

**The Correlation between Reading Comprehension and Writing Narrative Text
Ability of the Third Semester Students of English Study Program Teachers
Training and Education Faculty of University of Riau**

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Abstract

This research was intended to know how significant the correlation between reading comprehension and writing narrative text ability of the third semester students of English Study Program, Teachers Training and Education Faculty of Riau University. The researcher used reading comprehension test and writing a summary test to see how significant the correlation between the two variables. The research started on October 23th 2012.

There are two stages to do this research. First is held a try out and second is take a real test. For try out, there some questions that have to revised, because there is a question is difficult and some are too easy. So, the researcher has to change it. After that he takes a real test of reading comprehension and writing a summary.

Based on the finding, it was concluded that there was a correlation between reading comprehension and writing narrative text ability of the students and it was in moderate level.

Keywords: *reading comprehension, writing narrative text ability, narrative text*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of basic skills to be achieved during language course. Unlike speaking, reading is not something that every individual learns to do. Reading is a skill that everyone needs whether he is a student in elementary, secondary, university or adult school. Writing is very important for those who learn English as foreign or second language. Writing is the act or art of forming letters and characters on paper, wood, stone, or other material, for the purpose of recording the ideas which characters and words express, or of communicating them to others by visible signs. It means that, by writing, someone can express the ideas he/she is going to express. Basically, reading and writing affects one another. Researchers have found, when students read extensively they become better writers. Reading is a variety of genres that helps students to learn structures and language that can be transferred to their writing later on. At the same time, writing practice will help the students to build their reading skill. Especially for young learners who are working to develop their phonemic awareness and phonics skills. Phonemic awareness will develop as the learners read and write new words. Similarly, phonics skills (the ability to link sounds) are reinforced when learners read and write the same words. For intermediate learners, practice writing by their own texts will help them to analyze the texts that they read. Langer and Flihan (2000) state that correlational studies to that time showed that "better writers tend to be better readers (of their own writing as well as of other reading material), that better writers tend to read more than poorer writers, and that better readers tend to produce more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers" To prove the statement above, the researcher try to find out how significant the correlation between reading comprehension and writing narrative text ability of the third semester students of English Study Program of UR.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. The Nature of Reading

Reading is one of the four language skills that should be mastered by every student if they want to comprehend the text entirely. Reading perceives a written text in order to understand its contents. Reading is to learn unique thinking skills. Furthermore, learners must have ability to comprehend the material from text by using their own through activities which help them into an outline, be able to find comparison and contrast or cause and effect examples, following an argument in the text, choosing relevant topic under discussion. According to Nunan (1990:33) states reading is an interactive process, in which the reader constantly shuttles between bottoms-up and top-down processes. Harmer (1995:215) states that reading is often a prelude to a speaking or writing activity. In the development of the theory of reading comprehension, bottom-up and top-down processing strategies are important for readers. Moreover, Grabe (2009:47) states that aspect of reading – perception of word or comprehension is consider being a primary importance.

According to Nunan (1999:251) there are seven main purposes of reading: (1) to obtain information for some purposes or because we are curious some discussed;

(2) to obtain instructions on how to perform some tasks for our work or daily lives such as knowing how an appliance works and business runs; (3) to act in a play, play a game, do a puzzle; (4) To keep in touch with friends by correspondence or to understand the business letters, business documents and reports; (5) To know when and where something will take place; (6) To know what is happening as reported in newspapers, magazines, reports, business journals, business books, etc; (7) for enjoyment or excitement.

2. The Nature of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension instruction has evolved from teaching decoding of texts to teaching inferential and evaluative thinking (Fielding and Pearson, 1994:1). There are many different purposes for reading, sometimes to learn material, for pure pleasure, and need to follow a set of directions. Research suggests that comprehension of narrative text is better when the text is organized to a well-known story grammar (Calhoun, 1999:127).

Reading comprehension is a reading-thinking activity and as such relies for its success upon the level of intelligence of the reader, his or her speed of thinking, and ability to detect relationship (Burnes and Page, 1991:47). Reading can “expose students to models of different types of writing” (Joyce and Christie, 1989, p.105).

