



## THE EFFECT OF TASK-BASED LEARNING ON THE STUDENTS' READING ABILITY COMPREHENSION AT EIGHTH GRADE OF SMP NEGERI 8 PEMATANGSIANTAR

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of reading comprehension is to get some skills in understanding the text. So, they can master English well and can comprehend the aspects of reading comprehension well. This purpose of this research is to find out the effect of using task-based learning on students' reading comprehension at the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar. In this study, the researcher use quasi experimental research The research sample is 31 students of class VIII-7 as the experimental class and 31 students of class VIII-8 as the control class The instrument of this research is a reading test that is conduct into two tests, pre-test and post-test The instrumentation is create into 25 multiple questions. Based on the data analysis by using Paired Sample T-test in SPSS 21 for windows, the mean of pre-test score in the experimental class was 59.226 while the mean of post-test score in the experimental class was 87.871 It can be conclude that the students' who are teach by using task-based learning as teaching method are better than students who are taught by using conventional method The significance of the test is 0.000 which is lower than the significance level that is 0.05 with 5% of degree Moreover, it is also find that the students' score is improving especially for the students in the experimental class which gained 28.645 of their average score. The conclusion based on the data task based learning is a good method to Increase the students reading comprehension and the suggestion is the teacher should be more creative in teaching and learning process.

**Keywords:** Effect, reading comprehension, task-based learning, text

### INTRODUCTION

In this globalization era, the English language is important for people's lives, because English is an international language. Therefore, English is one of the subjects in school, which has an important role as a foreign language. English is taught in Indonesian schools from elementary school level to university level. So, based on the significant case students need to master English as a whole their skills. In English there are four skills as: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Understanding written texts and the dialogue between the author and the reader are both components of reading comprehension.

Understanding words and their meanings is only one aspect of reading comprehension.

Additionally, one of the challenges students confront is reading comprehension. Since English is a foreign language, Indonesian students frequently encounter difficulties when trying to read English-language texts. Students must use a more sophisticated cognitive process to comprehend what is written, connect it to what they already know, and create an internal representation of the material they have read (Takaloo & Ahmadi, 2017). Reading is a tough skill since Indonesian pupils are different from one another. They have weak reading comprehension skills.

Based on observation during the teching practice program (PPL) conducted by

the researcher in September-January 2024-2025 at SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar, the researcher found that the students lacked in reading comprehension. They were difficult to certain the main idea of the text. The students can not comprehend the aspect of reading comprehension namely determining the main idea, locating, reference, understanding, vocabulary, making reference, and finding factual information. To solve the problems the task-based learning good method to develop the students' reading comprehension. Task-Based Learning (TBL) is one alternative approach that can be used in the teaching-learning process, especially in teaching reading comprehension. Task-Based Learning offers an alternative for language teachers, and it is based on the belief, that students may learn effectively when their minds are focused on the task, rather than on the language they are using. (Prabhu, 1987). The advantages of task-based learning are, that this method can facilitate teaching reading and focus on students so that students become active and freer to convey the ideas that are on their minds, and the students can exchange ideas and information, task-based learning can gives the student a different way of understanding language as a tool instead of as a specific goal and can help in meeting the immediate needs of the learners, and provides a framework for creating interesting classes and that can address student needs.

line with the idea above, when learning English as foreign language, students need the strategy for reading. Reading strategy is important to make the readers know about how to understanding the text. In SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar, various ways to improve students reading comprehension are still having difficulties. It means teachers need strategy to make students have ability in reading comprehension. One of the reading comprehension strategies is Task-Based Learning. A task according to Willis (1996), is a goal-oriented activity in which learners use language to achieve a real outcome. The

emphasis of a task is on exchanging meaning, not producing specific language forms. According to Carter and Nunan (2001), a task is "an activity in the classroom that requires the use of language to achieve a communicative goal.

During the internship program in SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar, the researcher also found some difficulties in learning English, especially in reading comprehension. Almost 80% of students cannot follow the lesson well. It was evident from the weekly test scores of the students who are still below KKM, that the average students gets a score of 20-70. The difficult thing when students learn to read is that they are difficult to read word by word, they have difficult finding the main idea of the reading text, and cannot get the factual information from the text. And the researcher finds the other factors that make the student cannot read a text well, and cannot master the reading skill.

