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The Implementation of Experience Text Relationship (ETR) Method for Teaching Reading Comprehension in Recount Text

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki perubahan pemahaman membaca teks recount pada siswa kelas delapan setelah mendapatkan pembelajaran dengan menggunakan metode Experience–Text–Relationship (ETR). Desain kuantitatif pre-eksperimental dengan satu kelompok pretest–posttest ini melibatkan 30 siswa di SMP Tegar Kelana. Pemahaman membaca dinilai sebelum dan sesudah pembelajaran berbasis ETR. Metode ini menghubungkan pengalaman pribadi siswa dengan isi bacaan teks recount melalui diskusi terbimbing, pembacaan tersegmen, dan refleksi. Tesis tersebut melaporkan nilai rata-rata pretest sebesar 55,33 (SD = 8,79) dan nilai rata-rata posttest sebesar 71,06 (SD = 9,01), yang menunjukkan peningkatan rata-rata sekitar 15,73 poin. Skor berpasangan individu juga mengindikasikan adanya peningkatan untuk ke-30 siswa tersebut. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa skor pemahaman membaca siswa meningkat selama pembelajaran berbasis ETR. Namun, ketiadaan kelompok pembanding membatasi atribusi kausal, dan tesis aslinya tidak menyediakan keluaran uji inferensial yang dapat direplikasi. Penelitian ini menyoroti potensi instruksional dari pengaktivan pengalaman awal peserta didik saat mengajarkan teks recount dan merekomendasikan penelitian komparatif yang lebih ketat.

Kata kunci: Experience–Text–Relationship; pemahaman membaca; teks recount; pengetahuan awal; EFL

Abstract

This study investigated changes in eighth-grade students' reading comprehension of recount texts following instruction using the Experience–Text–Relationship (ETR) method. A

quantitative pre-experimental, one-group pretest–posttest design involved 30 students at SMP Tegar Kelana. Reading comprehension was assessed before and after ETR-based instruction. The method connected students' personal experiences with the content of recount passages through guided discussion, segmented reading, and reflection. The result showed a pretest mean of 55.33 (SD = 8.79) and a posttest mean of 71.06 (SD = 9.01), representing a mean increase of approximately 15.73 points. Individual paired scores also indicated improvement for all 30 students. The findings suggest that students' reading comprehension scores improved during ETR-based instruction. However, the absence of a comparison group limits causal attribution did not provide a reproducible inferential-test output. The study highlights the instructional potential of activating learners' prior experiences when teaching recount texts and recommends more rigorous comparative research.

Keywords: Experience–Text–Relationship; reading comprehension; recount text; prior knowledge; EFL

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is a central component of English as a foreign language (EFL) learning because students must integrate vocabulary, textual organization, and contextual information to construct meaning. Reading is not merely the recognition of words; readers use prior knowledge and strategies to interpret explicit and implicit information (Brown, 2004; Nunan, 2003). For junior secondary students, recount texts present a particularly useful context for developing comprehension because they organize past experiences into orientation, events, and reorientation (Derewianka, 1990).

In the preliminary observations in the study, students at SMP Tegar Kelana struggled to identify main ideas, locate details, and respond to comprehension questions. Conventional classroom routines centered on reading a passage and answering questions were described as insufficiently engaging. These difficulties motivated the investigation of a strategy that would invite learners to connect personal experience with written material. The Experience–Text–Relationship (ETR) method, initially described by Au (1979), provides a structured way to activate

background knowledge before reading, examine textual content, and then establish connections between the two.

The ETR approach is consistent with schema-oriented accounts of second-language reading, which emphasize the interaction between textual cues and readers' knowledge (Carrell, 1988). In its experience stage, the teacher elicits students' memories or expectations; in the text stage, learners read and discuss segments of a passage; in the relationship stage, they reconsider the text through their own experiences. Carrell (1989) examined metacognitive strategy instruction for second-language reading, while Lopera Medina (2012) described strategy instruction as a means of developing reading comprehension. These perspectives support investigating ETR as an instructional approach rather than assuming that its effectiveness is universal.

The ETR method organizes instruction around three connected phases: discussing learners' experiences, examining the written text, and relating textual ideas back to what learners know. Its original theoretical contribution remains historically important (Au, 1979), but recent evidence also supports activating prior knowledge in EFL reading. Monica et al. (2023), reviewing schema-activation studies, highlighted the relevance of linguistic, content, and formal schemata to comprehension. Thus, ETR offers a classroom procedure for helping students connect personal experience with the sequence of events in recount texts.

Previous studies conducted by English Language Education lecturers at Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika have highlighted the importance of interactive instructional strategies in developing students' reading comprehension. Utama (2017) examined the Think-Pair-Share strategy, which encouraged learners to exchange ideas during reading activities. Similarly, Imran and Sandiarsa S. (2018) investigated the Teammates Consult strategy and positive findings concerning reading performance and motivation. Damayanti et al. (2024) also examined content-based instruction in reading comprehension. Although these approaches differ from the Experience–Text–Relationship method, they provide relevant empirical support

for the use of meaningful interaction and active engagement in EFL reading classrooms.

