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## The Intervention of Using Reciprocal Teaching Technique and Learning Styles on Students' Reading Comprehension

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**Abstract:** Reading is one of language skills that should be acquired by the students who learn English course in junior high school level. In learning a foreign language, students face many problems, especially in comprehending reading text. In reading process, the students have to understand the meaning of the text through their learning styles and combining their background knowledge, experiences, and situation with the information which is stated on the text. This article was to investigate the empirical evidence on the effect of Reciprocal Teaching Technique (RTT) Technique and learning styles on Students' Reading Comprehension. The research was quantitative method and applied quasi-experimental design. Sample of the research were chosen through simple random sampling technique. Data collecting technique of this research were pre-test and post-test. The data were analyzed by two-ways ANOVA. The findings of the recent study are: (1) there was an effect between teaching method and students' learning styles on students' reading comprehension, and (2) there were differences effect of students' reading comprehension between students who own visual learning style in RTT group and those who own auditory learning style in class. It can be summed up that teaching through applying RRT technique which being supported by learning styles (visual and auditory) are to develop the students' reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** Reading Comprehension; Reciprocal Teaching Technique (RTT); Learning Styles

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## INTRODUCTION

Learning styles are many different and many definitions (Coffield, Moseley, Hall, & Ecclestone, 2004; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Lincoln & Rademacher, 2006; Pashler, McDaniel, Rohrer, & Bjork, 2008). The term learning style describes an individual's preferred or habitual ways of processing knowledge and transforming the knowledge into personal knowledge (Felder & Spurlin, 2005; L. Wang, 2007). As part of learning

styles, reading is one of the language skills that everyone should acquire. In foreign language teaching especially English, many of students rarely use their English in their daily activities, they only use and learn it in a formal situation. They will be helped to acquire a foreign language by reading the text (Fauziati, 2010; Kasper & Rose, 2001; Yu, 2018). In the reading process, the readers have to create meaning through their creative thinking by combining their background knowledge, experiences, and situation with

the information which is stated in the text (Joshi & Aaron, 2000).

Underpinned by this real fact, the government of Indonesia placed English as a compulsory subject for senior high school student. In curriculum 2013, English is included into group A which determined as compulsory subject along with religion and character building education, civic education and *Pancasila*, Indonesian, mathematics, Indonesia history, and English (The regulation of education and culture minister number 69, 2013, p. 10). In addition, the objective of teaching reading in curriculum 2013 for senior high school is understanding various of meanings (interpersonal, ideational and textual) in various oral interactional texts and monolog specially descriptive, narrative, spoof/recount, procedure, report, news item, anecdote, exposition, explanation, discussion, commentary and review.

From the regulation above, it is obvious that every student in senior high school has to master various kinds of text. Through reading, the students not only create the message of the text but also acquire language components such as grammar and vocabulary, which is really required to master English. The students read a text to seize knowledge, information, and pleasure, all of these has the main prominent goal is comprehension. Reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through the interaction and involvement with written language. In other words, comprehension is the process of creating meaning through interaction between the reader and the text (Coiro, 2003; Hannon & Daneman, 2001; Snow, 2002). To create good understanding, the readers involve many aspects of reading such as their intellectual ability, kind of text, kind of activity, learning style and many more (Wang, 2018).

Based on the researchers' observation before the treatment, most of the students were uninterested in learning reading. Some of them talked with their friends, daydreamt, scratched on the paper and many more. Meanwhile, the teacher read the text for them,

asked them to read it alternately, explained it in Indonesian and asked them to answer the following questions. In this case, this situation was occurred because of the absence of specific method in teaching reading. The teacher became a center of reading activity; the students became inactive and dependent learners who used to expect the explanation from the teacher. In addition, the teacher didn't give any motivation or specific purpose before conducting a reading activity. Thus, reading activity was boring and meaningless. Dealing with this problem, the researchers concluded that the teacher has to find an appropriate method in teaching reading. From the explanation of the problem above, it could be drawn a conclusion that this reading instruction tends to focus on teacher created a question that measures students' comprehension rather than improve metacognitive strategies.

Furthermore, based on the interview which was conducted on the same day of observation, the researchers asked students' responses about reading activity in their classes. From the interview, the researchers found that they were not enthusiastic and interested in reading because the activity was boring. It means that the teacher didn't involve them to be active readers. Hence, they ignored the teacher's explanation and command. Again, they also said that they couldn't find their comfort and enjoyment in reading. The researchers inferred that they didn't know their learning preference thus, they couldn't enjoy reading. In conclusion, these problems lead them to be a poor reader. Only a few of students with a high willingness and high motivation understand the text implicitly and most of them didn't.

Based on the explanation above, it is obvious that those problems caused the students to be slow readers. The researchers tried using the method to improve their reading comprehension ability. Hence, the researchers applied the Reciprocal Teaching Technique (RTT) to improve their reading comprehension ability (Gruenbaum, 2012; Harper & De Jong, 2004; Ingersoll &

Schreibman, 2006; Oczkus, 2003; Seymour & Osana, 2003; Stricklin, 2011). The researchers involved RTT because these reading comprehension techniques can create an independent and active reader. In conducting RTT, the activities focus on students' center and the teacher becomes a mediator and monitor. In addition, learning style or learning preference is considered to be involved due to an uncomfortable condition when they read the text as the researcher explained above.