The KKM standard for English lessons applied at the school is 75. And based on the score data, it turns out that there are still many of them who get a score of 70. Based on this valuable data, in 2024, 50% of students scored below the KKM (70) in language su of subjects. In England, 25% of students got a score of 75, 10% of students got a score of 80, 10% of students got a score of 85-88, and 5% of students got a score of 90.

When the researcher conducted teaching practice, several problems faced by students were related to reading English. The test results were less than satisfactory when the teacher gave an evaluation in determining the main idea in a narrative text. The data showed that: 13 out of 36 students were able to determine the main idea of the narrative text. This means that 23 students were unable to determine the main idea of the recall text. The obstacle experienced by students in reading a narrative text was that they did not know how to determine the main idea of the narrative text. In addition, only 50% of 100% of students had

adequate mastery in determining the main idea. In reading narrative text, 50% of students have an average grade of 6.5, 30% of students have an average of 7, and 20% of students have an average grade of 8.

Task-based learning, according to Harmer (2007), puts the performance of important tasks at the center of the educational process. It is based on the idea that students are just as likely to learn a language if they are focused on finishing a task as they are if they are focusing on language forms. Students are given a task to complete or an issue to solve rather than a language structure or function that needs to be learned. In other words, after giving the students a task to accomplish, the teacher simply discusses the language that was used and makes any necessary corrections or revisions based on what the students' successful completion of the assignment has demonstrated to be appropriate.

Task-Based Learning is a multidisciplinary teaching and learning technique that provides students with a variety of learning opportunities in several areas (Harden et al., 1996). In the teaching process of Task-Based Learning, the students should analyze problem by themselves and learn the necessary knowledge to solve problems. In Task-Based Learning, learning issues are offered by the case writers, an approach that has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, Task-Based Learning enables small group learning to actually happen without the need for qualified tutors.

Briefly, most previous studies show that task-based learning positively improve students' reading comprehension in language learning (Ardika, 2021; Putri, 2021; Astuti, 2020; Prasetyaningrum, 2018; Puspitasari, 2018). The most popular tool for measuring students reading comprehension by using task-based learning is pre-test and post-test. Most of the previous research using classroom action research (CAR) as a research design (Zahro, 2015; Puspitasari, 2018; Prasetyaningrum, 2018;

Astuti, 2020; Ardika, 2021). The previous studies mostly conducted on students in senior high school level (Putri, 2021; Puspitasari, 2018; Sari, 2017; Irfan, 2017; Zahro, 2015). Nevertheless, Task-Based Learning can help to encourage students to use the target language actively and meaningfully. When students are able to use the target language actively and meaningfully, students are expected to be able to comprehend the text when they read it.

In the fact, there are still many problems in the learning process of reading comprehension. Sometimes students are only required to read the text in the heart, and then answer questions related to the content of the text. It is a way that does not involve the process of thinking students so that students so that students are not involved in critical reading process, so the readers are practicing what the critical thinking theoreticians called explanation, analysis, synthesis, argumentation, interpretation, evaluation, problem solving, inference, logical reasoning and application (Brunt2005:Facione 1998).

Based on the journal "The Effect of TBL (Task-Based Learning) Method on Students' Reading Comprehension Narrative Text a study at the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 3 Satu Atap Andam Dewi in 2020/2021 Academic Year" (Vol.10 No.1 Edisi January 2022). The task-based learning method is suitable for teaching reading comprehension of narrative text. Whereas based journal "The Effect of Using Task-Based Learning Method on the Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension" by Nilam Ulami Siregar. Task-based learning can give a significant effect on students' reading achievement.

## METHODOLOGY

### 1. Design of the Research

This research design is quantitative. The quantitative method is a planned and careful problem-solving method. In quantitative systematically control data collection design, and will focus on constructing inductively concluded theories within the framework of empirically proving

hypothesis. The quantitative research imposes objective measuring to collect numeric data that are utilized the answer of questions or test the specified hypothesis.