What you have to do with a story is, you analyze it; you break it into parts. You figure out the characters, how they’re the same and different. And the plot, how it begins with a problem and goes on until it is solved. Then you understand the story better, and you can even write your own. (Calfee, 1991; in Ming Yueh Shen, 2009)

3. The Nature of Writing Paragraph

Writing is not an easy work, because it expresses ideas in an acceptable written language, of course, requires both writers’ linguistic and communicative competences. It means that writing is not a simple activity. There are a lot of aspects involved in the process of writing. Alice Oshima and Ann Hogue (1991:3) state that there are four main stages in the writing process: prewriting, planning, writing and revising drafts.

According to Richard (1992:70) there are three stages often recognized in writing process, they are rehearsing, writing and revising. Furthermore, Gorman (in Murcia, 1979:161) also states that writing is as a complex activity. It requires a variety of skills that must be employed by the writer during his writing activity.

Hughes (1986) proposes five components of writing that must be noticed by writers in writing a composition. They are content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, mechanism.

4. The Advantages of Writing

In modern life, there are many cases that can be done through writing. Say for example, we can share information to others by writing, both via internet and correspondence, we can get a job, we can share anything to the others by our write. Beside, Harsyaf and Izmi (1995:214) in MGMP (2009) said that writing will be used

as a generic term to refer to all the various activities that involves transferring thought through paper.

5. The relationship between Reading and Writing

Coles (1998:1) said that learning to read and write is perceived to be important across countries and culture. Wilson (1981:279) states that the relationship between reading and writing based is on communication. Both processes should develop as a natural extension of the child's need to communicate.

Nelson and calfee. (1998; in Ming Yueh Sen, 2005:2) suggest that while constructing meaning for the whole text, the writer has to specify "the functional aspects of language to readers for organizing, selecting and connecting content". Noryce and Christie (1998; in Ming Yueh Sen, 2005:3), in particular, indicate that a writer utilizes the same schemata that are used for reading comprehension.

Reading and writing connections have been proposed under the constructive orientation. Nelson and Calfee (1998) in Ming Yueh Shen (2009) said that both reading and writing require learners to actively involve in constructing meaning. Readers provide personal response and feelings that can be transacted into expressive writing. In this way, reading is used to stimulate writing as a source of motivation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research deals with the correlation between two variables, namely reading comprehension as the independent and writing summary ability. Correlation research is a research to find out how significant the correlation between two variables. In this case, the variables are reading comprehension and writing narrative text ability. The population of the research was the third semester students of the English Study Program Teachers Training and Education Faculty of the University of Riau. The sample in this research was taken by using cluster sampling. According to Gay (1987:322) the sample for correlation research is selected by using an acceptable method, and 30 participants are generally considered to being minimally acceptable sample size. In this research, the populations will be grouped or clustered as classes. The writer just chooses randomly the cluster as sample. Furthermore, the writer will take two classes as the sample.

To get the data, the researcher makes two instruments. First is about reading comprehension test and second is about writing test. Before the researcher takes a real test, he tests the students by doing try out which aims to determining the appropriate material. After that, the researcher revised the items that rejected. Heaton (1975) says that index of difficulty of an item shows how easy or difficult the particular item proved in the test. The test should reach the standard level of the difficulty which is >30% and <70% determined by Heaton (1975:172). The items were accepted if the degree of difficulty was between 0.30 and 0.70. If the index of difficulty was below 0.30 (difficult) or over 0.70 (easy), they would be rejected.

To get reading comprehension result, first, the students were given a reading test. The kind of reading test is the writer give a narrative text. The respondents asked to choose the most correct answer from the given option. The total amount of the

questions is 20 items, with 80 optional answers. The test was taken from reading textbook. After the reading test finished, the researcher collect their answer sheets and try to find out mean score, standard deviation and reliability of the reading comprehension test. To get the real writing summary score of sampled student, they were given a writing test. The test is asking the students to summarize the narrative text that they have read before in their own words. The summary was containing 3 paragraphs. After collecting the data, the writing sheets were scored. The researcher asked three raters to help him correcting the students' writing. In scoring the students compositions, the writer used the scoring based on Hughes (1989:91-93). There are five aspects of writing; they are grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, organization and fluency. After getting the real score of students in writing a summary of narrative text, the writer analyzed it to find out the mean score by using descriptive statistic and then researcher try to find out the percentage of the student's ability in writing summary of narrative text by using the formula by Hatch.

