



Impacts of authentic texts on EFL students' reading comprehension

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore the effect of authentic texts on students' reading comprehension of the English Education Study Program at the University of Bengkulu. This research applied a quantitative method, in the form of a quasi-experimental study. The subjects of the research were 68 sixth-semester students in which 34 students as the experimental group and 34 other students as the controlled group. The experimental group got treatment of authentic text, while the controlled group got treatment of textbooks. The instrument of the research used was the test. The mean score of the experimental group was higher than the scores of the controlled group (75.88: 68.24). The t-test calculation = $(p < \alpha)$; $(0.005 < 0.05)$. It means alternative hypothesis was accepted, and null hypothesis was rejected. In other words, there was an effect of using authentic texts on students' reading comprehension. It was recommended that it was a good idea for English lecturers, apart from other texts, pay close attention to authentic texts as well.

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INTRODUCTION

Reading is regarded as one of the most crucial abilities that students must develop when studying English as a second or foreign language (Grabe, 2002). Reading is defined as the process by which students obtain information and ideas from books, newspapers, letters, novels, short stories, advertisements, and other sources in order to learn new vocabularies, grammar, and even new culture. Nowadays, teaching reading is an important part in learning English. The goal of English teaching and learning is to help students develop functional literacy, which is the capacity to communicate in simple spoken and written English in everyday situations, such as reading and understanding books or articles.

There are four important things in reading comprehension: the reader, the text, the context, and the strategy (Buehl, 2017). Reading material, or text, are part that affects students' interest and motivation in reading comprehension. The more diverse the text, the better they achieve reading comprehension skills in English. Currently, most of the reading materials used in learning activities in schools and colleges provides the materials in the form of textbooks. "It has long been recognized that the language

offered to students in textbooks is a poor approximation of authenticity and most reading from textbooks used in institutional language are clearly neither authentic nor simplified” (Gilmore, 2007). From this statement, it is intended that textbooks which are generally used as reading material in teaching are only pedagogic materials aimed at teaching grammatical structures, not based on students' needs. In this case, it can be said that if students are not interested in the reading material presented, their interest and motivation to read will certainly be low, so it will affect their reading comprehension skills. The effects that will be faced by students if their reading comprehension skills are low. Developing students' motivation in reading comprehension is certainly a difficult thing, especially in learning English. One of the benchmarks used to make the teaching and learning process more effective in reading comprehension is related to the selection and adjustment of reading materials to improve students' understanding

Many academics have written about how to select appropriate learning resources for learners, such as teaching materials. According to Tomlinson (1998), there are two types of materials that can be used in teaching reading: authentic text materials and pedagogic text materials. Authentic text materials are texts or manuscripts that have been written, created, delivered by someone who comes from the results of real-life communication made for actual purposes and not intended for learning activities, for example: newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, advertisements, etc. Meanwhile, pedagogic materials are materials intended for language teaching and learning, such as text books, students work sheets, supplemental readers, abbreviated novels, graded materials, lecturer's made texts, etc.

Using authentic text as teaching materials is one of the good suggestions in reading comprehension activities. Authentic texts have several advantages when applied in classroom learning. This is based on the fact that the use of authentic texts can have a beneficial effect on increasing learner motivation, especially reading comprehension. As stated by Berardo (2006), advanced students using authentic texts are "more motivated" because they find actual information more "interesting", "fun", and "up-to-date" than textbooks). Authentic texts are also very interesting because of their relevance and the fact that they contain at least three layers of learning: language acquisition, cultural understanding, and practical application. They provide authentic cultural knowledge as well as real-world language experiences.

There are several types of authentic text materials in teaching. One of them is the text of a newspaper. In fact, College students are adult learners who seem dissatisfied with just reading textbooks. They have been given teaching using textbooks from elementary school to college level. It certainly becomes boring if the types of text that is considered is only simple text continuously. They are more interested in reading that provides realistic new knowledge. They will be surprised when given news about Covid-19, economic problems, business news, food recipes or current events. All of these things they can find in the type of authentic text in the form of newspaper. Therefore, the selection of newspaper texts that are known to lead the development of reading materials because of their advantages are expected to have an impact as authentic text materials in learning reading comprehension in this research.

Students of the Bengkulu University English Education Study Program have received teaching reading comprehension from semester two to semester four. They

have found types of reading comprehension courses, such as general reading, extensive reading, and academic reading courses. In learning process, there are so many students have difficulties in reading comprehension text because of the existence of discrepancy between the first language and the target language that will be learnt. In this situation, the use of approach, method of the selection of material that will be used is very determining the success of learning process. Therefore, the researcher was interested in examining impacts that exists if students are given treatment by teaching using newspapers as authentic texts. Furthermore, Sinar Huzain (2019) stated that authentic texts, especially using English newspapers as text material, had an effect on students' reading comprehension. English-language newspapers can develop students' reading comprehension. From several previous studies, students' reading comprehension improved significantly because of using English newspapers offer opportunities in develop cognitive skills and learning strategies in the subjects matter areas.

