



## The Effectiveness of Short Story To Improve Students' Reading Comprehension

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Received:

1 March 2020

Accepted

1 April 2020

### ABSTRACT

This research aims to know the effectiveness of the Short Story to improve students' reading comprehension. The design of the study is experimental research that consists of two classes; experiment and control classes. The research includes pre-test and post-test. The population is 60 and the sample is 40 students. The researcher uses simple random sampling to determine the sample of the study. In the pre-test data, the mean score of the experiment class is 60,69, and the mean score of the control class is 64,1. In post-test data, the mean score of the experimental class is 86.90, and the mean score of the control class is 62,25. Based on the analysis of the pre-test data, the value of  $T_{counted}$  is 0,015, which is compared with  $T_{table}$  is 1.685 or  $T_{counted} < T_{table}$ . It can be stated that there is no effect on pre-test data. Based on the analysis of the post-test data, the value of  $T_{counted}$  is 1,801 that compared with  $T_{tabel}$  is 1.685 or  $T_{counted} > T_{table}$ ,  $H_a$  is accepted. The Short Story was effective to improve the students' reading comprehension

**Keywords:** Students' Reading Comprehension, The Short Story, Experimental research

## I. INTRODUCTION

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are the essential skills that should be studied by the students. The students hardly study English Language if they do not have the ability in the four basic skills of English Language. Reading, especially reading comprehension, is one of an important skill that should be learned by the students. Diane (Diane, 2016: 1) stated that "Reading is a multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. Learn how readers integrate to make meaning from print. Reading is making meaning from print. It requires identifying the words in print, constructs an understanding, coordinate identifying words and making meaning so that reading is automatic and accurate". Furthermore, Wooley (Wooley 2011:20) stated that "Reading

comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. The goal, therefore, is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences”.

Based on the observation, the students only track the word in the text without understanding the aim, the details and the meaning in the text. The students are silent when the lecturer ask them during the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. This problem occurs because the students do not have the ability in reading, especially reading comprehension.

To improve the students’ problem in reading comprehension, the researcher tries to use a short story because the short story does not need a long time to read and it consists of various elements and experience, offering the new words and vocabulary. Besides, the text is simple and easy to be studied by the students. Those are the factors that help the students to understand the meaning and the aim of the text.

This study in not only concern how to improve students’ ability in reading comprehension, but as a way to create a proper assessment in reading. Rosmen (2020:1) stated that “providing a sufficient assessment to the students as reliable as possible to collect the data and making decision whether the students succeed or not achieving competencies yet”.

Based on the above explanation, the researcher wants to hold the research, and the title is “ The Effectiveness of Short Story to Improve Students’ Reading Comprehension”.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

There are many advantages of using literature as a media in teaching English language. Clandfield (2003:2) stated that “ literature is a good material to show the students this unmodified language, in order to overcome the difficulties that the students will face in learning this language”. Khatib and Askri (2012:242) added that “literature enhances students’ awareness, creativity, and their thinking. However, by using literature, students will be able to expand their knowledge about other cultures”.

The short story is one of the forms in English Literature besides Drama, Novel, Poetry and Poem. Another modern style of prose is short stories. The short stories are a prose narrative of indeterminate length, but too short to be published separately as novels or novellas (qq.v.) usually are. According to Edgar Allan Poe in J.A.Cuddon (J.A.Cuddon, 2013:345) stated that “it is a story that concentrates on a unique or single effect and one in which the totality of influence is the objective. A short story may be concerned with a scene, an episode, an experience, an action, the exhibition of a character or characters, the day’s events, a meeting, a conversation, or a fantasy”.

Al Alami (Al Alami, 2016: 21) stated that “the Short story deals with essential elements that build the story itself. All of these elements take their role to make the story sensible. They are theme, plot, setting, character and point of view”.

Al-Dersi (2013:76) stated that there are several strengths of short story:

- a. Short story makes learning English as an enjoyable and attractive process for learners.
- b. Short story stimulates learners’ curiosity about the target culture and language.
- c. Short story encourages language acquisition and learners’ language awareness.

