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The Effect Of Task-Based Learning Toward The Students' Reading Comprehension At MA Al-Hamidiyah Nw Sidemen

Isni Oktavia[1], Sugianto[2], Tawali[3]
[1,2,3] English Language Education Department, FBMB, Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika
Jl. Pemuda No. 59 A, Mataram, Indonesia 83125
E-Mail: isnioktavia1414@gmail.com

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji apakah pembelajaran berbasis tugas (task-based learning) dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa kelas sepuluh di MA Al-Hamidiyah NW Sidemen pada tahun ajaran 2024/2025. Desain kuasi-eksperimen dengan tes awal (pre-test) dan tes akhir (post-test) diterapkan pada dua kelas yang dipilih secara purposif. Kelas X1 bertindak sebagai kelompok eksperimen dan kelas X2 sebagai kelompok kontrol, dengan masing-masing kelas terdiri dari 20 siswa. Kelompok eksperimen menerima pembelajaran berbasis tugas, sementara kelompok kontrol menerima pembelajaran konvensional. Pemahaman membaca diukur menggunakan 20 butir soal pilihan ganda, dan data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif serta uji-t untuk sampel independen (independent-samples t-test). Rata-rata nilai kelompok eksperimen meningkat dari 39,25 menjadi 83,75, sedangkan rata-rata nilai kelompok kontrol meningkat dari 36,75 menjadi 45,50. Perbedaan pada tes akhir adalah sebesar 38,25 poin, dengan interval kepercayaan 95% antara 33,50–43,00; perbandingan tersebut menunjukkan hasil yang signifikan secara statistik, $t(38) = 16,315$, $p < 0,001$. Temuan ini mendukung pembelajaran berbasis tugas sebagai pendekatan yang menjanjikan bagi kelas-kelas yang diteliti. Namun, pemilihan sampel secara purposif, durasi intervensi yang singkat, serta penggunaan hanya satu kelas untuk setiap kondisi membatasi interpretasi kausal dan generalisasi hasil penelitian. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk melibatkan lebih banyak kelas, menggunakan instrumen yang didokumentasikan dengan jelas, serta menyertakan penilaian lanjutan.

Kata kunci: pembelajaran berbasis tugas; pemahaman membaca; pembelajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL); penelitian kuasi-eksperimen; pendidikan menengah

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Abstract

This study examined whether task-based learning improved the reading comprehension of tenth-grade students at MA Al-Hamidiyah NW Sidemen during the 2024/2025 academic year. A quasi-experimental design with pre-tests and post-tests was employed in two intact classes selected purposively. Class X1 served as the experimental group and class X2 as the control group, with 20 students in each class. The experimental group received task-based instruction, whereas the control group received conventional instruction. Reading comprehension was assessed using 20 multiple-choice items, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and an independent-samples t-test. The experimental mean increases from 39.25 to 83.75, while the control mean increases from 36.75 to 45.50. The post-test difference is 38.25 points, with a 95% confidence interval of 33.50–43.00; the comparison is statistically significant, $t(38) = 16.315$, $p < .001$. These findings support task-based learning as a promising approach for the participating classes. However, purposive selection, a short intervention, and the use of only one class per condition limit causal interpretation and generalization. Further studies should include more classes, clearly documented instruments, and delayed assessments.

Keywords: task-based learning; reading comprehension; EFL learners; quasi-experimental research; secondary education

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is central to learning English because students need to construct meaning from written information rather than merely recognize words. In secondary education, reading lessons require learners to connect details, identify a text's main message, and interpret relationships among ideas. Students who depend heavily on teacher explanation may answer familiar exercises without becoming independent readers. This challenge makes the organization of classroom activities an important consideration in English language teaching.

Preliminary classroom accounts identified reading difficulties at MA Al-Hamidiyah NW Sidemen and described conventional classroom instruction as providing limited opportunities for active participation. In this setting, students

needed opportunities to use information from texts while completing learning activities. The problem was therefore both instructional and practical: how could reading lessons encourage students to process meaning and demonstrate comprehension through purposeful work?

Task-based learning offers a way to organize instruction around activities with a meaningful outcome. Ellis (2009) explained that task-based teaching should be understood through the relationship between meaning, task performance, and language learning. In a reading classroom, this perspective directs attention to what students do with a text and how their responses demonstrate understanding. Completing an exercise is not automatically evidence of meaningful engagement; its value depends on the reading demands and the outcome students are expected to produce.