To find out whether there is a significant correlation between reading comprehension and writing summary ability the researcher used the coefficient correlation's Formula by Sudjono. After finding out the result of the coefficient of correlation, the writer interpreted it whether it is very low, low, moderate, high or very high. To know whether the hypothesis of this research is accepted or rejected, it could be found by comparing the value of r_{xy} with the value in the r table of Product Moment Correlation. Before doing that step, the value of the degree of freedom had been found first by using the formula of degree of freedom by Sudjono.

When the value of degree of freedom had been known, the final step is to consult the value of the degree of freedom to r table of Product Moment with the level of significant of 5% (0.05) which means there are only five possible errors of the case observed. According to Sudjono (2004:195) if the value of $r_{xy} >$ or \geq the value of r table of Product Moment, the Null hypothesis is rejected and the Alternative hypothesis is accepted, and vice versa.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

There were two kinds of try out, namely reading comprehension and writing a summary based on narrative text. They were taken in the third semester students of English Study Program of UR on October 23th 2012. Based on the difficulty level, the items would be accepted if they were between 0.30 and 0.70. The mean score and the standard deviation of each test were also calculated in order to find out the reliability of the tests. From the result of the reading comprehension try out, it was found that there were nine items that rejected. Eight items were rejected because easy, their difficulty level were bigger than 0.70. An item was rejected because difficult, its difficulty level was under 0.30. Then, after the mean score of the reading comprehension try out was calculated, it was found that the score was 13 and its standard deviation was 3.06, so by using the formula of Heaton, the result of the reliability of this try out test was 0.53 which was classified as high. From the result of reading comprehension, there were 13 students or (43.33%) got score ≥ 80 , so their

ability level was classified as *Excellent*. Then, 9 of them (30%) were *good* in their reading comprehension test because their scores were between 60 and 79. Finally, 8 of them (26.67%) were *average* in their reading comprehension test.

To get the real writing summary score of sampled student, they were given a writing test. The test is asking the students to summarize the narrative text that they have read before in their own words. The summary was containing 3 paragraphs. The test was conducted to measure the writing summary ability of the third semester students' of English Study Program Teachers Training and Education Faculty of UR. In writing test, the researcher asked three raters to correcting the answer sheets. Based on the first rater, it was found that the mean score of the student's writing a summary is 58.93, then based on second rater, the mean score of the students' writing a summary is 57.40 and the last rater, the mean score of the students' writing a summary is 59.16. Recapitulation of the mean score of the students' ability in writing summary from the three raters is 58.53 which was classified as average. For the classification of the student' ability in writing a summary is a student (3.33%) at excellent level, 14 students (46.67%) were at *good* level, 10 students (33.33%) were at *average* level and 5 students (16.67%) were at *poor* level.

After the researcher get the score of reading comprehension and writing a summary ability, the researcher try to calculate the coefficient of the correlation between reading comprehension and writing a summary ability. The coefficient of correlation or r was found by applying the sums of calculated data above. It was found that the score of r is 0.59 which was moderate level. Because the result of the coefficient was 0.59, it could be assumed that 59% of the students succeed in increasing their writing ability through their ability in reading comprehension. Based on the result, it was found that there was a correlation between reading comprehension and writing a summary even though it was at moderate level.

After calculating the data, it was found that the value of r_{xy} is 0.59 and the value of the degree of freedom (df) is 28. Then, from the r table of Product Moment Correlation it can be seen that the value of significant 5% (0.05) is 0.361. That means the value of r_{xy} is obtained bigger than the value of r table of Product Moment. That means there is a mediocre correlation between students' ability of reading comprehension and their ability in writing a summary. It can be concluded that the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This research is supposed to find out whether or not there is a significant correlation between reading comprehension and writing narrative text ability of the students. From the computation by using Product Moment Pearson Correlation, it was found that there was a correlation between the reading comprehension and writing narrative text ability of the students and it was moderate.

There are also some suggestions that the writer gives. First, students should enlarge their knowledge of reading comprehension since it plays an essential role in increasing their writing ability. Second, the students need to understand more the aspects of reading such as main idea, detail information, vocabulary, references and

inferences. Third, the students need to understand more the aspects of writing in order to improve their ability, especially in summarizing paragraphs. Fourth, the students need to motivate themselves to improve their writing ability by using different writing technique, such as writing journal or task. Finally, the writer knows that there are still many problems coming out concerning reading and writing skills.

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