This researcher will use a quasi-experimental! Design in conducting. A quasi-experimental design is derived from the true experimental design and incorporates a control group. However, it lacks the full control over external variabels that can influence the influence the execution of the the experiment. According to Sugiyono (2010:114) every student possesses unique characteristics related to their comprehension level, making it challenging to directly compre the experimental class with the control class. Consequently, not all influential variabels can be controlled by the researcher.

An experimental group used task-based learning while a control group used the conventional method. Sample was grouped into two classes, the first as an experimental group which taught by task-based learning method, and the second class as a control group without given any treatment. The researcher used a quasi-experimental research design. According to Alfianika (2018), quasi-experimental research is the development research of true experiment design that consists of an experimental class and control group. The researcher uses pre-test and post-test as the research design. The researcher will teach experimental class and control class. The experimental class will be given by using task-based learning while the control class using conventional method.

**Table 1. The Design of Research**

Classes	Groups	Test	Method of Teaching	Test
VIII-7	Experimental group	Pre-test	TBL Method	Post-test
VIII-8	Control group	Pre-test	Conventional Method	Post-test

From Table 1, it described VIII<sup>7</sup> as the experimental group which is taught by the TBL method and VIII-8 as the control group which was taught without the task-based learning method.

## 2. Population

Arikunto (2006:130) stated that population is formulated as the whole groups of people or objects that have been formulated clearly. The population of this study will be taken from SMP NEGERI 8 Pematangsiantar. The population of this research is all the class of eighth-grade students in SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar that is consist of two classes.

**Table 2. Population**

No	Class	Total Number
1.	VIII-1	32
2.	VIII-2	32
3	VIII-3	32
4	VIII-4	32
5	VIII-5	32
6	VIII-6	32
7	VIII-7	32
8	VIII-8	32
	Total	256

## 3. Sample

In this research, the sampling technique used is the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is undertaken for several kinds of research (Teddlie and Yu, 2007), including achieving representativeness, enabling comparisons to be made, focusing on

specific, unique issues or cases, to generate theory through the gradual accumulation of data from different sources.

The researcher chooses VIII-7 as the experimental class, and VIII-8 as the control class, because according to the English teacher in this school, these classes are appropriate to become the object of this research.

**Table 3. Data of Sample in The Research**

Classes	Groups	Male	Female	Total
VIII <sup>7</sup>	Control class	15	16	31
VIII <sup>8</sup>	Experimental Class	15	16	31
<b>Total</b>				<b>62</b>

## 4. Technique of Data Collection

The technique of collecting will be taken by a pre-test, treatment, and post-test as follows:

### 1) Pre-test

A pre-test is a test that has been given by the researcher to students' to know students' reading comprehension before the researcher applies the instrument.

### 2) Treatment

The experimental group and control group were taught by using the same materials but a different method of teaching. In the experimental group, students were taught by using TBL and in the control group, the students were taught with traditional method. The treatment was conducted after the administration of the pre-test. Both groups were taught in 2 meetings including pre-test and post-test.

### 3) Post Test

The post-test was administered after the treatments have been completed. The administration of this test was meant to find out the differences in the mean score of both the experimental and control group. It was aimed to compare both groups to know the effect of teaching TBL on students' reading comprehension.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Results

Based on the explanation of the analysis above, the researcher can conclude that there is an effect on students reading comprehension with using task-based learning method, with research data and calculation below:

1.  $N_a$  and  $N_b = 31$

The experiment class consisted of 31 students and the control class 31 students. Researchers will include research data score in the finding of this thesis, namely:

- a. Pre-test (experiment class), the lowest score of pre-test is 40.0 and the highest score is 64. From the data, it shows the students still have low in reading comprehension.
  - b. Post-test (experiment class), after get the treatment student's score are increase significantly. The lowest score is 80, and the highest score is 100.
  - c. Pre-test (control class), the lowest score of pre-test is 44 and the highest score is 56. From the data, it shows the students have low reading comprehension.
  - d. Post-test (control class), the lowest score of post-test 52 and the highest score is 72. From the data, it shows the students still have low in reading comprehension.
2. The validity test result of Experimental Class is 0.38 (sufficient), while the

reliability test result of Experimental Class is 0.55 (sufficient).

