

Article History:

Submitted:
30-11-2023
Accepted:
25-01-2024
Published:
04-02-2024



EXPLORATORY LEARNING OF FICTION TEXTS FOR BOOSTING READING COMPREHENSION OF TENTH GRADERS

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URL: <https://ejournal.stkipjb.ac.id/index.php/jeel/article/view/3399>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32682/jeell.v10i2.3399>

Abstract

Reading plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of education; nevertheless, the issue of low interest in reading necessitates immediate attention. In the Indonesian context, reading interest remains significantly low, as indicated by the data from the Indonesian Education report card, which reveals a decline in literacy scores at the high school level in 2022. Several factors contribute to this issue, including difficulties in word and letter recognition, mispronunciation, word confusion, and haste during reading. This study aimed to analyze the literacy proficiency adolescents, specifically focusing on their interest in reading fictional texts, their inclination towards exploratory learning methods, and strategies to mitigate their reliance on social media platforms. The research adopted a quasi-experimental design and collected quantitative data. The findings of this study revealed a significant value for the corrected model, indicating a rejection of the (H₀) as the significance value (0.000) is less than 0.05. Thus, at a 95% confidence level, it can be concluded that the exploratory learning method effectively influences the learning outcomes of Grade X students. When teachers incorporate quizzes, riddles, and educational board games into their instruction, students exhibit great enthusiasm and actively participate, thereby overcoming their dependence on visual media.

Keyword: *Exploratory Learning, Reading Comprehension*

Abstrak

Membaca merupakan salah satu kunci untuk meningkatkan mutu pendidikan, tetapi minat membaca saat ini menjadi salah satu permasalahan yang harus segera diselesaikan. Di Indonesia minat membaca dinilai masih sangat rendah, berdasarkan data dari raport Pendidikan Indonesia nilai literasi pada jenjang SMA yang mengalami penurunan tahun 2022. Terdapat beberapa faktor yang dapat mempengaruhi kesalahan mereka dalam mengenali kata dan mengenal huruf, salah mengucapkan, berpindah tempat, tidak mengenali kata dan terburu-buru saat membaca. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tingkat literasi remaja kelas X di SMAN 1 Nganjuk. Bagaimana minat siswa dalam membaca teks fiksi, bagaimana kecenderungan remaja dalam metode exploratory learning, serta bagaimana cara mengatasi ketergantungan siswa kelas X terhadap media sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain quasi experimental dengan mengumpulkan data secara kuantitatif. Dari hasil penelitian yang telah dilakukan ditemukan bahwa nilai signifikansi corrected model. Terlihat bahwa nilai signifikansinya adalah sebesar 0,000. Karena nilai signifikansinya $0,000 < 0,05$ maka H_0 ditolak. Sehingga pada tingkat kepercayaan 95% dapat disimpulkan metode exploratory learning efektif mempengaruhi hasil belajar siswa kelas X SMAN 1 Nganjuk. Pada saat guru memberikan sebuah kuis, teka-teki, dan permainan papan edukatif siswa sangat antusias mengikuti pembelajaran, dengan hal inilah guru mengatasi ketergantungan siswa terhadap media visual

Kata kunci: Exploratory Learning, Pemahaman Membaca

Introduction

Nowadays, many people are questioning Generation Z's literacy skills. This is supported by the fact that interest in reading books in Indonesia is still considered very low. We can see this in Indonesia's education report card (Kemendikbudristek, 2023) based on data from national assessments in 2022 where literacy at the high school level decreased by 4.59% from 2021 (53.85%) down in 2022 to (49.26%). Apart from the education report card, interest in reading books in Indonesia is also considered to be very low (Yudanti & Putri, 2023). Factors that affect children's inhibitions are their mistakes in recognizing words and recognizing letters, mispronouncing,

switching places, not recognizing words, and rushing when reading (Rohimah, 2021). Generation Z students view the world differently from their teachers, and there are gaps in several aspects of language learning. First, students find language programs boring and ineffective, while teachers find them effective. Second, Generation Z students prefer to use mobile devices and social media because they can obtain information simultaneously in the classroom. Thirdly, students prefer to receive instant and individualized feedback when it comes to assessment (Demi R & Sönmez, 2021). With these technological advances, teachers are required to teach students to read more effectively by utilizing informatics.

