

THE EFFECTS OF ONLINE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION ON STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract

This research is "The effect of online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension". The purpose of this study is to examine 2 cases, namely: (1) What is the effect of online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension, (2) What is students' perception of the effect of online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension, to determine students' perceptions of the effect of online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension. Implementing learning to understand English reading. This research uses quantitative methods. In this study, researchers used purposive sampling to collect data. This study was attended by 30 participants and this research was conducted at the English Department of the Indonesian Muslim University, Makassar. The results of this study indicate that the use of learning with the small group discussion method in the network is quite effective in improving students' reading comprehension. In carrying out this research, the research uses zoom and WhatsApp applications. so that it is difficult to follow the lesson, but it can all be overcome by re-meeting. These results can be a reflection for teachers and students to be even more active in learning to understand English writing or scripts.

Keywords: *small group discussion, online, impact, perception, implementation*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is what happen when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text. It means that reading is the process of reader's mind or process of mind activity in trying to interpret the perception of symbols that present language. Besides, reading comprehension is the main goal of reading that refers to understanding what is being read. Readers usually make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, and grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text (Rahemi, 2013). Additionally, students' reading comprehension means how far they can understand what they are reading and usually the students make use their background knowledge, vocabulary, and grammatical knowledge, experience with the text and strategies to help them understand a text. Based on curriculum 2013 at point 4.14 at exploration stage for second grade of senior high school as cited in Yunus, M. (2019) there are two indicators of successful reading that should be achieved by the students and one of them is the students are able to catch the meaning of the text. Then, the students are able to write out the content of the text together with their friends by paying attention to the content and vocabulary.

The students might consider that understanding the meaning of the text is unnecessary as long as they could get good scores in reading test and they just focused on reading certain

paragraph or sentence that perhaps indicated the answer of the question and. In addition, there are five main problems that are frequently faced by the students during reading comprehension process and they are vocabulary, sentence problem, reference (rhetorical structure), and background knowledge (Sutarsyah, 2013).

These problems are assumed as the main factors that make the students fail to comprehend the content of text. On the other hand, those problems above require a teacher to find a suitable and appropriate technique in order to solve those reading problems so that the students will comprehend the meaning of the text well and their reading comprehension will increase and to make students become active and get involved in reading activities, it is needed to teach them the various reading strategies because reading with various strategies would create students to be critical and creative readers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Definition of Reading

Reading is the meaningful interpretation of printed or written verbal symbols. It is a complex process in which the recognition and comprehension of written symbols are influenced by readers, perceptual skills, decoding skills, experienced, language background, mind set and reasoning ability as they anticipate meaning on the basis of what has been read (Tarigan, 2008). In different way, according to Alyousef (2005) reading can be seen as an “interactive” process between a reader and a text which leads to automaticity or (reading fluency). In this process, the reader interacts dynamically with the text as he or she tries to elicit the meaning and where various kinds of knowledge are being used: linguistic or systemic knowledge (through bottom-up processing) as well as schematic knowledge (through top-down processing).

Reading Comprehension

Comprehension is the main goal of reading that refers to understand what is being read. Readers usually make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, and grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text. Similarly, reading comprehension is the interaction among word identification, prior knowledge, comprehension strategies, and engagement. Without all of these skills, one cannot comprehend properly and, therefore, not read properly Descriptive Text of Writing. Besides, comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading. Everyone agrees that reading comprehension is not a simple matter of recognizing individual words, or even of understanding each individual word as our eyes pass over it. All models of comprehension recognize the need for readers to build up mental representation of text, a process that requires integration across a range of sources information, from lexical features through to knowledge concerning events in the world. In summary, reading comprehension is the main goal of reading in which readers usually make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, and grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text and this is a process that requires integration across a range of sources

Background Knowledge

Most students confused that the lack of background knowledge of the reading topic became their main reading problem. A difficult text is the one that contains unfamiliar topic or at least the topic is not interesting. In other words, a passage can be considered easy or difficult depending on whether or not the topic of text is familiar to a reader. If a reader does not know or never experience about the topic discussed in the text, he would have a serious problem to understand the text and would not be able to follow the story. Thus, a reader must have enough

background experience on the topic that enables him or her to bring personal meaning to the events and feeling of the story.

