

# **IMPROVING THE READING COMPREHENSION OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMPN 2 TELUK KUANTAN THROUGH TASK-BASED LEARNING METHOD**

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**Abstract:** *This research is aimed to find out whether or not the use of Task-Based Learning method can improve the reading comprehension of the second year students of SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan. The type of the research is a classroom action research. The subject was class VIII<sub>5</sub> which consists of 31 students. Test and observation sheets were used as instruments to collect the data. Test used to measure the students' progress in every cycle during the classroom action research. This test consisted of pre-test and post-test. Observation sheets used to observe the teacher's and students' activities in the classroom. The level of achievement in this research was 75, based on the standard minimum criteria of achievement of English subject in SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan. The research finding showed that the implementation of Task-Based Learning method could improve the reading comprehension of the students at the first and second cycle. Based on the data analysis, the students' scores improved from 59,03 in pre-test to 77,90 in post-test. Thus, the implementation of Task-Based Learning method could improve the reading comprehension of the second year students of SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan.*

**Key Words:** *Task-Based Learning Method, Reading Comprehension*

# **PENGGUNAAN DARI METODE TASK-BASED LEARNING METHOD UNTUK MENINGKATKAN PEMAHAMAN BACAAN PADA SISWA TAHUN KEDUA DI SMPN 2 TELUK KUANTAN**

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**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah penggunaan metode Task-Based Learning dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa tahun kedua SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas. Subjek penelitian adalah kelas VIII5 yang terdiri dari 31 siswa. Tes dan lembar observasi digunakan sebagai instrumen untuk mengumpulkan data. Tes digunakan untuk mengukur kemajuan siswa dalam setiap siklus selama penelitian tindakan kelas. Tes ini terdiri dari pre-test dan post-test. Lembar observasi digunakan untuk mengamati kegiatan guru dan siswa di kelas. Tingkat pencapaian dalam penelitian ini adalah 75, berdasarkan kriteria standar minimum pencapaian mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris di SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan metode Task-Based Learning dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa pada siklus pertama dan kedua. Berdasarkan analisis data, skor siswa meningkat dari 59,03 pada pre-test menjadi 77,90 pada post-test. Dengan demikian, penerapan metode Task-Based Learning dapat meningkatkan pemahaman bacaan siswa tahun kedua SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan.

**Kata Kunci:** Efek, Strategi Hot Potato, Pemahaman Membaca

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is a process of capturing information and meaning from a text. Reading is also defined as way to gain knowledge and perspective. Through reading, readers can get many of information which can enlarge their knowledge more and more. A reader gets messages from the text about what the writer intends to convey. The ultimate objective of reading is Comprehension (Nation, 2005; Spear-Swerling, 2006). Being able to comprehend a text is a must to do. Through reading comprehension, a reader can have an ability to read a text, to process it and then try to comprehend it.

According to Pardo (2004), the teaching of reading comprehension is essential to prepare students with basic reading skills for gaining information and knowledge from reading more effectively. So it means, it is very important to master reading comprehension especially for a student. By mastering reading comprehension, students are expected to get main ideas and the detail information from the text. But, the students are also expected to get chance to take out meaning from specific sign in the text as well. For another reason, reading skill is used in the final examination for third grade. Students must have a good preparation and understanding of reading comprehension if they really want to graduate from the school and pass the exams with good results. By having a good understanding in reading comprehension, it will make them easier to get knowledge from a specific text.

Badan National Standar Pendidikan or BNSP (2006) states that students in middle school must learn reading comprehension since reading is a skill that will help them to get information. One of the main objectives of English lessons at this level of education is comprehension of various short functional types of text, monologues and also essays. The types of the text are procedure text, descriptive text, recount text, narrative text, and report text. In this case, the writer focused on descriptive text. There were some reasons why the writer choose descriptive text as the reading material. First, based on syllabus of the second year students of Junior High School in curriculum 2013 students are expected to be able to comprehend descriptive text. Second, descriptive text is one of the text that students will face in daily test, mid-test, semester-test, and final examination. Third, we can find many texts of descriptive text within magazines, newspapers, and bulletin.

