



Influence of Reading Strategies and Interests on Exposition Writing Skills in Higher Education Students

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Abstract

The objective of the present study was to investigate the impact of reading strategies and reading interest on students' exposition writing skills. An experimental research design was adopted, whereby the experimental group was instructed using reading strategies, while the control group received no such instruction. Additionally, the participants were further subdivided into groups based on their level of reading interest, with high and low interest groups identified. The study population comprised first-semester students, and a sample of 30 individuals was selected based on their performance on expository writing tests. Data on reading interest were obtained through the administration of a questionnaire. Data analysis was performed using ANOVA, with the aid of the SPSS software. Results indicate that students who received instruction in reading strategies demonstrated superior exposition writing skills, compared to those who received no such instruction. Additionally, students with high reading interest exhibited better writing skills than those with low reading interest. Notably, an interaction was found between learning techniques and reading interest, highlighting the combined influence of these factors on the development of exposition writing skills.

Keywords: *Reading strategies, reading interest, exposition text*

1. Introduction

In learning Indonesian, it is inseparable from reading and writing skills. In fact, the biggest and fundamental problem in learning Indonesian today is the problem with reading and writing skills and habits. Currently, reading and writing skills get a larger portion than other skills. This is done considering the lack of reading and writing culture for students.

It is widely held that a positive correlation exists between the development of reading and writing skills. The ability to read proficiently is recognized as a crucial factor in promoting lifelong learning, and it has been established that reading can serve a myriad of purposes. For instance, reading can facilitate the construction of new concepts, aid in the development of an extensive vocabulary, impart knowledge, contribute to personal growth and enrichment, enhance intellectual capacity, deepen empathy, and serve as a source of pleasure.

Moreover, reading is an essential tool for understanding and addressing social issues, as it allows for the exploration of diverse perspectives and experiences. In this way, reading can contribute to the development of a strong sense of self, foster critical thinking, and promote intercultural understanding.

In light of these benefits, it is crucial that educators prioritize the promotion of reading skills alongside writing skills in the curriculum. By providing students with opportunities to engage with a range of texts, educators can support their development as lifelong learners and cultivate their ability to communicate effectively, both in writing and speech.

This is in line with the opinion of Tarigan [1] which explains that in writing activities, writers must utilize graphology, language structure, and vocabulary. This means that a writer is required to have a fairly high intellectual level. Writers must understand the structure and elements of language,

master a lot of vocabulary, have the ability to organize and organize ideas coherently and logically, and present them in a variety of written languages according to the current writing rules. Al-Qarni [2] explained that reading helps develop thinking and clarify ways of thinking, increase one's knowledge, and improve memory and understanding. By reading often, people can master many words and various types and models of sentences.

Nadia (in [3]) once said that it is impossible for a person to become a writer or a writer if he does not like to read. Reading is like accumulating memory, the more we read like having a collective memory, the more insight into writing capital. This is in line with the words of Kertanegara (in [3]) who said that the tradition of writing would not be achieved without being preceded by the tradition of reading. Thus, it can be concluded that reading activities are very useful and can make a person develop.

However, the reality that occurs in the field, especially for students in higher education, is that there are still few students who have a high interest in reading. Low reading habits certainly affect vocabulary mastery, because one of the benefits of reading is to increase vocabulary. In addition to facts about reading interest, facts on the ground regarding students' writing skills are still not in line with expectations. Students still have difficulty in expressing their ideas into a coherent writing.

Writing is considered the most challenging of the four language skills, even for native speakers. Wikanengsih [4] suggests that writing ability is related to one's cognitive ability. Nurgiyantoro [5] notes that writing requires mastery of linguistic elements and content, both of which must be integrated to produce a coherent essay. Tarigan [1] adds that writing is a form of indirect communication, distinct from face-to-face communication.

Exposition is a text that expresses opinions and thoughts from the author's point of view and then serves to make others believe that the argument is true and in accordance with the facts [6]. Meanwhile, according to Rosmaya [7], exposition text is defined as a text that describes and explains a real subject so that readers can broaden their views and knowledge. From the above opinion, it can be concluded that the exposition text is a text that contains facts or information that aims to add insight or knowledge of the reader.