Small Group Discussion as a technique in reading comprehension

Small group discussion is one of the cooperative learning techniques in which students work in groups of three or four. A small group is a small member of human, work together through interaction whose interdependent relationship allows them to achieve a mutual goal (Yunus, M. 2019). According to Yunus, M., Taslim., (2017) group discussion team is more effective if the group consists of 3-4 students, enable students gives their opinions or ideas to other students easily. So, the students are more confidence to give opinion in each of their small group. In short, small group technique is a small member of human, work together through interaction whose interdependent relationship allow them to achieve a mutual goal. This technique provides opportunities for students' initiation, for face to face, give and take, for practice in negotiation of meaning for extended conversation exchanges.

Teaching Small Group Discussion in Reading Class

The small group learning format can be conceptualized in various ways and proponents of the technique have assessed only certain types of the models. But when the groups have found out how to plan work together, they may not all agree. The members of the group know well enough to really trust each other, and they still have to determine each other's skills, knowledge, situation and attitudes. They often feel comfortable and "lost" (Sulaiman, R., Muhajir. 2019). In a class of 30 – 40 students, a teacher may have difficulties when he teaches without knowing whether the students have understood and comprehended the reading passages. Additionally, teaching small group discussion in reading class here means that the students will be trained to catch the meaning of the text and write out the content of the text together with their friends by paying attention to the content and vocabulary based on curriculum 2013 as cited in Syamsu, A., Yunus, M., Sulaiman, R., (2019). In small group discussion, the students would be trained to comprehend the meaning of the text by sharing and discussing their ideas with other members' in-group. Small group discussion technique would be conducted after pretest has been done first and then, in order to check students' reading comprehension after being taught by using small group discussion posttest will be administered. In addition, producing a text in Indonesian language is a test that would be conducted in pretest and posttest where the students should be able to produce a text in Indonesian language based on their understanding of text in English language. This activity is administered in order to evaluate students' reading comprehension after being taught by using small group discussion.

Advantages

According to Brown and Atkins (2001), the advantages of small group include better communication skills and intellectual and professional development. Yunus, M. (2019) adds that the advantages of small group include increased participation by students, and deeper and longer-lasting understanding. According to Harmer (2001) the advantages of small group discussion are:

1. It dramatically increases the amount of talking for individual students.
2. Because there are more than two people in the group, personal relationship are usually less problematic; there is also a greater chance of different opinions and varied contribution.
3. It encourages broader skills of cooperation and negotiation.
4. It promotes student autonomy by allowing students to make their own decision in the group without being told what to do by the teacher.

METHOD

This study was conducted to find out the effect of intensive reading strategy on students' reading comprehension. This study was conducted through a quantitative research. In this research the researcher used quasi experimental. According to Sugiyono (2011), quasi experimental design means that the researcher does not have maximum control in doing the experiment. The design used in this research is quasi-experimental design which uses experimental and control groups. Experimental group receives a treatment, while control group does not receive any treatment.

Quasi experimental design divided into two they are nonequivalent control group design and the time series design. According to Setiyadi (2006), non-equivalent control group design means that there are two groups in the study; experimental group and control group, in which both of the groups are the same level of knowledge but used different treatment or maybe there will be no treatment used. This type of research has pre-test and post-test, experiment and control groups but no random assignment of subject. In other word, the subject in this research had already been grouped when this research was conducted.