In this case, based on the preliminary observation on the teaching-learning process in SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan, the writer found that there are some problems in students' reading comprehension. The students still faced some difficulties in comprehending English texts. It was because of their lacks of vocabularies that gave obstacles for them to understand the text or to get the meaning of' the text. They had difficulties with unfamiliar words in the text which led them to low understanding of the sentences, general ideas, main ideas in the text; they got difficulties in identifying the implicit and explicit information of the text. Besides, many students still had low motivation in reading class.

Over 75 percent of the students gained low score in the mid-test and semester test. They were failed to get satisfying score in reading class. They were failed to reach Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement (KKM). It happened because the students of class VIII5 SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan still had little understanding in reading comprehension. The wrong chosen method by the teacher sometimes could be a reason to lead the students to the passive reading. The passive strategy made the students bored

and unlikely interested in reading. There was no way for them to have little intention and emotion that would lead them to fully comprehend the reading.

Regarding to the problem faced by the students in learning reading comprehension, the teacher must apply an appropriate strategy that would be effective to solve the students' problems. By applying appropriate method, the students were expected to have more motivation, confident and self-esteem in learning reading especially descriptive text in order to make the students improve their reading comprehension. The objective of this study is to find out whether Task-Based Learning method can improve the reading comprehension of the second year students of SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan.

Poorahmadi (2012) states that Task-Based Learning method can enhance EFL students' motivation in reading comprehension because task-based learning creates a cooperative learning environment for students and make students involved in developing the language communicatively and cognitively. Task-Based Learning method is entirely centered on the students during teaching and learning process. Starting from the beginning to the end of the lesson, the students get to complete their tasks either in groups or individually. Task-Based Learning method also provides students more opportunities to prove their thinking through their actions. In Task-Based activities, students are fully motivated to accomplish the tasks in interesting and challenging way in order to make them to take risk, make efforts and take more responsibility for their own learning.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The type of the research was Classroom Action Research. The research was conducted at SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan which is located at Tuanku Tambusai Street, Beringin, Teluk kuantan, Kuantan Tengah District, Kuantan Singingi Regency, Riau Province. The research data was collected from 14 September to 12 October 2018. The subject of the research was the second year students of SMPN 2 Teluk kuantan. The writer did the research on class VIII<sub>5</sub> which consisted of 31 students.

### **Data Collecting Technique**

There were two kinds of data collected by the writer in this research; quantitative data and qualitative data. Quantitative data collected by administered reading test to the students. In this research, the writer conducted pre-test to find out the students' reading comprehension before applying Task-Based Learning method. After doing pre-test, the students taught by using Task-Based Learning method. Then, the writer conducted the post-test to find out the difference achievement of students reading comprehension after they had been taught by using Task-Based Learning method. Somehow, qualitative data collected by using observation sheet which was observed by a colaborator during teaching and learning process. The purpose of observation sheets in this research was to know whether the teacher and students did the activities of the steps or not.

## Data Analysis Technique

To analyze the data, the writer used the formula as follows:

$$P = \frac{X}{N} \times 100$$

Where:

P: individual score

X: Correct answer

N: Number of respondent

**Wayan and Sumartana (2005)**

To know the means score of the students, the writer calculated by using the following formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Note:

$\bar{x}$  = the average score of the test

$\sum x$  = the total score of the students

$N$  = the number of the students

**(Hatch and Farhady, 1982)**

To analyze qualitative data, the writer used two observation sheets. The observation sheets divided into teacher's observation sheet and students' observation sheet. The observation sheets used as follows:

**Table 1. The Teacher's Observation Sheet**

NO	OBSERVATION POINTS	YES	NO
1	The teacher introduces and defines the topic by showing a picture of an animal and asking them to observe it.		
2	The teacher asks students about some question in order to recall/learn useful words and phrases.		
3	The teacher asks the students to do the task in groups and each person is given worksheet.		
4	The teacher asks the students to collect information about generic structure, language features and social function of the descriptive text.		
5	The teacher asks the students to discuss in group and answer question from the text given in worksheet.		

