher can lead the learners to understand a text by using some strategies on reading comprehension (Pang, 2003: 14). By using certain strategies, students are also guided to find the main idea and detail information of the text. In teaching reading comprehension, the teacher also helps the students to learn micro-skills in reading so that they can enhance their reading comprehension.

In conclusion, teaching reading comprehension is an activity which is done by the teacher to give opportunities for students to comprehend texts by using certain strategies. In teaching reading comprehension, the teacher has to consider which strategies that suit to the learners' need, the texts and the condition of the class during the teaching and learning process. It is because different comprehensions texts need different reading comprehension strategies (Pang, 2003: 14).

2.5 Assessing reading comprehension

Assessment is measurement done by the teacher to know how far the students have already understood about the materials that have been discussed. In teaching reading comprehension, assessment is aimed to know how far the students comprehend texts. The teacher usually gives a test to assess the students' ability. In assessing the students" reading comprehension, the teacher may refer to some techniques for tests. There are some techniques that can be used by teachers (Anderson, 2000: 206-232). Some of them as follow:

1) Integrative tests

These tests are designed to obtain a much more general idea of how well students read a text.

2) The cloze test and gap-filling tests

Cloze test are constructed from a collected text arranged by applying the random deletion procedure for words. The words deleted are between five and twelve. Meanwhile, gap-filling test does not use random deletion,

but it uses rational deletion. The words which are deleted represent the idea to what the whole sentence.

3) Multiple-choice techniques

It is a common technique usually done by teachers in assessing reading comprehension. This technique allows the students to choose the right answer from some possible answers given.

4) Matching techniques

This technique allows the students to match two sets of components. For example, the testers match the title with paragraphs.

5) Dichotomous techniques

This technique allows the testers to choose the two possible answers given for example: true and false. The students have two choose one of those two choices.

6) Short-answer techniques

Short-answers technique is constructed by giving questions requiring a brief response in 13 few word. It is possibly used to interpret and to see whether the students have really understood the specific information of the text.

7) The 13 mmary test

This technique allows the students to summarize the main idea of each paragraph of the whole text.

2.6 Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

TBLT is actually an approach of teaching learning process. It is highly recomend because pupils will be strongly trigered to do the task and being usual with the materials. TBLT was popularized by N. Prabhu while working in Bangalore, India. Prabhu noticed that his students could learn language just as easily with a non-linguistic problem as when they we 5 concentrating on linguistic questions. Jack C. Richards (2003: 223) stated that Task Based Language Teaching refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. Noer Doddy (2014: 2) cited Krashen's opinion

in task-based lessons included below our aim is to create a need to learn and use language. The tasks will generate their own language and create an opportunity for language acquisition. If we can take focus away from form and structures we can develop our students ability to do things in English. That is not to say that there will be no attention paid to accuracy, work on language is included in each task and feedback and language focus have their places in the lesson plans.

a. Principles of Task Based Language Teaching

David Nunan (2004: 35-38) establishes seven principles that are the basic foundations of the instructional sequence of tasks. They are stated below.

1) Scaffolding

The teacher or the researcher should provide a supporting framework or material within which the learning can take place. At the beginning of learning process, the learners are not expected to produce their own new language forms. The teacher should know when to remove the framework so that the learner can do it independently. If he removes it earlier before the learners are ready, the entire process will be collapsed.

2) Task dependency

In this frame work the learners first engage themselves in the receptive and slowly they should move on to productive tasks. In other words, within one lesson, one task should move on to develop further tasks, and the tasks should be built upon the ones that are already over.

3) Recycling

The learners usually will not reach the goal of learning one hundred percentage as soon they encounter a particular item for the first time. They require a course of time to develop and also they need to do it in repeated exercises before they achieve it. This recycling allows them to remember and recall what they learnt so far and it provides opportunities to do particular language items after some intervals.

4) Active Learning

It is believed that learners do learn truly when they involve themselves actively when they do something by themselves. It is called as experiential learning where the tasks provide them the experience of doing it. The learners should be allowed to participate in various opportunities to engage themselves and have a lot of practice. This kind of practice removes their inhibitions and they will be doing the work rather than the teachers unlike traditional classrooms.

5) Integration

If the learners do the activities in an active way that is not adequate for their learning. They should be aware of what they learnt or the language forms they are learning and they should be able to relate them to communicative function and their meaning. Actually they should be provided with key factors regarding how to integrate their items of language and how to operate them.

6) Reproduction to Creation

Usually, the learners learn and produce what they are given as models. In a way, they will be successful in attaining it. But they should not stop there by simply reproducing what they have seen or heard. They should be encouraged to create new ways to use the linguistic forms or items. They are allowed to move from the level of reproduction to creation of their own ways.

