

# USING TASK - BASED LEARNING TO IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMA NEGERI 1 BANGKINANG IN READING NARRATIVE TEXTS

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**Abstract:** This classroom action research aimed to describe and to investigate whether Task-Based Learning can improve the students reading ability at SMA Negeri 1 Bangkinang. The participants were 31 students of the second year students of SMA Negeri 1 Bangkinang. The data were collected through observation, field note and tests. The research findings can be briefly explained as follows. First, the students reading ability could be improved by using Task-Based Learning method. Before the research was done, the average score of the students reading ability was only 50.4 (pre-test). After doing the research, it increased to 61.1 (post-test 1), and to 77.2 (post-test 2). Second, the students' interest and motivation also increased. These can be seen from the increasing of students' awareness in comprehension the texts. Third, in teaching learning process, students can work together, discuss, share information to get the objectives. Therefore, it can be concluded that the application of Task Based Learning is significantly effective in improving the students reading comprehension ability on Narrative Texts at SMAN 1 Bangkinang.

**Keywords:** *Task Based Learning method, Students' Reading Ability, Narrative Text*

## INTRODUCTION

According to the School Based Curriculum (KTSP 2006), English language course is a compulsory subject at every level of education units ranging from elementary school through high school level. The English subject consists of four skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading skill has become the first priority to be taught between the four skills since communicative approach implantation has been influential in foreign language learning.

KTSP recommend types of text for senior high school, the curriculum recommends twelve types of text: recount, narrative, procedural, descriptive, report, news items, analytical exposition, persuasive exposition, spoof, explanation, discussion and review (Depdiknas, 2006b). In this research, the writer focuses on teaching narrative texts.

Based on the writers interviewing with the English teacher of SMAN 1 Bangkinang, the students of SMAN 1 Bangkinang faced some problems in reading. The student's motivation was low reading. In addition, the students could not comprehend the text that they learn. They knew only a few vocabularies. Students got bored in reading. From the teacher, this is due to inefficient learning media and strategies used. The teacher only used the same strategy for different materials. On the other hand, different materials had different difficulties. Therefore, the teachers should determine the best strategy to teach in every material.

According to Willis (1996) most of the tasks that the teacher just were imaginative and were usually given at the end of learning, so that teaching became less communicative and students were not motivated to learn. Willis (1996) suggested the tasks of learning activities as a major focus within the framework of the methodology of teaching are communicative and creating the real purpose of the use of the language itself and provide a natural context of the language being studied. It is expected that students will more quickly understand the context of the language they are learning and encourage student interest in learning. For it, Willis (1996) suggested the use of "Task Based Learning" which provides a variety of tasks as the focus of the use of alternative teaching methodologies that can be used through listening, reading, speaking and writing.

Based on the problem above, the writer uses a task-based learning to help students solve the problems within reading. According to Joseph E. Beck, Jack Mostow and Juliet Bey said that the teacher can improve children's reading comprehension by using Task-Based Learning. Task Based Learning can solve students' problems in reading comprehension. In this case the writer uses a customized narrative text based on the syllabus of class XI senior high school.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The participants of this research were the second year students of SMA Negeri 1 Bangkinang. The writer chose class of XI Science 1 as the sample class. The number of the students was 31 students.

The data collection instruments for the students are reading test, observation sheets and field notes. The writer administered Pre-Test to the students before conducting cycle I. The test consisted of 35 items and the students are asked to comprehend the narrative texts. The students were asked to comprehend seven components of reading comprehension, namely; finding main idea, finding factual information, guessing meaning of vocabulary in context, identifying reference, making inference, identifying generic structures and language features of narrative text. The Pre-Test was aimed at finding out the students' basic score in reading narrative texts.

The writer gives treatment Task-Based Learning as a way to improve the students' ability in comprehending narrative texts. The writer believed that the use of Task-Based Learning method is an effective way to solve the students' problems in reading comprehension. In addition to this, together with the collaborator, the writer prepared the lesson plans for two cycles of treatment, topics that would fit the the school curriculum, and also a set of observation sheets and field notes to note specific things, weakness, strengths or suggestions related to teaching and learning process. The writer used the score in Pre-Test as a guidance for her to conduct this research.

The steps of using Task-Based Learning strategy were drawn as follows; (a) explain the purpose of the Task-Based Learning, (b) decide the topic of the reading material, (c) explain the procedure of the Task-Based Learning in learning reading, (c) divide students into group and tell students to sit in their group, (c) give the pre-task and explore the topic for today and then try to make students feel free and enjoy today's learning students will feel engaged, (d) ask students to work in group and doing the task, make plan and report about their work in the group, (d) doing classroom discussion and check students work about the material and make sure students understand and realize their mistake so they can make it correct and (e) ask students to practice their new vocabularies written and orally.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The collaborator observed both the teacher and the students' activities during the treatment through observation sheets and field notes. The collaborator analyzed the students' progress during treatment. The collaborator also gave comments about the teacher's performance and added any other improvement in using Task-Based Learning method in the classroom.

The writer administered post-test I at the end of cycle I. The purpose of administering post-test was to know the students' progress in comprehending narrative texts after the implementation of Task-Based Learning method. Post-Test 1 was consisted of five narrative texts and each text consisted of 7 questions based on reading comprehension components. The writer decided to continue to the cycle 2 if the result of the quantitative and qualitative data in the cycle 1 did not show a significant improvement yet. In this cycle 2, the writer still used Task-Based Learning method based on the result of reflection in the cycle 1 to improve the ability of students in reading skill. The writer also administered post-test II at the end of cycle II.

In addition to this, the quantitative data of this study was collected through the multiple choices test (Pre-Test, Post-Test I, and Post-Test II), and the qualitative data was collected by the recording of activity during the treatment by using the observation sheets and field notes.