Teaching technique is one of the most important factors which determine the success or the failure of foreign language teaching and learning. According to Richards & Renandya (2002), technique or strategies help the reader to get better comprehension, by conducting specific technique they seem like an expert and invite them to be more active. In addition to teaching technique, another factor that also influences the success or the failure of foreign language teaching and learning is learning the style. According to Ellis (2015) language learners vary on a number of dimensions to do with personality, learning style, motivation, aptitude and also age. In other words, based on the experts' ideas technique and learning style must be considered by the teacher before conducting foreign language teaching because they are some of the variables that decided the success of it. It is a process by the learner to assist them to obtain, storage, retrieval of information. It also assists the students to make the learning process easier and more successful.

Learning style is assumed to be a significant variable which determine the success or failure in acquiring English language learning. Since the learners differ in their preferences to the certain learning styles, it will be important for an educator to know the variations of students on the features of their learning styles because the information about students' learning style can help the teachers or lecturers become aware of the students' differences bring to the classroom (Hawk & Shah, 2007; Joy & Kolb, 2009; Neuhauser, 2002; L. Wang, 2007). DePorter

and Henarckiar argue there are three kinds of learning style preferences based on their own modalities: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Visual learners are learners who prefer to learn via the visual channel. Therefore, they like to read a lot; they also require high concentration and time spent alone. Auditory learners are students who enjoy the oral-aural learning channel. Thus, they want to engage in discussions, conversations, and group work. Kinesthetic learners are learners who prefer to learn via physical involvement such as taking a field trip, dramatizing, pantomiming, or interview (Bobbi & Hernacki, 2002; DePoter & Hernacki, 2000). In reading class, learning styles do exist and influence students' comprehension in an invisible way. Sometimes, students do not recognize how it really works. The most obvious sign can be seen when they can't enjoy reading and feel bored to read the text. In this research, the researchers only focused on two widely discussed learning styles namely visual and auditory. It was determined because of several reasons, the first reason was the difficulty to identify kinesthetic learner in reading activity, the second was the result of preliminary questioner which most of the students owns visual and auditory learning preference and the last one was the limitation on sample number in this research.

Whereas, RTT focuses on four cognitive steps namely predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarizing. According to Slavin (2002), reciprocal teaching technique is a small group teaching method based on principles of question generation; through instruction and modeling, teachers foster metacognitive skill primarily to improve the reading performance of students who have poor skill. In reciprocal technique students learn in small group discussion, they examine and interpret the text they are asked to read. Students who apply RTT will learn the explicit reading comprehension instruction, learn how and when to use the strategies and become self-regulated in the use of this strategy.

## METHOD

This research was a quantitative method with a quasi-experimental research design. The experimental design was applied in this study to investigate the effect of RTT and students learning style on students reading comprehension.

The design of this research was factorial design 2x2; it consisted of two independent variables and one dependent variable. The independent variable was RTT and students' learning style. The dependent variable was reading comprehension.

The experimental group received a treatment of some sort (such as a new textbook or a different method of teaching) and the comparison group receives a different treatment. The comparison group was crucially important in all experimental research, for it enabled the researcher to determine whether the treatment has had an effect or whether one treatment is more effective than another (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011).

Furthermore, the group was given pre-test before treatment and post-test after treatment. These tests were aimed to see significant improvement before and after treatment. They also got the questioner in order to determine their learning style and interview to get clear information about teaching and learning activity.

Data analysis was conducted using a method of quantitative or statistical methods. Data analysis techniques used in this study was ANOVA 2 (two) ways or two-dimensional analysis of variance. Before implementing ANOVA, the data was the requirement of normality and homogeneity.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to obtain the empirical evidence about the significant effect of teaching method using RTT and students' learning style on students' reading comprehension. There are a lot of teaching

methods may support and improve students' performance, especially in reading. In this study, the researchers applied the Reciprocal Teaching Technique (RTT) method. The researchers also involved two students' learning style, visual and auditory. This study also investigated which method works best for both learning style.

Teaching methods basically assisted the students to get better comprehension and improved their performance in reading. In this study, conducting specific methods (RTT) was expected to be able to improve their reading comprehension ability. It also was expected to encourage the students to be more active in reading. It was considered because there were some metacognitive steps in each method which supported the students to be good readers. It was in line with Richards (2002) who stated that the teaching method helps the reader to get better comprehension and by conducting it they look like an expert and become more active. In the previous research which was conducted by Ola Mabekoje (Mabekoje, 2011)

In this study, RTT has given an average contribution to students' reading comprehension. On the contrary, based on numerical data which was obtained from the reading score test, the score was improved. The mean score of visual learners in RTT was 79.16. Furthermore, the mean score of the auditory learner in RTT was 80.53. Overall, the total mean score of all visual learners in the RTT was 81.31, the auditory learner in RTT was 79.03 and the mean score of the total was 80.14. It could be concluded that the mean score of the students was good, higher than the minimum passing grade which was 75. Even though the score was improved but there was low significant effect of RTT intervention strategy on reading comprehension skill of the fifth grade elementary school disability. This finding was in line with the study of Kamel (Kolang, Tantra, & Ratminingsih, 2013). It could be concluded that RTT gave a significant effect on students reading comprehension score.