7) Reflection

The learners should not stop producing linguistic forms on their own but they have to go forward to assess their learning process. They should reflect how they have done it and they should be given opportunity to assess their learning by feedback questions.

b. Basic foundation for task based language teaching

The basic foundation for TBLT is identifying and defining what are real world tasks and pedagogical tasks. Everyday life events and situations are known as real world tasks Few examples are: collecting new information, writing an article, interviewing and booking. David Nunan describes the three macro functions which Michael Halliday defined 'three macro functions.' Halliday describes that

people do three things with language. Firstly language is used to exchange goods and services. This is transactional or service macro function. Secondly language is used to socialize with others. This is interpersonal or

social macro function and thirdly language is used for enjoyment. This is aesthetic macro function (1985: 19).

In order to make the learners involve in learning situations it is required to change the real world tasks into pedagogical tasks. They are arranged in a sequence or series from practice to final active one.

2.7 Teaching Reading using Task Based Language Teaching

Teaching reading comprehension for students of Junior High Schools, as it mentioned, becomes a challenge for the teacher. It cannot be said as an easy job. Before teaching them such kind of reading, the teacher has to consider to the technique or strategies that are used to teach students' reading comprehension. There are many available strategies that can be chosen by the teacher. One of them is using TBLT.

TBLT is strategies which use task as the core of learning process. By using TBLT, students can work in peer or in groups. Meanwhile, the task takes role as the monitor and guidance. In teaching reading comprehension using TBLT, there are some steps which have to be noticed by the teacher. First, the teacher introduces the strategies to the students. Introduction is done by presenting the task that are conducting in reading comprehension. Then, the teacher explains the activities. It is done so that the students can really understand what they done on their reading activities. Next, the teacher divides the students into groups. Each group consists of three, four, or five students. This aims to make students work collaboratively and help one another in understanding a text. After that, there has to be a student who is responsible for his or her group to guide and lead the other members of the group in the process of reading comprehension (Scruggs and Mastropieri, 2010: 208). Each group has to present what has been discussed with their own group.

C. Research Method

This research is classified into experimental research. Gay (1987: 200) states that the experimental research is guided by a hypothesis (or several hypotheses) that states an expected relationship between two or more variables. An experiment is conducted to support or disconfirm this experimental hypothesis. The experimental research has been put to various uses in solving educational problems. Blankenship (2010: 57) argues that the experimental research applies two types of variables. These variables are called independent variables and dependent variables, and they are always used in experimental studies. There is a pre-test before the treatment is given to experimental group. A post-test is after the treatment.

The subject of the research are class 9A and 9B students of SMP 2 Pajangan school in academic year 2016/ 2017 semester one. Class 9A consists of 28 students, 14 male and 14 female studets. Class 9B consists of 28 students 16 male and 12 female.

Simple statistical formula was used to compare the result of the pre-test and post-test in this research. The data analyzed by using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). Analysis of covariance is a method to analize the difference between dependent variable and experimental groups after counting the measurement of beginning test or other relevant variable measurement test.

Smolkowski (2011: 675) states that an Ancova is the alternative to gain scores, focuses on differences between the tre,atment groups at post-test while holding constant pre-test differences. To compare two or more regression lines to each others, the analyzing of Ancova is calculated by using SPSS Computer Program.

D. Research Findings and Discussion

1.   The Students' Reading Comprehension Skills by Using Task Based Language Teaching

The result of this variable used the result of the statistical analysis processed by using SPSS 20.0 for Windows. The mean score was 18.87, standard deviation 2.55, minimum score was 14, and maximum score was 28. The reading comprehension test consisted of 30 questions with four options, soothe ideal maximum score was 30, the chance score was $\frac{30}{4} = 7.5$, ideal mean was $\frac{30+7.5}{2} = 18.75$, ideal standard deviation was $\frac{30-18.75}{3} = 3.75$. Based on the statistic above, it can be made a normal curve distribution to six scales as follows:

26.25	–	= excellent
30.00		= very good
22.50	–	= good
26.25		= fair
18.75	–	= poor
22.50		= very poor
15.00	–	
18.75		
11.25	–	
15.00		
7.50	–	
11.25		

Based on the result of statistical analysis, the mean value of the students' reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching was 18.87. This score was in scale between 18.75 – 22.50 in good category. It could be stated that the category of students' reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching was good category.