Research by English language education scholars associated with Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika and its predecessor, IKIP Mataram, provides a relevant local foundation. Imran and Sandiarsa S. (2018) reported favorable results for a cooperative strategy in narrative reading. Sandiarsa et al. (2014) compared PQRST and SQ3R in relation to text types, showing why reading instruction should consider both strategy and material. These studies concern approaches distinct from task-based learning, but they support examining how instructional organization relates to reading achievement.

Other local studies have emphasized the role of guided interaction and comprehension support. Kamarudin (2016) found small-group discussion effective in a senior secondary reading setting. Permana et al. (2019) investigated note-taking pairs and critical thinking in reading comprehension. Hidayatullah (2016) described questioning activities involving explanation, group discussion, guidance, and presentation. Together, these studies suggest that reading lessons can provide structured opportunities to work through meaning rather than rely exclusively on teacher-led explanation.

Evidence also comes from studies of listening, reading, and discussion. Terasne et al. (2018) reported improvement in report-text comprehension, while Tawali (2021)

documented progress in descriptive-text reading. Haerazi and Irawan (2020) examined the ECOLA technique in relation to motivation and self-efficacy, and Haerazi et al. (2019) investigated contextual teaching and learning. Their findings justify attention to classroom processes and learner characteristics, while their different designs and outcomes prevent treating all student-centered approaches as interchangeable.

The present study contributes evidence from two tenth-grade classes in an Islamic senior secondary school. Its contribution is a classroom comparison in this setting, rather than a claim that task-based learning is a new approach. The research question was whether students receiving task-based learning obtained different reading comprehension outcomes from students receiving conventional instruction. The study examined pre-test and post-test patterns and the post-test difference between the two classes, with attention to the limits of the quasi-experimental design.

METODE

The study used a quantitative quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group. It was conducted at MA Al-Hamidiyah NW Sidemen during the 2024/2025 academic year. Two existing tenth-grade classes participated: X1 received task-based learning and X2 received conventional instruction. Both classes completed a pre-test and a post-test. Because allocation was based on intact classes rather than individual random assignment, the groups could differ in ways not captured by their initial reading scores.

The school-wide population consisted of 120 students across six classes. The analytic sample comprised 40 students: 20 in X1 and 20 in X2. The classes were selected purposively following the teacher's recommendation and their suitability for the instruction. The participating classes constituted the analytic sample rather than the entire school population.

The outcome measure was a reading comprehension test comprising 20 multiple-choice items. Correct answers were converted to a score on a 0–100 scale, giving five points per correct response. The instruments were drawn from reading

materials used in English lessons. Although the findings chapter described narrative-text instruction, the appended test materials also included descriptive passages. Accordingly, the outcome is showed as performance on the administered reading comprehension test, rather than as a validated measure restricted to narrative reading.

There was a two-week implementation involving two instructional meetings. Students first completed the pre-test. The experimental class then received task-based instruction in which students used their understanding of the reading material to complete assigned activities. The control class received the conventional instruction. Both groups subsequently completed the post-test. The source does not document each task, its duration, or implementation fidelity in sufficient detail to reconstruct a full lesson protocol; those details are therefore not supplied retrospectively.

The researcher analyzed the data using SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics summarized the number of students, means, standard deviations, and score ranges. Shapiro–Wilk results and the post-test Levene test were examined before interpreting the independent-samples t-test at the .05 level. A software significance entry of .000 was expressed as $p < .001$. The post-test comparison was considered alongside descriptive results checked against the individual score tables. Mean gains describe changes within each class; they are not presented as a separate statistically tested treatment effect.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 summarizes the reading comprehension scores. Before instruction, both classes had relatively low means, and their score ranges overlapped substantially. The experimental class started 2.50 points above the control class. The groups were therefore descriptively similar in initial average performance, although this similarity does not establish equivalence on all relevant characteristics.

Table 1. Reading comprehension scores before and after instruction

Group and assessment	n	Mean	SD	Range
Experimental pre-test	20	39.25	9.770	20–55
Experimental post-test	20	83.75	6.859	70–95
Control pre-test	20	36.75	10.036	15–55
Control post-test	20	45.50	7.931	30–60

The experimental mean increased by 44.50 points, from 39.25 to 83.75. The control mean increased by 8.75 points, from 36.75 to 45.50. The difference between these descriptive gains was 35.75 points. This pattern indicates that improvement was considerably greater in the experimental class over the observation period.

The score distributions also showed clear separation after instruction. All 20 experimental students obtained scores of at least 70, with one student scoring exactly 70. No control student reached 70; the highest control score was 60. The threshold describes the observed scores and does not by itself establish broader proficiency or retention beyond the administered test.