Reading is one of the keys to improving the quality of education so that human resources can also improve (Sutarti, 2017). In today's sophisticated modern era, printed books are not the only literacy center (Andi Rusgandi, 2023). There are so many literacy sources that can be accessed anytime and anywhere, by young people, adults, and even parents can easily search for them using smartphones. A lack of basic reading skills can hinder students in learning materials. Most students only read but do not understand what they have read and what has been taught by the teacher. Many of them have difficulty in grammar and lack of vocabulary. Thus, they do not understand the overall meaning of the text. Students lack confidence and spend a lot of time looking up the meaning of words in the dictionary (Syam, 2020; Nurmalasari & Haryudin, 2021).

The complexity of reading skills is supported by the fact that students are always passive during the learning process and do not pay attention to the teacher's explanation. Students are more interested in other activities that are more interesting than reading literacy texts, students choose to play rather than read (Kasáčová & Babiaková, 2019; Pitoyo, 2020). This interest in reading can be influenced by the surrounding social environment. The results of the observation show that educators generally provide a direct understanding of the material and have not been able to train students to think independently. Learning is teacher-centered. Learners sit and listen to what the educator says (Safitri, Umamah, & Sumardi, 2019).

Reading becomes fun if the reading material has an appeal to students, so that students will read it seriously which in turn will support students' reading comprehension (Sari Dewi, 2018). Reading can be taken from many sources, letting students read according to their wishes and interests. Students will easily understand the reading and can even find ideas or solutions from what they read if they have an interest in reading (Dewi,

Hasanah, & Wahyudi, 2020).

The ability to read is the key to good learning. Some studies have found that the exploratory learning method can improve students' reading activities (Asnawi, 2022; Fata, Pratama, & Al, 2019; Nicholes, 2022; Par, 2020). Learning with exploratory learning activities is at a high and very high standard. All learning activities that have been carried out are very helpful in stimulating the cognition and psychomotor of students so that they can increase their knowledge and understanding of learning. This means that after students learn with the exploratory learning method, students are more active in learning. The exploratory learning method can improve them in writing fiction stories.

Research intended to improve reading skills generally seeks to propose the most relevant strategies given. Research reveals that the more students use strategies in reading, the better their comprehension of the text. Most of the previous studies tend to use fiction texts (Fata et al., 2019; Hadna Suryantari, 2022; Nicholes, 2022; Par, 2020; Rachmijati & Anggraeni, 2019; Syam, 2020). The views of parents, teachers, and students generally agree that fictional stories have a positive impact on making students more active. In terms of language, fictional stories help develop vocabulary and new vocabulary. In terms of emotions, it can help develop emotional intelligence. In terms of English, it helps students learn sentence structure and apply it to writing.

So far, there have not been many studies that use exploratory learning methods using fictitious text, especially in the context of learning for tenth-grade students. In this case, the researcher assumed that exploratory learning is suitable to be applied in teaching English to tenth-grade students at SMAN 1 Nganjuk. The researcher chose SMAN 1 Nganjuk as the research site because the researcher found problems with reading during her internship at this school. By using the exploratory learning method, it is expected that students' interest in reading will be increased so that students can develop their knowledge quickly. Thus, this research is expected to help teachers in finding answers to the problems faced and learning methods that can be applied appropriately.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the level of literacy skills of grade X adolescents at SMAN 1 Nganjuk amid the development of information and communication technology today by applying exploratory learning. Specifically, this research will explore their interest in reading

fictional texts, adolescents' tendency to exploratory learning, and how teachers can overcome the dependence of grade X students on visual media.

Research Methods

The research design used by researchers is quasi-experimental. Researchers collect and analyze data quantitatively (Creswell, 2017). This research compares two research groups (experimental and control groups). This study began with identifying the problem of reading comprehension of students in class X IPS 1 and X IPS 2 of SMAN 1 Nganjuk. In the early stage, the researcher gave a try out to both classes to see the validity and reliability.

Secondly, the researchers administered a pre-test before administering treatment to the students. Subsequently, Next, the researcher gave the previewing method to the control class, namely class X IPS 2 and special treatment to the experimental class, namely class X IPS 1, using an exploratory learning approach. The treatment consisted of the teacher initially guiding the learning objectives to be attained through the material being discussed. The teacher then prepared learning materials aligned with these objectives. Subsequently, students were presented with a problem and engaged in discussions with their peers to tackle the problem. The teacher actively encouraged students to foster a dynamic classroom environment through these discussions. Following this, students presented their comprehension outcomes in front of the class, with the teacher allowing them to engage in further discussion. Classmates were also encouraged to respond to the explanations provided. Moreover, the teacher motivated students to actively seek assistance from other groups when necessary. Toward the conclusion of the lesson, the teacher offered constructive feedback on the student's progress and elucidated the connection between the learning objectives and the exploration.