An innovative method or technique is needed to overcome these problems, one of which is a reading strategy which is a cooperative learning method. The technique emerged from research on cooperative learning and wait time. This Think, Pair, and Share technique also allows students to share information at the same time [8]. This technique is an effective way to change the pattern of discourse in the classroom. This approach assumes that all discussions need to be conducted in a whole group setting, and has built-in procedures to give students more time to think, respond, and to help each other [9].

The reading strategy is one of the innovative cooperative-based learning models. This technique gives students the opportunity to work alone as well as collaborate with others. Optimizing student participation is an advantage of the reading strategy. Students in addition to issuing individual abilities also develop their ability to work together in groups to get maximum results. Reading strategies are able to improve exposition writing skills, so that the works produced are of higher quality and creative. Reading strategies affect the ability to develop the quality of expository writing written by students.

Research using this reading strategy method has also been widely carried out with various backgrounds in the field of study, such as Elhefni et. al. [10], Abidah [11], Widiastuti [12] with a research entitled "Improving Reading and Writing Narrative Writing Skills with the Application of Methods. Cooperative Learning Types of Reading Strategies". This study states that the use of cooperative methods in the type of reading strategy in learning can improve student learning outcomes in reading and writing narrative essay skills. In addition, the implementation of cooperative learning with the type of reading strategy can also increase student activity and cooperation. This certainly convinces researchers to use this learning technique to improve students' exposition writing skills in Higher Education.

This study aims to analyze differences in expository writing skills between students who receive learning by using reading strategies with think-pair-share techniques and students who receive learning without using reading strategies for level 1 students. This study also aims to analyze differences in expository writing abilities. between students who have high reading interest and students who have low reading interest. In addition, to analyze whether there is an interaction between learning techniques

and reading interest on students' exposition writing skills. This research is important to do because based on observations in the field, it was found that students' writing skills were still low.

2. Methods

The method used in this research is experimental. The experimental class participated in learning to write an exposition using the think, pair, share technique. Meanwhile, in the control class, students participated in learning to write expository texts using conventional techniques commonly used by lecturers. This research was conducted at Padang State University, in the odd semester of 2021/2022. The population that is the subject of the study is level 1 students by determining the sample with random sampling technique to determine the class to be sampled.

The data collection technique in this study was by conducting pre-test and post-test in the control and experimental classes to analyze learning techniques that were more effectively used in writing expositions. Meanwhile, to find out students' reading interest, it is done by using a reading interest questionnaire test. Data analysis in this study uses statistical techniques because the data taken is quantitative data, while the analysis used is a two-way analysis of variance technique. Before analyzing the data, the analysis prerequisite tests were carried out including: normality test and homogeneity test as stated by Arikunto [13]. The data analysis technique in this study used Anova.

3. Results and Discussion

This research was conducted in several stages. The initial stage in this study was a pre-test to determine the students' initial ability in writing exposition skills. After the pre-test was carried out, the students were treated using their respective learning techniques which were analyzed in the control and experimental classes. The next stage is to do a post-test in the experimental and control classes to analyze whether the ability to write exposition in each class has increased or vice versa. To find out students' reading interest, a questionnaire test was conducted, each student from both classes filled out a questionnaire about reading interest.

Prior to conducting the Anova test, it is necessary to perform two tests: the normality test of the data distribution and the homogeneity of variance test. In this study, normality was tested on pre- and post-test data for students' exposition

writing abilities using the SPSS program. The criteria for normality is met if the value of sig. (2-tailed) obtained from the calculation results is greater than the 5% alpha level (sig (2-tailed) > 0.050). The normality test revealed that both the control and experimental groups' data were normally distributed, with significance values of 0.226 and 0.124 for the control group pre-test and post-test, respectively, and 0.236 and 0.294 for the experimental group pre-test and post-test, respectively. Since the normality assumption was met, the next step is to proceed with parametric statistical analysis.

The next requirement for analysis is the homogeneity test of variance. This test assesses the suitability of variance between the conventional learning techniques used in the control group and the reading strategy techniques used in the experimental group, with a significance level of 0.05. The Homogeneity of Variances (Levene Statistics) test was used to perform the homogeneity test. The calculation results indicated that the ability to write expositions in both groups had the same variance, indicating that both groups were from the same population. The test criteria are that if the significance value (sig.) is greater than or equal to 0.05, the data is considered homogeneous or has the same variance. In this study, the homogeneity test resulted in a significance value of (sig.) = 0, indicating that the variance in both groups was the same.