- d. Short story offers new words with the actual usage in many forms, thus learners are able to understand the meaning and the usage in the context of the new words.
- e. Short story makes the readers guess what would happen next and therefore involve them in that process actively and help them understand the meaning of new words they encounter through context.
- f. Short story offers opportunities for EFL teachers to integrate them with the productive skills like speaking and writing.
- g. Short story makes the students can bring it everywhere; it does not need much time to read it.
- h. Creative opportunities: it encourages the students to be creative students.

Based on the above explanation, it can be stated that the short story has many benefits that can be used as a media in teaching English Language for students.

In this research, The frog prince is a short story that is used by the researcher because the frog prince is one of the famous short stories and the content of the short story is easy to be learned.

### III. RESEARCH METHOD

The population was 60 students, and the sample of the study was 40 students that divided into two classes, the classes were experiment class and control class. In the experiment class, there were 20 students, and the control class was 20 students. The study conducted at the Elementary Study Program, STKIP Al Maksud Langkat.

The design of the study was true experimental with randomized subject, pre-test and post-test control group design. In gathering the data, The researcher gave a pre-test to experimental and control classes. After that, the researcher gave a treatment by teaching short story in experiment class. In the post-test, the researcher gave post-test to experiment and control class.

The researcher used a test in the form of multiple-choice as an instrument of collecting data in this study. Donald (Donald 2010:148) stated that “ Test is a set of stimuli presented to an individual to elicit responses on the basis of which a numerical score can be assigned”. The multiple-choice consists of twenty questions. The maximum score of the correct answer is 100, and the minimum score of the incorrect answer is 0.

The data was tested by validity and reliability test after the researcher gathered the data. The validity test aims to convince that the instrument has valid items. To examine the validity, the researcher used a correlation product-moment by Karl Pearson.

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2\} \{N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

Explanation :

N: The number of Students

$r_{xy}$  : Correlation between variable X and variable Y

$\sum X$  : Total score distribution X ( response values every item)

$\sum Y$  : Total score of all students

$\sum XY$  : The number of multiplication score X and score Y

In addition, the reliability test was to convince that the test was proper to be used as the instrument to collect the data. The researcher used alpha Cronbach as the reality test

$$r = \left[ \frac{k}{(k-1)} \left[ 1 - \frac{\sum \sigma_b^2}{\sigma_t^2} \right] \right]$$

Explanation :

r : Coefficient reliability of instruments

k : Number of question

$\sum \sigma_b^2$  : Total of varians item

$\sum \sigma_t^2$  : Total of varians

The criteria of reliability test

0,00- 0,20 : Very low

0,20-0,40 : Low

0,40-0,70 : Medium

0,70-0,90 : High

0,90-1,00 : Very high

To examine the hypothesis, the researcher used t-test to examine the hypothesis in the study. To know the influence of the independent variable toward the dependent variable, The researcher used t-test by using the level of significance was 95% ( $\alpha = 5\%$ ). The t-test was useful to know that the hypothesis of the study was accepted or rejected.

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{s \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}}$$

S was the variance combination calculates by using this pattern below:

$$S = \frac{(n_1 - 1)S_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)S_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}$$

Explanation :

T = distribution

$X_1$  = The average score of experiment class

$X_2$  = The average score of the control class

$N_1$  = Samples of experimental class

$N_2$  = Samples of the control class

$S_1^2$  = Variations in the value of learning result experimental class

$S_2^2$  = Variations in the value of learning result control class

#### IV. DISCUSSION

After the researcher gathered the data, the researcher divided the data into two types, namely pre-test and post-test data. In the pre-test, the total score of the experiment class was 1219, and the mean was 60,95. Next, the overall score of control class was 1282, and the mean was 64,1. The result of pre-test data is explained in the below table.