In sum up, there was another factor besides teaching method which influences students' reading comprehension; one of them was learning the style. The researchers analyzed that it happened because of several reasons (1) the techniques were implemented to students who have low reading proficiency, thus these methods were quite hard to implement (2) the confusion of cognitive, students who aren't used to use strategy in reading, may have been confused and annoyed by intervention of new strategy. There were only some students who have great willingness were interested in new strategy (3) the number of the students in the class was quite big, it is hard to control every student's ability in implementing the strategy.

Furthermore, based on the observation during the treatment and evaluation after the treatment, the researcher admitted there were some weaknesses that caused the methods were not effective. There were some reasons, the time was insufficient either time of introducing and training the new methods or implementing the methods in real reading and the researcher was not able to control each student's performance during implementing the methods.

In addition, the researcher picked two students from every class to be interviewed about their responses after implementing RTT. The first interview was conducted in RTT class, both of the students said that they were able to use RTT in reading class. They were also glad and interested in using RTT. In addition, RTT improves their enthusiasm and curiosity about the text. They said that RTT quite effective to solve their reading problem. Working in a small group was very fun; they could share their thought and idea about the text with others. If they don't understand the text they easily discuss with others.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the students in the RTT group was able to implement the methods in reading class. The methods gave a positive effect on their reading performance but not significantly on their test. Furthermore, it takes time for them to integrate

comprehension methods into their real reading. Thus, practicing the methods before real reading was recommended for the teacher, in order to streamline the time. Overall, based on statistical analysis the method has given low effect but based on students' performance in reading they were improved.

There was an interactional effect between teaching method and learning style towards students' reading comprehension. Students' reading comprehension was influenced by the implementation of teaching methods and the involvement of students' learning style. Furthermore, it was assumed that suitable reading method and students' learning style affected students' reading comprehension ability. Event ought, the first hypothesis was proven that there was no effect of teaching method toward students' reading comprehension, but when students learning style involved there was interactional effect toward it. It meant the teaching method was not the only one variable that influenced students' reading comprehension. There was another variable such as learning style.

Furthermore, this finding proved the researchers' assumption about RTT technique which was appropriate for each learning style in the classroom. RTT was appropriate for auditory learners because it was conducted in a group work, thus they like to discuss the text with others.

This finding was relevant with the previous study which was conducted by Putri found that there was a significant interaction between kinds of strategy and learning style in improving the reading comprehension. Students' learning style had a contribution to the kind of strategies.

This finding proved that RTT was not appropriate for the visual learner but it was appropriate for auditory learners. They required full concentration on the text and spend their time alone. Meanwhile, in RTT visual learners were asked to discuss the content of the text, they felt difficult to work or to read in a noisy environment (Sukarwan,

2012). Based on its characteristics, visual learner needs to spend a long time reading, on the contrary, their time of reading the text silently and alone was limited. It was contradictive with visual learners' characteristics. That's the reason for visual learner in RTT was lower than visual learners.

It was proven that the auditory learning style would learn better when they achieved RTT. Based on their characteristics, auditory learners tend to read by discussing content with others, listening and asking others about pros and cons of the text and verbalizing their ideas, RTT gave them a chance to be the more active reader (Sukarwan, 2012). Their reading comprehension ability improved because they accepted, argued and analyzed the opinion from others. It could improve and enrich their critical and creative thinking.

It happened because it was the individual activity which focused on the text intensively. Meanwhile, auditory learners had difficulties in reading silently for long period, following written direction and focusing on illustration or text. It could be concluded that auditory learner in RTT could learn better than the visual one.

This finding was supported by the theory which assumed that RTT was appropriate for auditory learner. The visual learner who conducted RTT would be annoyed by the intervention of other students. They could not concentrate on the text in the noisy environment. It means that RTT was not effective for a visual learner. That's the reason for visual learner who was taught by RTT was lower than auditory learners who were taught by RTT.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on finding and discussion, it can be drawn conclusions which are related to the main questions posed in this study. The RRT method gives a positive effect on students' reading comprehension performance. In other words, There is an

interactional effect between teaching method and learning style towards students' reading comprehension. Students' reading comprehension was influenced by the implementation of RRT teaching method and involvement of students' learning style. In summary, applying RTT is more effective for students who have a visual learning style than who were taught by RTT which having an auditory learning style.

Referring to the conclusion above, it can be recommended that the intervention using a new method could affect students get confused and annoyed. It happened because the methods were not familiar with them. Sometimes there are a few students who have high motivation and interested in the new method. Furthermore, the methods were applied to students who have low reading proficiency, thus it was quite hard to implement them effectively.

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