FINDINGS

The Effect of Online Small Group Discussion on Students' Reading Comprehension

In this part, the researcher did quasy-exprimental research to know the effect of online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension. The score they got in these test would be described in following table:

Table 1. The Score of Pre-test and Post-test in Experiment Class

No	Name	Pre-test	Post-test
1	AAN	62	80
2	BE	50	88
3	CJT	64	88
4	CAZZ	48	72
5	DNR	64	80
6	DVM	52	72
7	FS	56	76
8	FNI	56	74
9	HF	68	72
10	IMG	68	92
11	L	64	72
12	MAP	56	76
13	MSS	64	72
14	MR	64	92
15	MIR	44	74
16	MRF	52	74
17	MIZ	48	60
18	NZA	36	64
19	N	60	76
20	NAL	54	80
21	OH	44	68
22	RA	52	60
23	RB	52	74
24	RA	60	84

25	RS	62	72
26	SS	42	74
27	SN	64	84
28	SA	48	76
29	YPP	56	72
30	YNA	62	96
		$\Sigma X = 1672$	$\Sigma X = 2294$
		$M = 55,73$	$M = 76,46$

After that the researcher calculated them based on t-test formula:

1. The average score of experiment class:
 $\bar{X}_1 = \frac{\Sigma K_1}{N_1} = \frac{2294}{30} = 76,46$
2. The average score of control class:
 $\bar{X}_2 = \frac{\Sigma K_2}{N_2} = \frac{1864}{30} = 62,13$
3. Sum of the squared deviation score of experimental class:
 $\Sigma X^2 = 2221.468$
4. Sum of the squared deviation score of control class:
 $\Sigma X^2 = 1439.467$
5. Determining t-table (tt) by using formula: $Df = N_1 + N_2 - 2 = 30 + 30 - 2 = 58$

Hypotesis Testing (t-test)

Data obtained from both pre-test and post-test are analyzed and calculated by using t-test formula. The data obtained from experiment class and control class are calculated with the assumption as follows:

If $t_o < t_t$: the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is rejected and null hypothesis (H_o) is accepted. It means there is no significant effect of using online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension.

If $t_o > t_t$: the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. It means there is significant effect of using online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension.

From the result of the calculation above, it is obtained that the value of t_o (t observation) is 7,38 and the degree freedom (df) is 58. There is no degree of freedom for 58, so the researcher used the closer df from 58 is 60. In degree of significance 5% from t table is 2,00. In degree of significance 1% from t table is 2,66. After got the data, the researcher compared it with t_t (t table) both in degree significance 5% and 1%. Therefore, $t_o > t_t = 7,38 > 2,00$ in degree of significance 5% and $t_o > t_t = 7,38 > 2,66$ in degree of significance 1%. Since t_o score obtained from the result of calculating, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. It means there is significant effect of using online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension.

Students' Perception on the Effect of Online Small Group Discussion on Students' Reading Comprehension

To answer the second problem statements, the researcher used questionnaire to know the responses of student perception on the effect of small group discussion on students' reading

comprehension. The questionnaire consists of 13 items (close ended questionnaire). There were seven negative statements and eight positive statements.

Item 1: Learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion increase student ability in understand the text. From item 1 above showed that 30 students, seventeen students (61%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, ten students (39%) agree with the statements.

Item 2: Learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion is boring. From item 2 above showed that 30 students, one student (4%) said that they were agree with the statements, two students (7%) doubtful with the statements, nineteen students (68%) disagree with the statements and eight students (21%) strongly disagree with the statements.

Item 3: Learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion increase students spirit. From item 3 above showed, twenty one students (74%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, eight students (19%) agree with the statements, one students (4%) doubtful with the statements.

Item 4: Learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion did not motivate the students in understanding the text. From item 4 above showed that 30 students, one students (4%) said that they were agree with the statements, five students (19%) doubtful with the statements, fiveteen students (53%) disagree with the statements, nine students (24%) strongly agree with statement.

Item 5: Learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion increase the students' curiosity. From item 5 above showed, nineeteen students (63%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, ten students (33%) agree with the statements, one students (4%) doubtful with the statements.

Item 6: Student could understand the text through small group discussion. From item 6 above showed that 30 students, seventeen students (60%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, thirteen students (40%) agree with the statements.

Item 7: Learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion was effective and efficient way for students. From item 7 above showed, twenty one students (66%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, ten students (34%) agree with the statements.

Item 8: Learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion was not efficient because it needed much time. From item 8 above showed, one students (4%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, three students (11%) doubtful with the statements, sixteen students (50%) disagree with the statements, ten students (35%) strongly disagree statement.