6	The teachers asks the students to write a descriptive text.		
7	The teacher asks the students to present their report to class and then every group compared the result		
8	The teacher explains components of reading, such as main idea, factual information, difficult words, references and restatement in the reading text.		
9	The teacher asks the students to discuss the components of reading in descriptive text in the worksheet.		
10	Teacher gives a practice for the students to answer the following questions of the reading text comprehension		

**Table 2. The Students' Observation Sheet**

NO	OBSERVATION POINTS	YES	NO
1	The students observe the picture that the teacher is showing		
2	The students listen to the teacher carefully, then answer and also ask question in order to recall/learn useful words and phrases.		
3	The students are given worksheet and do the task in groups.		
4	The students collect information about generic structure, language features and social function of the descriptive text.		
5	The students discuss in group and answer question from the text given in worksheet.		
6	The students write a descriptive text		
7	The students present their report to class and then every group compared the result.		
8	The students listen to the teacher's explanation about components of reading, such as main idea, factual information, difficult words, references and restatement in the reading text.		
9	The students discuss the components of reading in descriptive text in the worksheet.		
10	The students do the exercise and answer the following questions of the reading text		

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A pre-test was administered to the students in order to know their reading comprehension before the treatment applied. After collecting the data and computing the students' score, the result of pre-test was presented in the following table:

**Table 3. The Students' Pre-test Result**

Achievement	Amount of Students	Percentage
Successful	7	23%
Failed	24	77%
Total	31	100%

Based on the data from table 3, only 23% students reached score  $\geq 75$  or passed the test. Then, more than half of the students, 24 students (77%) got the score  $< 75$ . In conclusion, before the writer applied the Task-based Learning method, the average score of the students' ability in comprehending reading text is 59,03.

The writer also presented the data of the students' Reading Comprehension according to five aspects of reading in the following table:

**Table 4. The Students Reading Comprehension in Each Aspects of Reading in Pre-test**

No	Texts	Components of Reading Comprehension									
		MI		FI		DW		RF		RS	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	I	20	65%	24	77%	17	55%	14	45%	16	52%
2	II	17	55%	22	71%	7	23%	28	90%	25	81%
3	III	28	90%	25	81%	13	42%	21	68%	15	48%
4	IV	18	58%	22	71%	7	23%	26	84%	7	23%
5	V	29	94%	23	74%	15	48%	25	81%	9	29%
6	VI	23	74%	25	81%	11	35%	27	87%	16	52%
7	VII	22	71%	27	87%	11	35%	20	65%	4	13%
8	VIII	21	68%	14	45%	5	16%	24	77%	9	29%
<b>Total</b>		<b>178</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>41%</b>

The average percentage of the students' reading comprehension in each aspects on the table 4 were: a) Finding Main Idea was 71%, b) Finding Factual Information was 73%, c) Finding Difficult Words was 35%, d) Finding Reference was 75% and e) Finding Restatement was 41%. Thus, based on the average scores of the students' reading comprehension in each aspects was still low.

After the treatment was applied by using Task-Based Learning method, a post-test was administered in order to measure the students' reading comprehension. The result of the post-test were presented in the following table:

**Table 5. The Students' Post-test I Result**

Achievement	Amount of Students	Percentage
Successful	14	45%
Failed	17	55%
Total	31	100%

Based on the table 4.9 and 4.10, there were 14 students (45%) could reached the score of Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement. But, there were 13 students (55%) got score < 75.

Then, the following table presented the improvement of the students' reading comprehension in post-test I based on five aspects of reading:

**Table 6. The Students Reading Comprehension in Each Aspects of Reading in Post-test I**

No	Texts	Components of Reading Comprehension									
		MI		FI		DW		RF		RS	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	I	20	65%	26	84%	19	61%	22	71%	19	61%
2	II	20	65%	26	84%	9	29%	28	90%	25	81%
3	III	28	90%	30	97%	13	42%	27	87%	16	52%
4	IV	20	65%	26	84%	10	32%	28	90%	11	35%
5	V	31	100%	28	90%	19	61%	29	94%	12	39%
6	VI	24	77%	28	90%	17	55%	31	100%	17	55%
7	VII	24	77%	30	97%	11	35%	26	84%	7	23%
8	VIII	31	100%	18	58%	8	26%	30	97%	11	35%
<b>Total</b>		<b>198</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>48%</b>

The average percentage of the students' reading comprehension in each aspects on the table 4 were: a) Finding Main Idea was 80%, b) Finding Factual Information was 78%, c) Finding Difficult Words was 43%, d) Finding Reference was 77% and e) Finding Restatement was 48% . The aspect of difficult words and restatement got the lowest percentage than the other aspects. But, there had been a good improvement in this cycle. It meant that the result had been increased from pre-test, even though the students' comprehension of difficult words and restatement are still low.