The frequency of students' reading comprehension skill by using Task Based Language Teaching was 82.15%, while 17.85% students who were under the mean value. This frequency is supported by the mean and standard deviation scores. Based on the results of descriptive analysis, it is known that the ideal mean of data of students' reading comprehension skill by using Task Based Language Teaching was 15.41 and the empirical mean was 18.87, while the ideal standard deviation was 3.125 and the empirical standard deviation was 2.55. Based on these scores, the empirical standard deviation 2.55 was lower than the ideal standard deviation 3.75, it means that the data was homogenous.

2.   The Students' Reading Comprehension   Skill by Using Conventional Teaching Method

The descriptive statistic, the mean score was 16.79, standard deviation was 2.52, minimum score was 20, and maximum score was 11.

The reading comprehension test consisted of 30 questions with four options, soothe ideal maximum score was 30, the chance score was $\frac{30}{4} = 7.5$, ideal mean was $\frac{30+7.5}{2} = 18.75$, ideal standard deviation was $\frac{30-18.75}{3} = 3.75$.

The average score of the students' reading comprehension skills by using conventional teaching method was 16.79. This score was in the scale between 15.00 –

18.75 in fair category. It could be stated that the category of students' reading comprehension skill by using conventional teaching method was fair.

The frequency of students' reading comprehension skill by using conventional method was 53.57%, while 46.43% students who were under the mean value. This frequency is supported by the mean and standard deviation values. Based on the results of descriptive analysis, it is known that the ideal mean of data of students' reading comprehension skill by using conventional method was 15.625 and the empirical mean was 16.79, while the ideal standard deviation was 3.125 and the empirical standard deviation was 2.52. Based on these scores, the empirical standard deviation 2.52 was lower than ideal standard deviation 3.75, it means that the data were homogenous.

3. **The Effectiveness of Task Based Language Teaching in Teaching Reading Comprehension**

Based on the result of statistical analysis, the score of t_{obs} = 2.812 > $t_{table\ 5\%}$ 2.016. It can be stated that there was a positive and significant difference between the students' reading comprehension skill by using Task Based Language Teaching and students' reading comprehension skill by using conventional teaching method. The difference can be seen from the mean value of the students' reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching and students' reading comprehension skillby using conventional teaching method.

The Comparison Scores of the Students' Reading Comprehension Skill by Using Task Based Language Teaching and Conventional Method
Group Statistics

		Value		Mean	Me an	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
core	S	TBLT	8	8696	18.	2.54602	.53088
	tional	Conven	8	7917	16.	2.51913	.51422

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the mean value of students' reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching was 18.87 and the mean value of students' reading comprehension skill by using conventional teaching method was 16.79. Based on those mean values, it can be said that the students' reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching was better than the students' reading comprehension skills by using conventional teaching method, so the use of Task Based Language Teaching was effective to improve the students' reading comprehension skills.

It is supported by the frequency of students' reading comprehension skills that is above the ideal mean. The frequency of students 'reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching that is above the ideal mean was 91.3%, while the frequency of students 'reading comprehension skills by using conventional teaching method that was above the ideal mean was 53.57%. It means that there was improvement of students reading skills 25% by Task Based Language Teaching than the teaching of reading comprehensions by using conventional teaching method.

Based on the score of standard deviation, the empirical standard deviation students' reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching was 2.55 and the empirical standard deviation students 'reading comprehension skills by using Task Based Language Teaching was 2.52. Those empirical standard deviations were lower than the ideal standard deviation 3.75, it means that students' reading skills were getting more homogenous by the implementation of Task Based Language Teaching.

E. Conclusion

Having finished analyzing and discussing students' reading comprehension ability before and after treatment by using Task Based Language Teaching, the writer can draw some conclusions that should be in line with the problems. They are explained as follows:

a. The mean value of the students' reading comprehension skills by using concept mapping method was 18.87 in scale between 18.75 – 22.50 in good category. The frequency of students' reading comprehension skill by using concept mapping method was 91.31%, while 8.69% students who were under the mean value.

b. The average score of the students' reading comprehension skills by using conventional teaching method was 16.79 in the scale between 15.00 – 18.75 in fair category. It could be stated that the category of students' reading comprehension skill by using conventional teaching method was fair. Based the analysis, it can be seen that the frequency of students' reading comprehension skill by using conventional method was 58.33%, while 41.66% students who were under the mean value..

c. Based on the result of statistical analysis, the score of t_{obs} = 2.812 > $t_{table\ 5\%}$ 2.016. It can be stated that there was a positive and significant difference between the students' reading comprehension skill by using concept mapping method and students' reading comprehension skill by using Task Based Language Teaching. This improvement is caused by the facts that the students were able to recognize the text completely, were able to comprehend the content, language feature, or grammar focus of the text, and were able to differentiate several texts with the same genre and topic.

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