Item 9: Student could think freely in learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion. From item 9 above showed, sixteen students (56%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, nine students (25%) agree with the statements, five students (19%) doubtful statement.

Item 10: Learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion did not give a chance in understanding the text. From item 10 above showed, three students (11%) said that they were doubtful with the statements, fourteen students (49%) disagree with the statement, ten students (40%) strongly disagree statement.

Item 11: I can't less concentration using small group discussion on reading comprehension class. From item 11 above showed, two students (7%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, one students (4%) agree with the statement, five students (19%) doubtful statement, fiveteen students (47%) disagree with the statement, seven students (22%) disagree with the statement,

Item 12: Student were attracted to understand the text through small group discussion. From item 12 above showed, seventeen students (55%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, thirteenth students (48%) agree with the statements.

Item 13: Students are interested in learning English reading comprehension through small group discussion. From item 13 above showe, nineteen students (67%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, eight students (22%) agree with the statement, one students (4%) doubtful statement, two students (7%) strongly disagree with the statement.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Online Small Group Discussion on Students' Reading Comprehension

In addition, the implementation of intensive reading strategy has given changes toward students reading comprehension, as follows: students' vocabularies mastery was increased, they could look for main idea, understand the main text, understand the grammatical well and they have received a new motivation by intensive reading strategy. It was proved from the result score posttest after intensive reading strategy was implemented. According on the data analysis in the previous part, in can be seen in the class A as experimental class, the highest score of pre-test is 68 and the lowest score is 36. The highest score of post-test is 96 and the lowest score is 60. The mean of pre-test score obtained by students in this class is 55,73 and the mean of post-test is 76,46. The mean of pretest and post-test score has good enough improvement it seen $76,46 > 55,73$. The improvement caused by the experimental class learnt reading comprehension by using online small group discussion that not used yet before.

Students Perception on Learning English Reading Comprehension Through Small Group Discussion

The questionnaire From item 1 above showed, seventeen students (61%) said that they were strongly agree with the statements, thirteen students (39%) agree with the statements. this is one item about questionnare positive statement. And item 4 About the statement the learning reading comprehension through small group discussion did not motivate the students in understand the text From item 4 above showed that 30 students, one students (4%) said that they were agree with the statements, five students (19%) doubtful with the statements, fiveteen students (53%) disagree with the statements, nine students (24%) strongly agree with statement, This is negative statements. Even though one class had an equally increasing score, but for the exprimental class based on the findings above the score was increased significantly. It simply illustrates that the students who were taught by using online small group discussion were better and easier to learn English.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of data and hypothesis testing, it can be conclude that:

1. Students' reading comprehension at 5 semester in English education Universitas Muslim Indonesia before using online small group discussion is low at is low. It can be seen from the result of pre- test computation, it indicates that the average of pre- test score in experimental class is 55,73 and in controlled class is 55, 86. So, after the researcher gave

treatments in experimental class that teaching reading comprehension using intensive reading strategy is effective rather than traditional method. It can be seen from the result of computation in post-test. It indicates that the average score of experimental group (m) mean is 76, 46 it is higher than the controlled group (m) mean which is 62, 13. The data above

- show that there is significant difference between the experimental class and controlled class.
- Using online small group discussion is effective in students' reading comprehension. It can be seen from the result of post-test was higher than students pre-test. The students' lowest score of post-test at experimental class was 60 and the highest score was 96. The result of lowest of post-test at control class was 44, the highest was 72. After the date, the result of t observation was 7,38. Then, researcher compared it with tt (t table) both in degree significance 5% and 1%. Therefore, to : $tt = 7,38 > 2,00$ in degree of significance 5% and to : $tt = 7,38 > 2,66$ in degree of significance 1%. it means that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. It can be concluded that online small group discussion is effective on students' reading comprehension.
 - The students' perception of the effect of online small group discussion on students' reading comprehension on the 5 semester in English education Universitas Muslim Indonesia gave the positive perception that exactly students' perception of the researcher method in teaching English. Most of the students do like to learn English reading comprehension through small group discussion.

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