In spite the students reading comprehension in cycle I had been increased from the pre-test, but there were some who students had not reached the score of Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement (KKM), score 75. It meant that the students' post-test score in cycle I was not satisfied yet. So, the writer need to continue the treatment to cycle 2 in order to improve the students reading comprehension to achieve score up to Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement (KKM), score 75.

Afterdoing another treatment in cycle II, the writer found that there was improvement. The writer gave gave test to know the students' reading comprehension after taught by Task-Based Learning method. The instrument of written test in cycle II was similar to the instrument in the previous cycle. The students' score was presented in the following table:

**Table 7. The Students Post-test II Result**

Achievement	Amount of Students	Percentage
Successful	24	77%
Failed	7	23%
Total	31	100%



Based on the table 7, there were 24 students (45%) could reached the score of Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement and 13 students (55%) got score < 75. In conclusion, the result of post-test 2 was satisfied because more than half of the students reached score  $\geq 75$ . The average score of post-test II was 77,90.

The following table presented the improvement of the students' reading comprehension in post-test II based on five aspects of reading:

**Table 8. The Students Reading Comprehension in Each Aspects of Reading in Post-test II**

No	Texts	Components of Reading Comprehension									
		MI		FI		DW		RF		RS	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	I	22	71%	26	84%	22	71%	22	71%	22	71%
2	II	21	68%	27	87%	15	48%	29	94%	26	84%
3	III	29	94%	30	97%	21	68%	28	90%	19	61%
4	IV	21	68%	26	84%	17	54%	29	94%	17	54%
5	V	31	100%	28	90%	23	74%	29	94%	19	61%
6	VI	28	90%	28	90%	24	55%	31	100%	23	55%
7	VII	28	90%	30	97%	17	54%	27	87%	19	61%
8	VIII	31	100%	19	61%	17	54%	30	97%	15	48%
<b>Total</b>		<b>211</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>65%</b>

The average percentage of the students' reading comprehension in each aspects on the table 4 were: a) Finding Main Idea was 85%, b) Finding Factual Information was 79%, c) Finding Difficult Words was 63%, d) Finding Reference was 78% and e) Finding Restatement was 65%. Based on the previous cycle, the aspect of difficult words and restatement raised in cycle II. It meant that the students' comprehension about difficult words and restatement had been improved.

## DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

In the discussion, the writer analyzed the improvement of students' reading comprehension result. The data consisted of the data compilation from the qualitative data (students' observation sheet and teacher's observation sheet) and the quantitative data (pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2).

## 1. Students' Activities

The improvement of students' activities in writing narrative texts were presented in the table below:

**Table 9. The Improvement of Students' Activities**

No.	Cycle	Students' Activities	
		F	%
1.	Cycle I	18	58%
2.	Cycle II	24	77%

The data on the table 9 showed the students' activities in every cycle was increased. In the first cycle, the average score of the students' activity was 58% (18 students) and it increased up to 77% (24 students) in the second cycle. In conclusion, there were improvements of the students' activities during teaching and learning process from cycle I to cycle I.

## 2. Teacher's Activities

There was improvement of the teacher's activities from cycle I to cycle II. The data can be seen in the following table:

**Table 10. The Improvement of Teacher's Activities**

No.	Cycle	Teacher's Activities	
		Yes	No
1.	Cycle I	70%	30%
2.	Cycle II	90%	10%

In the first cycle, the percentage of the teacher's activities was done 70% and only 30% of the activities did not done well. Meanwhile in cycle II, the percentage reached 90%. It meant the activities almost finished well but only 10% of the activiteis did not finished yet. In conclusion, there was an improvement of the teacher's activities during teaching and learning process from cycle I to cycle II.