The implementation involved all students in the experimental class actively participating in classroom learning by giving them a quiz, puzzle, and educational board game containing fictional story material. The class ended by giving a post-test for both experimental and control classes giving a test consisting of 25 questions with a multiple choice model. The post-test material was based on the material treatment but with different topics and questions. The purpose was to see the progress of the experimental and control groups after providing the exploratory learning method in the experimental class.

The most important way to determine the success or failure of the learning process is by using data analysis, pre-test, and post-test data were analyzed using ANCOVA (Analysis of Covariance) used in this study. The criteria for acceptance or rejection of this study is if the Sig value <0.05 then H_0 is rejected, which means exploratory learning is effective in teaching reading to class X students.

Results and Discussion

Results

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Discussion

The findings of previous research, which indicated that the exploratory learning method is efficacious in instructing students in the area of reading, lend support to the outcomes of this study (Fata et al., 2019; Nicholes, 2022; Par, 2020; Sham, 2020). However, in some aspects, there are some differences, namely the application of the exploratory learning method which is different from the research that has been carried out (Syam, 2020).

This research responded to the literacy issues of Generation Z, specifically addressing the low interest in reading and the decline in literacy at the high school level. Thus, this research has relevance to contemporary literacy challenges. Exploratory learning can overcome students' dependence on visual media. This could be seen during the lesson, the teacher provides a quiz game, puzzles, and educational board games. Students discussed understanding the text they have learned before, students were active in class discussion, and students criticized the opinions of their friends so that the atmosphere in the classroom became more lively.

This study possessed a distinct advantage when compared to other studies in which as research by (Sutarti, 2017) entitled Efforts to Increase Students Reading Interest on Educational Reference Through Classical Guidance and Counseling Experiential Learning Model, research by (Fata et al., 2019) which entitled The Exploration Model of Introduction and Concept Application (Epa) 5 In Learning In Beginning Reading, following the implementation of the exploratory approach, the instructor presented an educational game comprising quizzes, puzzles, and educational board games. The incorporation of quizzes, puzzles, and educational board games in the process of learning exhibits a deliberate endeavor to enhance student engagement and render the teaching and learning process more captivating. The outcomes of learning can be

observed through the results of the significance value derived from the adjusted model in Table 5, revealing a significant finding of $0.000 < 0.05$. Hence, it is thereby demonstrated that students actively engage in the learning process.

In this study, the supporting factors for the application of exploratory learning included; SMAN 1 Nganjuk which has supported researchers in conducting research, students who are responsive to learning with new methods, the delivery of appropriate material, and a good classroom atmosphere so that students can receive learning comfortably.

Research limitations are limitations that identify the scope and parameters of the research conducted. This research is limited in time and the findings may not fully reflect the conditions at other times. This study only focused on class X students at SMAN Nganjuk, so it is not necessarily the same if applied in other schools.

This study used a quasi-experimental design by applying the exploratory learning method. This study did not include variations of other learning methods that might give different results. Then the teacher's ability is also one of the success factors of the exploratory learning method. This factor may limit the generalization of the findings to situations where teachers have different skills.

Conclusion

Overall, this research addressed the serious problem of low literacy skills in Generation Z students, particularly the decline in interest and ability to read at the high school level in Indonesia. The result of the research conducted is that exploratory learning can improve the literacy skills of grade X adolescents at SMAN 1 Nganjuk amidst the development of information and communication technology today by implementing exploratory learning.

Students have an interest in learning by using exploratory, this can be seen when the teacher gives a quiz, puzzle, and educational board game in between lessons. Students actively participate when learning is carried out, they are active in searching, learning, and discussing in class with their friends. In this way, the teacher overcomes students' dependence on visual media.

From the results of the research that has been studied, the researcher recommended that future research involve further research on students' perceptions of exploratory methods and compare the effectiveness of exploratory learning with other learning methods to provide a more comprehensive picture of the best choice for improving reading comprehension.

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