The research sample group satisfies the requirements of normal distribution and homogeneous variance. Thus, the next step is to proceed with hypothesis testing using ANOVA statistical analysis. This involves inputting data on the ability to write exposition, reading interest, and learning techniques, followed by testing the hypothesis with a two-way ANOVA.

Table 1. ANOVA Test Results

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2.385a	3	0.795	27,753	0.000
Intercept	5.753	1	5.753	200,853	0.000
Technique_learning	2.050	1	2.050	71.572	0.000
Interest_Reading	0.200	1	0.200	6,966	0.011
Technique_learning * Interest_Reading	0.096	1	0.096	3.358	0.073
Error	1.318	46	0.029		
Total	9.550	50			
Corrected Total	3,702	49			

a. R Squared = .644 (Adjusted R Squared = .621)

3.1 Analysis of the Effect of Learning Techniques

The first hypothesis states that there are differences in the ability to write expositions between students who are taught using think-pair-share strategies and conventional techniques. The difference is the ability to write exposition of students who are taught using reading strategies is better than those taught without reading strategies. This is based on the test results in the Test of Between-Subject Effects table above which is the main table that presents the results of the hypothesis proposed by the researcher. From the table, it is known that the p-value or sig for the category of learning techniques is 0.000 (<0.05), then the hypothesis is accepted, meaning that there is a significant effect of learning techniques on writing skills. Therefore,

The results obtained are in line with the research that has been done previously by Rahmah [14], that students who are taught using reading strategies have an average score increase of 20 from after being treated with this technique. In line with research conducted by Astini et al. [15], that students who were taught using reading strategies also experienced a positive increase.

3.2 Analysis of the Effect of Reading Interest

The second hypothesis in this study asserts that there are differences in the ability to write expositions between students with high and low reading interests, with higher reading interest leading to better writing abilities. The Test of Between-Subject Effects table presents the results of this hypothesis test, with the p-value or sig for the technical category learning being 0.011 (< 0.05). Since the hypothesis is accepted, it

can be concluded that there is a significant effect of reading interest on the ability to write exposition, and that there are indeed differences in writing abilities between students with high and low reading interests.

Nasser [16] conducted a study which supports the findings of the current research. The study showed that students who received a reading program had a value of 0.50 compared to students who did not receive the program with a value of 0.18. This demonstrates that developing reading habits based on interest can positively impact students' academic achievement.

Encouraging reading interest is important for students' academic achievement, and parents can play a significant role in supporting their children's interest in reading. Increasing the frequency of reading activities at home can enhance reading interest, and families with limited financial resources can use public libraries. According to Randsdell [17], parental support is crucial in promoting reading interest, and encouraging reading activities at home is one way to achieve this. Such efforts are expected to result in positive outcomes in terms of academic achievement, knowledge, and insights.

3.3 Interaction Analysis between Learning Techniques and Reading Interest

The third hypothesis states "there is an interaction effect between learning techniques and reading interest on the ability to write exposition". Based on the test results contained in the Test of Between-Subject Effects table, the p-value for the interaction of learning techniques and reading interest is 0.073 (> 0.05), so the conclusion is that there is an

insignificant difference in the interaction of learning techniques (think-pair-share). and conventional techniques) with interest in learning (high-low). Thus, it can be said that there is an insignificant interaction between learning strategies and reading interest on the ability to write expositions.

4. Conclusions

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the ability to write expositions when using reading strategies and when not using them. Students who were taught to use reading strategies showed better writing skills compared to those who were taught without them. Additionally, students who had a high interest in reading demonstrated better exposition writing skills than those who had low interest. This indicates that reading interest plays a significant role in influencing students' writing abilities.

Moreover, there is an interaction effect between learning techniques and reading interest on students' exposition writing skills. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers should use reading strategies when teaching expository writing, especially for students who have low reading interest. Additionally, parents should actively support and encourage their children's reading interest at home, which can help improve their exposition writing skills. Overall, the findings of this study highlight the importance of both learning techniques and reading interest in enhancing students' expository writing skills.

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