### 3. Students' Reading Comprehension

The improvement of students' reading comprehension can be seen in the following table:

**Table 11. The Improvement of Students' Reading Comprehension**

No.	Score	Pre-Test		Post-Test I		Post-Test II	
		F	%	F	P %	F	P %
1.	≥ 75	7	23%	14	45%	24	77%
2.	< 75	24	77%	17	55	7	23%
<b>Total</b>		25	100%	25	100%	25	100%

Based on the table 11, in pre-test, there were 77 students (23%) of 25 students reached score the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement. While the rest 24 students (77%) were failed. In post-test I, 14 students (45%) reached score  $\geq 75$  and 17 students (55%) got score  $< 75$ . At the last, post-test II, 24 students (77%) reached score  $\geq 75$  and 7 students (23%) had score  $< 75$ .

It meant that the students' reading comprehension could be improved by using Task-based Learning method. The improvements of the students' average scores in pre-test, post-test I, and post-test II had been presented in the following table and graph:

**Table 12. The Students' Average Scores in Pre-test, Post-test I, and Post-test II**

Tests	The Average Scores
Pre-test	59,03
Post-test I	68,95
Post-test II	77,90

The data on the table 12 showed the improvements of the students' average scores from the pre-test, post-test I, and post-test II.

### 4. Students' Improvement in Each Aspect of Reading

The improvement of the students in each aspect of writing from the pre-test, post-test I, and post-test II could be presented in the following table:

**Table 13. The Students' Improvement in Each Aspect of Reading**

<b>Aspects of Reading</b>	<b>Pre-Test</b>	<b>Post-Test I</b>	<b>Post-Test II</b>
<b>Finding Main Idea</b>	71%	80%	85%
<b>Finding Factual Information</b>	73%	78%	79%
<b>Finding Difficult Words</b>	35%	43%	63%
<b>Finding References</b>	75%	77%	78%
<b>Finding Restatement</b>	41%	48%	65%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>74%</b>

Based on table, there were some improvements in each aspect of reading. It showed that there was increasing average percentage of the students from pre-test, post-test I, and post-test II. The aspects of reading could be improved well was Finding Main Idea, the last average score was 85%; Finding Factual Information, the last average score was 79%; Finding References, the last average score was 78%; Finding Restatement, the last average score was 65%; and Finding Difficult Words, the last average score was 63%. It meant that the students' comprehension in every aspects of reading had been successfully improved.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Conclusions**

Based on the research results and discussion elaborated in the preceding chapters, It can be concluded that Task-based Learning method can improve the reading comprehension of the second year students of SMPN 2 Teluk Kuantan. The improvement can be seen from the increase of students' average score. In pre-test, the students' average score was 59,03. It increased to 68,95 in the post-test I. In post-test II the students' average score increased to 77,90. The average score of post-test II passed the Standard Minimum Criteria of Achievement, score 75. It meant that the research was successfully improved. Task-based learning can improve the class situation and students' activities. The class becomes more enjoyable and fun. The students become more active both individually and in group. The improvement of students's activities was 58% in cycle I and improved in cycle II to 77%. It was such a good improvement that could improve the class situation. There was also an improvement on teacher's activities. In cycle I, the teacher's activities was 70% and improved to 90% in cycle II.

Thus, the use of the task-based learning method has proved to be an effective way in teaching-learning reading comprehension. Using the task-based learning in reading class is strongly suggested. Using Task-based Learning method is effective to improve the students reading comprehension.

## Suggestions

Based to the research results and discussion, some suggestions are offered on the use of the task-based learning in the teaching learning of reading comprehension. For teachers, it is suggested to assign the students to study about finding difficult words/vocabularies and finding restatement. It is also suggested teachers especially whose students have the same characteristics and in similar situation to apply this method as one of the alternatives that can be used in the teaching of reading comprehension. Meanwhile for future researchers, it is hoped that they will conduct a similar study on other skills like listening, speaking, and writing. It can be at other levels of students for the improvement of the teaching English or carry out an experimental study on same skill in order to verify the present result.

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