Based on the illustration above, this study was to find out the effect of authentic texts on reading comprehension, by presenting a small-scale study that seeks to provide empirical evidence that shows “ The Effect of Authentic Texts on Students' Reading Comprehension in English Education Study Program at the University of Bengkulu”.

METHODS

This study used quantitative research which is measuring relationship among available variables. Specifically, the researcher used a quasi-experimental design. The researcher chose a quasi-experiment rather than a true experiment because this study was conducted in a university, where random allocation of participants is impractical. The researcher wanted to find whether authentic text impacts 6th semester students of English Education Study Program at the University of Bengkulu on their reading comprehension abilities.

Instruments

In this research, a reading comprehension test was administered to obtain the data. The reading comprehension test included pre and post-test. The scores gained from both the pre-test and post-tests were compared in order to know whether or not the effect of using authentic text on students' reading comprehension of the English Education Study Program at the University of Bengkulu.

There are 20 items of the test for multiple-choice. Multiple-choice was used because of several of factors. The primary goal of the test is to measure students' reading comprehension. Multiple-choice exams are more successful than the WH-Question test for reading comprehension since it is a receptive skill. In addition, before administering the test, an analysis of the validity and reliability of the items is performed to ensure the instrument's quality.

Data Analysis Procedures

After the data was collected, the results and instrument (reading comprehension test) will be analyzed in order to answer the research question. The next step of analysis is classifying students' scores. The data were analyzed by using a t-test (independent sample test) to compare the reading comprehension test between class A as the

experimental group and class B as a control group. T-test calculations for reading comprehension tests in this study will be compared to find out the effect of authentic text on students' reading comprehension. The researcher conduct a t-test through the SPSS version 25 application.

The t-count will be compared with the t-table with the criteria for testing the regional hypothesis that accept and reject the following:

- If t-count > t-table means Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted.
- Meanwhile, if t-count < t-table means that Ho will be accepted and Ha will be rejected.

FINDINGS

Table 1: Group statistics

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	Pre-test : 53.97	10.43
	Post test : 75.88	11.11
Control	Pre-test : 53.24	10.07
	Post-test : 69.24	10.36

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for both groups. The pre-test mean score (X) for the experimental group was 54.97, with the lowest score was 40 and the highest score was 75. Mean score of (X) students' in post test increased to 75.88. Meanwhile, the mean (X) of pre-test was 53.24, with the lowest score was 35 and the highest score was 70.

The researcher need to understand that in parametric statistics there are conditions that must be conducted before testing the hypothesis (in this case the hypothesis test uses an independent t-test). The following are some prerequisite tests that must be carried out before carrying out the t-test; 1).The two samples are not paired with each other. 2). The data used in this test is in the form of quantitative data on an interval or ratio scale. 3). The data for both samples are normally distributed. 4). There is a similarity of variance for the two data. In this case the data must be homogeneous.

The aim of normality test is to checking the data distribution is normal or not. In checking data normality the researcher using Shapiro-Wilk Test. In order to analyze the gathered data, the SPSS software, version 25 software was used.

Table 2: The Result of Normality Test (*Shapiro-Wilk*)

Experimental	.947	34	.101
Control	.950	34	.124

Table 2 shows that the statistical of scores was normally distributed as the results obtained from using SPSS 25. In this case, the parametric statistics like independent samples t-test can be used to get the final results. The researcher has to make sure that the data distribution is normal.

After calculating normality test, the researcher calculated the homogeneity test in each class and each test. Homogeneity test is a test conducted to find out that two or more groups of sample data come from the same populations or homogeneous variance. The homogeneity test in this research used Levene Statistics table method in SPSS.

Table 3: The Result of Homogeneity Test (Lavene Statistics)

	<i>Levene Statistic</i>	df1	df2	Sig.
Result based on Mean	.009	1	66	.926

After conducting the homogeneity test, it was found that the significance homogeneity value of the two populations was 0.926. From the significance value, it is found that the distribution value of the two populations was more than α ($0.926 > 0.05$) it meant that the data distribution is homogeneous. The results of this homogeneity test can be used as a reference to carry out the t-test.

Before interpreting the output results, the researcher must know the guidelines in making decisions on the Independent Sample t-test as follows; 1). If the value of sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05 then H_0 is accepted and H_a is rejected, which means that there is no effect of using authentic text on student's reading comprehension between the experimental class and controlled class. 2). If the value of Sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05 , then H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, which means that there is an effect of using authentic text on student's reading comprehension between the experimental class and the control class. (V.Wiratna Sujarweni, 2014:99).