The pre test was administered before the respondents were given treatment by using Task Based Learning. The number of students who took the test was 31 students. As assumed before, the pre test score was low in average. It was 54.94. It means that the treatment was needed to increase students' reading because the average score of pre test was lower than the minimum score of successful learning process.

The result of pre test shows that no student was able to reach the levels of excellent and very poor. It means that the students ability in comprehending text were poor before teaching by implementing Task Based Learning method. There were 3 students or 9.67% of the students who could reach the good level. Then

48.38% of the students were in fair level, and 13 students (41.94%) were in poor level.

The quantitative data in cycle 1 was collected by looking at the progress that students' got through two treatments. In the end of cycle I, Post-Test 1 was given as the evaluation.

In cycle 1, the result of qualitative data shows the unsatisfying score. It is because their mean score had not achieved KKM (75). The students' score was the highest in excellent level (2 students or 6.45%). There were 20 students (64.52%) in good level. Then, five students (16.13%) were in Fair level in which no student fell into very poor level. Even though the students' mean score was higher than minimum criteria of successful learning process, this cycle could not be considered successful. This was caused by most of the students who were still passive during learning process.

The activeness of the students in cycle 1 shows that the activity of paying attention and doing making group, the number of students doing the activities were same, that there were 25 students (71.43 %) in the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, while in the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting there were 29 students (82.86 %). While there were only 28 students (80 %) who were doing task in the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting while there 30 students (85.71%) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. While sharing ideas activity, there were 16 students (45.71 %) sharing ideas in the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting and 19 students (54.29 %) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Then deciding and writing the information activity, there were 12 students (34.29%) in the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting and 15 students (42.86 %) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The last activity, reporting to class, there were 8 students (22.86%) in the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting while there 10 students (28.5 %) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Seeing the percentage of the students' activeness above, we may conclude that the activeness of students increased by 8.57 % with total average percentage was 62.86%.

Based on students' score in pre test and post test 1, there was a significant improvement. The average score in pre test was 50.4 (fair), while the average scores in post-test I was 61.2 (fair). It means that the students' achievement in reading was better after implementing Task-Based Learning (Creative Task) which

would improve the reading ability of the second year students of SMAN 1 Bangkinang. Unfortunately, the students' score in post test 1 could not achieve the standard score (KKM) at SMAN 1 Bangkinang; namely 75. The observation sheet of students show that some student did not follow the procedures of Task-Based Learning (Creative Task) completely. Only some students follow all procedure well. Therefore, the writer decided to conduct cycle II in order to improve the students' ability in reading narrative texts.

In short, almost all of the students got involved in Task-Based Learning (Creative Task) method. The teacher should give the students more explanation and practice in order to be active and enthusiasm in using Task-Based Learning (Creative Task) method.

Therefore, referring to the result of observation above, the writer had to rearrange the planning in taking action, so that an improvement could be achieved by students. Then, the writer formulated the result of reflection that would be implemented at the second cycle, the way of teaching writing to the students was still same as before, she still used Task-Based Learning (Creative Task) method..

The result of cycle 2 showed a significant improvement. There were 6 students or 19.35% achieved the good to excellent level. Then, there were 23 students or 74.20% that reached the good level. Then, there were 2 students or 6.45%. Then, both of level were poor and very poor none of students. This evidence showed that the writer has been success to help students science program (IPA 1) at SMA 1 Bangkinang to increase the students' ability reading comprehension narrative text by using Task based learning. The writer also analyzed the students' ability in answering the question.

For the result of observation sheet and field notes, it was found that the teacher's and student's activities in teaching and learning process was obviously better than cycle 2. The progression could be seen on observation sheets and field notes that collaborator made during the class activities for the third meeting to the fourth meeting.

The collaborator observed the researcher applying Creative Task in teaching narrative text. The teacher observation results revealed that the teacher

typically focused on conducting the teaching steps methodically. Below is the table showing teacher's activity during teaching and learning process in the class.

As shown on the table, the English teacher pointed out that the researcher conducted the steps in teaching narrative text by using Creative Task in every cycle. The improvement of students' reading ability from cycle 1 to cycle 2 can be seen as on the table below:

**The Improvement of Students' Reading Ability from Pre- Test, Post-Test 1 and Post-Test 2**

Score	Ability Level	Pre- Test	Post- Test 1	Post- Test 2
81-100	Excellent	0 %	6.45%	19.35%
61-80	Good	9.67%	64.52%	74.20%
41-60	Fair	48.38%	16.13%	6.45%
21-40	Poor	41.94%	12.90%	0.00%
0-20	Very poor	0 %	0.00%	0.00%

The students' mean score in pre test was 50.4, while in post test 1 increased to be 61.17, and in the post test 2 became 77.22. Looking at students' mean score from pre-test to post-test I and post-test II, it can be concluded that the students' mean score has achieved the standard score (KKM>75). It shows that the applying of Task Based Learning strategy has been successfully improved the students' reading comprehension ability in narrative texts.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The aim of this research is to find out whether the use of Task Based Learning especially Creative task in teaching reading can improve student's achievement. From the research that has been done at grade XI Science 1 at SMAN 1 Bangkinang, it could be concluded that the use of Task Based Learning could improve students reading ability in comprehending narrative text. It could be seen in the pre-test there was no student who reach KKM, which is 75, with their average score is only 50.37. While in the post-test 1, the average score increases

into 61.2. And it has more improvement in Post-test 2 with their average score is 77.22 with 25 of 31 students reached the KKM.

In addition to this, this method also helped improve the students' interest and motivation to read, especially in narrative text. It could be seen from the increasing number of participants involved in class activities from the first meeting to the end of the cycle.

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