The Shapiro–Wilk significance values .189 for the experimental pre-test, .076 for the experimental post-test, .557 for the control pre-test, and .504 for the control post-test. None was below .05. The experimental post-test Kolmogorov–Smirnov result was nevertheless significant at .013, so it would be inaccurate to state that every normality test supported normality. With 20 students per group, the findings are interpreted cautiously rather than treating a non-significant test as proof of a normal population distribution.

For the post-test comparison, the Levene statistic was $F = 0.029$, $p = .865$. The equal-variance row of the independent-samples t-test was therefore used, as shown in Table 2. The result did not indicate a statistically significant difference in post-test variances.

Table 2. Independent-samples comparison of post-test scores

Statistic	Result
Mean difference	38.250 points
Standard error of difference	2.345
t statistic	16.315
Degrees of freedom	38
Two-tailed significance	$p < .001$
95% confidence interval	33.504–42.996

The experimental group obtained a significantly higher post-test mean than the control group, $t(38) = 16.315$, $p < .001$. The estimated difference was 38.25 points, and the confidence interval did not include zero. Thus, the null hypothesis of equal post-test means was rejected under the assumptions of the student-level test. The statistical result establishes a difference between these observed groups; the design determines how strongly that difference can be attributed to instruction.

One plausible interpretation is that task completion gave students a clearer reason to process information in the reading material. The experimental class was expected to apply comprehension when performing assigned activities. This interpretation is consistent with Ellis's (2009) emphasis on meaningful task performance. However, the study did not directly measure attention, depth of processing, or strategy use, so these processes remain explanations for investigation rather than demonstrated mechanisms.

The result can also be considered alongside local work on collaborative reading. Imran and Sandiarsa S. (2018) found favorable reading outcomes under Teammates Consult, and Kamarudin (2016) reported benefits from small-group discussion. The shared instructional implication is that organizing opportunities to work with textual meaning may be useful. The present study did not directly compare task-based learning with either strategy, so it cannot establish which approach would be more effective.

The questioning and paired-learning literature helps identify practical directions for classroom development. Hidayatullah (2016) emphasized guided questioning in expository reading, while Permana et al. (2019) investigated paired note-taking and critical thinking. Teachers adapting task-based reading could use questions and written responses to make comprehension visible. Such activities are recommendations informed by related research, not a claim that every one of them was implemented or measured in the present intervention.

The work of Terasne et al. (2018) and Tawali (2021) provides further evidence that structured reading activities can accompany improved comprehension in local school settings. Their action research concerned Listen–Read–Discuss and different text types, whereas this study compared two classes receiving different instruction. Agreement in the direction of improvement strengthens the practical rationale for purposeful reading support, but differences in design, assessment, and participants prevent direct comparison of the size of the effects.

Text selection and learner characteristics should also guide interpretation. Sandiarsa et al. (2014) examined reading strategies in relation to text types, drawing attention to the fit between material and instructional approach. Haerazi and Irawan (2020) considered motivation and self-efficacy in a different reading intervention, while Haerazi et al. (2019) examined contextual learning and motivation. The present study did not measure those learner variables, and its mixed descriptions of text genre require restraint when generalizing the finding to particular types of reading.

The size of the observed difference warrants careful consideration. The intervention lasted only two weeks, and the same general testing format was used

before and after instruction. Test familiarity, alignment between instruction and assessment, class characteristics, or differences in implementation could have contributed to the separation. With only one class in each condition, the effect of the teaching approach cannot be separated statistically from the effect of the class. The conventional student-level t-test also does not account for this classroom clustering, so its confidence interval should not be read as capturing every source of uncertainty.

For teaching practice, the evidence supports a considered trial of task-based reading with clear goals and individual checks of understanding. Teachers should choose texts suited to learners, explain the expected task outcome, and examine whether each student can justify answers using the text. Future research should use several classes in each condition, document task procedures and instrument quality, account for baseline scores and clustering, and include delayed and unfamiliar-text assessments. These improvements would help determine whether the observed advantage extends beyond the immediate test and participating classes.

CONCLUSION

The experimental class showed greater reading comprehension gains than the control class, with post-test means of 83.75 and 45.50 and a significant difference, $t(38) = 16.315$, $p < .001$. Task-based learning is therefore promising for the participating tenth-grade classes. Teachers may consider purposeful reading tasks with individual comprehension checks. However, purposive selection, one class per condition, limited instrument documentation, and the short intervention restrict causal claims and generalization. Further research should involve more classes, documented task procedures, and delayed assessments.

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