3. The validity test result of Control Class is 0.6 (low), while the reliability test result of Control Class is 0.75 (good)
4. The researcher found the mean score experiment class from the pre-test and post-test is 59.226 and 87.871
5. The researcher found the mean score of control class from the pre-test and post-test is 50.839 and 65.032
6. Standard deviation of experiment class is 7.5257
7. Standard deviation of control class is 6.9158
8. Pairs 1 and 2 on the results of the paired sample t test, obtained the value of sig. (2 tailed)  $0.000 < 0.05$ . It can be concluded that there was an average difference for the pre-test and post-test in the experimental class using the task-based learning method was compared with the pre-test and post-test in the control class.

### B. Discussion

Reading comprehension is important skill. In this globalization era, reading is one of the skills that are considered as the most important activity to get information, especially for students in learning English. The function of reading not only read, but the students should comprehend the text that they read. They can find the main idea, understanding vocabulary, making inference, locating reference and finding factual information.

TBL (Task-Based Learning) is a method to teaching reading that found by Willis. Task-based learning is a learning experiment in which the students experience the language they have learned by completing tasks. Task-based learning required the students to be more active in the process of learning because task-based learning method is the method that give the students the freedom to express their idea.

Based on the research finding results from the implementation of task-learning method (TBL) by researcher in English subject in SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar variable independent significantly affects variable dependent. It can be seen based on the output of Pairs 1 and 2 on the results of the paired sample t test, obtained the value of sig. (2 tailed) of 0.000 < 0.05. It can be concluded that there was an average difference for the pre-test and post-test on the experimental class using the task based learning method was compared with the pretest and post-test in the control class.

The comparison between the pre-test and post-test of experiment that are treated using task based learning method with control class (did not receive special treatment), there are differences in the value of learning outcomes which is quite significant at 14.452, where the value of the experimental class students those who use the task based learning method are higher or an increase of 14.452 compared to the control class (no special treatment). Thus, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted, namely "There is a significant effect students' reading ability comprehension in narrative text in the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar Academic year 2025/2026".

The result above was relevant to the research conducted by Asriani (2020) where stated that there task based learning (TBL) method can improve the students' reading comprehension. TBL method was suitable for teaching reading comprehension. The other research conducted by Sariannur (2017) where stated students were easier to developed their reading comprehension by applying the TBL method.

Based on the explanation above the researcher's experience showed that task based learning can give the good effect on the students' reading comprehension. It can be seen from the post-test in experimental and control class, Students were more motivated to improvetheir reading comprehension compared to conventional media only relying

on books. Students were more active when using task based learning method compared to using conventional method that the teacher as a center of process learning. So it can be concluded that the use of task based learning method is more effective on students' reading ability comprehension in the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research entitled "The Effect of Task-Based Learning On The Students' Reading Ability Comprehension At The Eighth Grade of SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar" the following things were found:

1. Students reading comprehension especially in reading comprehension about narrative text at the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar before implement the task based learning method 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 59.226 and in control class 50.839. So, after the researcher gave treatments in experimental class that teaching reading comprehension using task-based learning method is better rather than conventional method. It can be seen from the result of computation in post- test. It indicates that the mean score of experimental group is 87.871 it is higher than the control mean which is 65.032. The data above show that there is significant difference between the experimental classes and controlled classes.
2. Based on the output of Pairs 1 and 2 on the results of the paired sample 1 test, obtained a sig. (2 tailed) value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , for the experimental class that was given treatment, namely using the task based learning method while the control class was

not given any treatment. The pre-test and post-test of experiments that are treated using task based learning have the average students learning reading ability with average outcomes students of 28.6452 and the control class 14.1936. It means effect of task based learning method is more significant on student's reading comprehension, who have differences and have increased at number 14.452 compared to the control class using conventional method (no special treatment). It means also that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. It can be concluded that task based learning significantly affects student's reading ability comprehension at the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar.

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