This study therefore examined whether eighth-grade students' recount-text comprehension scores changed after ETR-based teaching. The research question was: How did students' reading comprehension scores differ between the pretest and posttest after implementation of the ETR method?

METHOD

The research employed a quantitative pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design. The setting was SMP Tegar Kelana, and the sample comprised all 30 students in the selected eighth-grade class. The same group completed a pretest, received ETR-based teaching, and then completed a posttest. No control group was included; accordingly, the design supports a description of within-group change rather than a controlled estimate of treatment effect (Sugiyono, 2015).

The study described a multiple-choice reading comprehension instrument with 25 questions and four response options. It also stated that students were assessed on comprehension of recount texts, including identification of main ideas, details, referents, and conclusions. The score distributions were on a 0–100 scale. Because the result stated an item score of 2.5 while also describing 25 items, the scoring explanation was internally inconsistent; this article preserves the total scores without assuming an unverified item-weighting rule.

During instruction, the teacher first encouraged students to recall relevant experiences, then guided their reading and discussion of recount passages, and finally asked them to relate textual events to their own experiences. The analysis summarized the score distributions and descriptive statistics. The study mentioned an independent-samples t-test despite presenting only one group; therefore, the present article does not reproduce an unsupported comparison-group significance claim. Individual paired scores are used to describe observed change.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study involved 30 students with complete pretest and posttest scores. Table 1 presents the descriptive results. The average score increased from 55.33 to 71.06, a gain of approximately 15.73 points. The lowest score rose from 40 to 52, while the highest score rose from 68 to 88.

Table 1. Reading Comprehension Results

Measure	Pretest	Posttest
Number of students	30	30
Mean	55.33	71.06
Standard deviation	8.79	9.01
Minimum	40	52
Maximum	68	88
Total score	1,660	2,132

Table 2. Frequency distribution of pretest and posttest scores

Score	Pretest n	Posttest n
40	4	0
48	2	0
52	10	1
56	2	2
60	3	2
64	5	4
68	4	3
72	0	6
76	0	5
80	0	4
84	0	2
88	0	1

The distributions show a shift toward higher scores after instruction. Before treatment, the modal score was 52 (10 students), whereas after treatment the modal score was 72 (six students). Posttest scores of 72 or above were achieved by 18

students, compared with none before instruction. All 30 individually paired scores increased, although the size of the gain varied across students.

The observed improvement is pedagogically consistent with the ETR sequence. By discussing experiences before reading, students may have accessed relevant knowledge that helped them interpret the events and context of recount texts. Reading shorter sections and responding to questions may also have helped them identify key information, while the final relationship stage encouraged integration of text meaning and personal knowledge. These interpretations align with Au's (1979) emphasis on experience-based discussion and Carrell's (1989) work on strategy-supported comprehension.

The higher posttest scores are consistent with the instructional rationale of ETR, although they cannot establish a causal effect. In the experience phase, learners recalled familiar events; in the text phase, they examined information in the recount; and in the relationship phase, they connected new details with prior knowledge. Monica et al. (2023) described schema activation as a potentially useful approach to EFL reading instruction. Comparable locally situated studies have also emphasized interaction and meaningful content: Utama (2017) investigated think-pair-share reading instruction; Imran and Sandiarsa S. (2018) examined teammates-consult activities for narrative reading; and Damayanti et al. (2024) studied content-based instruction for comprehension. The approaches and populations differ, so these sources provide theoretical and contextual comparisons, not direct replication of ETR.

Nevertheless, the results should be interpreted cautiously. The study lacked a comparison class, making it impossible to rule out test familiarity, maturation, other instruction, or classroom factors as explanations for part of the gain. It referred to a significant independent-samples t-test but did not supply the corresponding statistical output or a control-group dataset. Thus, the observed increase is supported by the recorded scores, whereas a causal claim that ETR outperformed conventional instruction is not established by the available evidence. Future studies

could use a comparison group, consistent test scoring, and transparent paired or between-group analyses.

In classroom practice, the method may be useful because recount texts often describe everyday events to which students can relate. Teachers can begin with brief personal-experience prompts, guide reading through targeted questions, and ask students to explain similarities or differences between the passage and their lives. This approach makes prior knowledge an explicit resource for comprehension rather than treating reading as a purely individual decoding task (Monica et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

The reading comprehension scores of 30 eighth-grade students increased after ETR-based recount-text instruction, from a mean of 55.33 to 71.06. The results support ETR as a promising classroom strategy for linking students' experiences with reading material. However, without a comparison group, improvement cannot be attributed exclusively to ETR. Teachers may incorporate guided experience, text, and relationship discussions, while future researchers should test the approach with controlled designs and clearly documented assessments.

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