Table 4: The Result of Independent Sample t-test

Independent Samples Test						
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
Mean	Std.	Error	differe	ence	(2- tailed)	Lower Upper
RESULT	Equal	.009	.926	2.	66	.005 7.64
	2.6056	2.444	12.84			

Independent Samples Test							
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means			
F	Sig.	T	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
Mean	Std. Error			(2-tailed)	Lower	Upper	
variances			93		706	4	
74	938						
assumed			5				
Equal	.009	.926	2.	65.	.005	7.64	
2.6056	2.444	12.84					
Variances			93	683		706	4
27	985						
not			5				
assumed							

The interpretation of the independent sample test output table above was guided by the values contained in the "Equal Variances Assumed" table. The "equal variances assumed" section showed that the value of sig. (2-tailed) was smaller than alpha (α) as the basis for taking decision in the independent sample test ($0.005 < 0.05$). It implied that H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. From the results obtained, it is proven that authentic reading text had an effect on student's reading comprehension based on the comparison of the average value in the t-test.

DISCUSSION

According to the findings of the data analysis, there was the differences in students' reading comprehension ability between the experimental group after receiving the treatment by using authentic text, and the control group, who were given treatment by using textbooks. It demonstrated from students' reading comprehension test scores in both classes. Students in the experimental class had a reading comprehension test mean score was 75.86. Meanwhile, the reading comprehension test score in controlled class was 68.24

The results of the mean scores of these two different classes indicated that students in the experimental class who were given the treatment by reading authentic

texts got higher scores than the control class students who used textbooks in the learning process. This means that there was a difference in the students' reading comprehension ability in the experimental class and the control class. The researcher discovered evidence of a relationship between authentic texts and students' reading comprehension abilities. This result was similar to Syaiful Islam (2018), the research also found that the use of authentic texts in teaching reading comprehension was more effective in improving students' reading comprehension scores than non-authentic texts. So it can be claimed that authentic text was effective in increasing students' reading comprehension in 6th semester students. The findings above are supported by previous related research which also found that authentic texts, especially using English newspapers as text material, had an effect on students' reading comprehension. Sinar Huzain (2019) reported that English-language newspapers can develop students' reading comprehension. She found that students' reading comprehension improved significantly because using English newspapers offers opportunities to develop cognitive skills and learning strategies in the subject matter areas.

The result of the t-test calculation in this research was the value of sig. (2-tailed) was smaller than $\alpha = (p < \alpha)$; $(0.005 < 0.05)$. Moreover, Rizki Kurniawan (2021) revealed that the value of sig. (2-tailed) in his research was smaller than α ; $(0.003 < 0.05)$. It meant that H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. It showed that the effect of authentic text on reading comprehension in Rizki's research was stronger than this research. Contrarily, the research from Asma Aftab (2018) had different results. Asma's research revealed that the treatment by using authentic texts had no effect on the experimental group students who received the lowest score. As a result, it appears that the treatment only had an effect on high achieving students, in other words, there was no increased students' reading comprehension skills.

One of the other previous studies was conducted by Yoga Prihananto (2014) obtained the same result with this research, it revealed that the score of students' reading comprehension ability in the experimental group was outranked to the control group which was no given treatment by using authentic text. The similarity of the results by previous research has provided support and strengthened the findings of this research, which showed that authentic texts had an effect on students' reading comprehension ability.

The positive effect given to 6th semester students as an experimental class was to increase students' interest and enthusiasm in reading, furthermore it also had an effect on increasing students' self-confidence and motivating them to read and improving their reading comprehension skills. These benefits could assist students in dealing with reading comprehension tests in class or reading comprehension tests on the TOEFL or IELTS. On the other hand, because authentic texts use natural language, it was possible for students to be able to deal directly with texts that contain complete and meaningful messages, allowing students to apply non-linguistic signals such as layout, images, colors, symbols, and physical arrangements, also enabling students to see the significant implication of what they do in class to what they need to do outside of class.

CONCLUSIONS

The researcher provided some of the conclusion based on the results and discussion in the previous chapter. According to the findings of this study, using authentic texts provides a significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement in English. The conclusion was obtained from the independent sample t-test that was performed. The result of the Independent t-test showed that value sig. (2-tailed) ($p < \alpha$) = 0.005 < 0.05. It meant that the H_0 (Null Hypothesis) was rejected and H_a (Alternative Hypothesis) was accepted. So, It proved that there is any significant effect on reading comprehension between the students who are taught by using authentic text and without authentic text.

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