**Table 3.1**  
**The finding in the pre-test experiment class**

No	Score	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
1	50-59	7	35,00%
2	60-69	13	65,00%
	Total	20	100%

**Table 3.2**  
**The finding in the pre-test control class**

No	Nilai	Frequency Absolute	Frequency Relative
1	50-59	6	30,00%
2	60-69	14	70,00%
	Total	20	100%

In the post-test, the total score of experiment class was 1738, and the mean was 86,90. The total score of the control class was 1245, and the mean was 62,25. The result of post-test experiment and control class explained in the below table

**Table 3.3**  
**The finding in the post-test experimental class**

No	Score	Frequency Absolute	Frequency Relative
1	80-89	9	45,00%
2	89-99	11	55,00%
	Total	20	100%

**Table 3.4**  
**The finding in the post-test control class**

No	Score	Frequency Absolute	Frequency Relative
1	60-69	12	60,00%
2	70-79	7	35,00%
3	80-89	1	5,00%
	Total	20	100%

Based on the validity test, the valid questions were 18 questions. Meanwhile, the invalid questions were 2 questions. The result of the validity test depicted in the below table. The value of each item compared with the value of the  $r_{table}$ .

**Table 3.5**  
**The result of validity test**

Question	$r_{\text{counted}}$	$r_{\text{table}}$	Status
Question 1	0.750	0.444	Valid
Question 2	0.706	0.444	Valid
Question 3	0.988	0.444	Valid
Question 4	0.650	0.444	Valid
Question 5	0.610	0.444	Valid
Question 6	0.988	0.444	Valid
Question 7	0.671	0.444	Valid
Question 8	0.988	0.444	Valid
Question 9	0.988	0.444	Valid
Question 10	0.645	0.444	Valid
Question 11	0.607	0.444	Valid
Question 12	0.210	0.444	Invalid
Question 13	0.988	0.444	Valid
Question 14	0.671	0.444	Valid
Question 15	0.988	0.444	Valid
Question 16	0.125	0.444	Invalid
Question 17	0.876	0.444	Valid
Question 18	0.635	0.444	Valid
Question 19	0.988	0.444	Valid
Question 20	0.750	0.444	Valid

Based on the reliability test, the value of reliability test or ( $\alpha$ ) was = 0.755. By using the level of significant 95 % ( $\alpha= 5\%$ ), The value of  $r_{\text{table}}$  was 0.444. Based on the comparison, the data was reliable. The result of reliability test depicted in the following table.

**Table 3.6**  
**The value of reliability**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.755	20

To know the influence before giving the treatment, the researcher examined the pre-test data by using t-test. The result was the value of  $t_{\text{counted}}$  is 0,015. By using the level of significant 5%, the value of  $t_{\text{table}}$  was 1,685. Based on the analysis the pre-test data, the value of  $t_{\text{table}}$  was bigger than  $t_{\text{counted}}$ . It can be stated that there was no influence in experiment and control class.

After giving the treatment in the experiment class, the researcher prepared to collect post-test data in experimental and control classes. Based on the analysis of post-test data, the value of  $t_{\text{counted}}$  is 1,801. Using the level of significant 5 %, the value of  $t_{\text{table}}$  is 1,685. After comparing the post-test data, the value of  $t_{\text{counted}}$  was bigger than  $t_{\text{table}}$ . It could be stated that Short Story was effective to improve student's reading comprehension.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on analysis and discussion, the conclusion of the research is:

1. In the pre-test data, the total score of experiment class was 1219 and the mean was 60,95. Next, the total score of the control class was 1282 and the mean is 64,81.
2. In the post-test data, the total score of experiment class was 1738 and the mean was 86,90. Next, the total score of the control class is 1245 and the mean is 62,25.
3. Based on the post-test data, the short story was effective to improve the students reading comprehension.

Based on the above conclusion, the suggestions of the research are :

1. The usage of the short story as a media was effective to improve the students' reading comprehension because the content of the short story was easy to be understood.
2. The teacher should consider using the local story as the content of the short story.

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