
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' TEXT GENRE AWARENESS AND CRITICAL THINKING DISPOSITION WITH THEIR READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract

This research was aimed at knowing the relationship among three variables, genre awareness (X_1), critical thinking disposition (X_2), and reading comprehension (Y). The study was conducted at SMAN 4 South Tangerang, and the participants were 180 students of the twelfth-grade students. A quantitative method was used to get through this research using the correlation as the design. Some instruments were developed to collect the data; they are tests (genre awareness test and reading comprehension test) and questionnaire to measure students' critical thinking disposition adapted from Facione (2000). In data analysis, r product moment and R multiple regression coefficient tests was applied to test the correlation value through SPSS 21 program. The research found that (1) there is a correlation between genre awareness (X_1) and reading comprehension with correlation value r_o 0.876 which is higher than 0.05, (2) there is a correlation between students' critical thinking disposition (X_2) and their reading comprehension (Y) with value r_o 0.263 which is higher than 0.05, (3) there is a simultaneous correlation among students' genre awareness and critical thinking disposition with their reading comprehension with correlation value $R_{y.12}$ 0.881 and the p -value = 0.00 < 0.05 meaning that the H_o is rejected. The contribution of X_1 and X_2 to support the Y variable is found as 77.5%, or it is stated that reading comprehension success is determined by students' genre awareness and their critical thinking disposition.

Keywords: genre awareness; critical thinking disposition; reading comprehension; english language teaching

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengetahui hubungan tiga variabel yaitu, pengetahuan genre (X_1), sikap kritis (X_2), dan kemampuan membaca (Y). Penelitian ini dilakukan di SMAN 4 Tangerang selatan dan siswa kelas XII sebagai populasi penelitian. Seluruh populasi 180 siswa dipilih sebagai sampel. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode quantitative dan model korelasi sebagai desain penelitian. Adapun untuk menjangkau data, ada beberapa instrument penelitian yang digunakan yaitu tes (test pengetahuan genre dan tes pemahaman membaca) dan kuesioner sikap kritis Facione (2000). Untuk menganalisa data, penelitian ini menggunakan r product moment dan R uji koefisien regresi ganda melalui program SPSS 21. Penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa: (1) terdapat hubungan antara pemahaman genre (X_1) dan pemahaman membaca siswa (Y) dengan nilai korelasi rhitung 0.876 yang mana lebih besar dari 0.05; (2) terdapat hubungan antara sikap kritis siswa (X_2) dan pemahaman membaca (Y) dengan nilai indeks korelasi rhitung 0.263 yang mana lebih besar dari 0.0; (3) terdapat hubungan yang simultan di antara ketiga variable penelitian X_1 , X_2 , dan Y dengan indeks korelasi $R_{y.12}$ 0.881 dan p -value = 0.00 < 0.05 yang menyatakan bahwa H_o ditolak. Kontribusi variable bebas terhadap variable terikat adalah sebesar 77.5%, yang manadapat dikatakan bahwa keberhasilan pemahaman membaca ditentukan oleh pengetahuan siswa terhadap genre dan sikapkritis mereka. Maka, dapat disimpulkan bahwa pengetahuan siswa terhadap genre dan sikap kritis mereka berhubungan dengan kemampuan pemahaman membaca mereka.

Kata kunci: Pengetahuan Genre; Sikap Kritis; Pemahaman Membaca; Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris

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Introduction

Language plays an important role in education since it is used as the media of knowledge transfer among authors, teachers, and students. It can be in the form both spoken and written language. Spoken language takes place in the direct situation and usually happen while the teaching and learning process. On the other side, the written one takes place everywhere; it can be both on the inside and outside the classroom. Written language allows students to foster knowledge and use it to support the learning. Written language is considered as the fundamental aspect of students' success in learning since formal education served learning materials in the form of written language, books.

Most of the students concern on reading skill, to gain knowledge from various sources to fit in today's education. Reading, one of language skills taught from the very beginning of education, is seen as the source of knowledge because fostering knowledge is usually gained through reading. It is the skill needed in all stages of education. Due to its importance, some researches were conducted investigating reading skill regarding how well it be mastered and how to enhance it. Also, reading is one of language skills used as language input. It supports other language skills such as writing. No writing can be developed without reading as well as good output gained by the enhancement of the input. Therefore, reading, the source of knowledge, is an important skill in any learning, so does in language learning.

In EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context, reading is one of the language skills seen as crucial language input. It supports other skills such as productive skills, speaking, and writing. Then, it is seen as the most important language input to enhance language learning. Decoding information from the printed text is how reading is simply defined. It is the process of absorbing

and conveying meanings from the printed text. Having an ability to convey the meaning of the texts takes extensive practices, so the decoding skill goes effortlessly. However, according to (Guest, 2010, p. 35) reading is actually a complicated process of the mind. It needs the activation of the brain to absorb knowledge from the text and interpret its meaning. To absorb knowledge during reading activity, it deals with how the eye and the brain quickly recognize the words; while interpreting meaning deals with understanding the reading passage. In other words, Kamil et al. (2010, p. 200) considered reading as the activity of extracting knowledge from the printed text using readers own language interpretation. In fact, to extract knowledge is not easy because it needs understanding of the language context and vocabulary mastery, so misunderstanding during the reading activity can be avoided. Thus, reading give significances in learning which it is actually a complex activity that takes skillful reader to be successful in it.

Although reading is essential for learning process and outcome, some people seem to believe that learning to read is a particularly challenging (Smith, 2004, p. 3). In Indonesia, it was reported in 2011 by the Vice Minister of Education and Culture (reported from the statistic of Ministry of Education and Culture) that more than 95% of Indonesian students only have medium level of reading ability, while it is very left behind by other countries that most of them have already in advance level. However, like first language reading, reading also becomes challenging for EFL learners (McNamara, 2009, p. 5), for understanding how the words come together in each sentence is not easy as it looks. Readers may understand each word in a sentence, but to understand the relationships between the sentences and the meaning of the text as a whole would not come easy. Additionally, recognizing and understanding foreign language which is rarely used in daily life

become the main reasons for the challenge in EFL reading. It takes more effort for EFL learners to decode and understand the reading passage than the native or ESL learners. Therefore, reading is challenging both in first and foreign language reading.

Due to reading is not an easy task, there are some factors that can affect reading skill. It means that there are some variables related to the skill of reading comprehension. According to Alderson (2000, pp. 32—84), it was summarized that there are two factors that can influence reading comprehension; they are reader factor and text factor. From the readers' factor, there are some factors that lead to reading success. They are readers' background knowledge, motivation, purpose, anxiety, strategies, skills (cognitive and meta-cognitive aspects), rapid word recognition and eye movement, and readers' characteristic (such as personality and gender). It can be said that readers' cognition and affection lead to the success of reading comprehension. Moreover, another aspect which can affect reading skill is the text factor. It is well-known that language is never free from text. The text is used in all language skills. Thus, text affects the way readers convey meaning from it. Text factor which can affect reading is text cohesion, text type or genre, and text readability.

The genre is what readers associate with during the reading process. It is text's attribute, and a language competence taught at schools. Being aware of genre is a way to stimulate reading comprehension. To define genre awareness, Clark (2010, p. 77) elaborates genre awareness refers to the knowledge of genre as how the text is developed, not only know what they are. Students' awareness of genre will make them realize how to use that knowledge during reading or writing because different genres have different purposes and level of difficulty. That is why some people choose a certain genre to read because it deals with readers' enjoyment which

can impact reading comprehension. Risko et al. (2011, p. 376) would like to agree that different text genre provides different purposes, organizations, and language features. Texts have numerous structural and organizational features that affect students' comprehension and word composing. Knowing how texts are built and knowledge of text structure is a great help for building comprehension (Oakhill et al., 2010, p. 82) in which in every genre consists of different text structure which readers have to be aware of to enhance their comprehension in reading.

Additionally, regarding the genre awareness, research was conducted by Rozimela (2014, p. 462) found that being aware of genre helps comprehension because being aware of text genre can increase readers' awareness of the position of key ideas of the text and its contextual dimension. The awareness of the position of key ideas and understanding language through contextual dimension make reading more efficient because it put students' direct recognition of the text structure. Thus, reading comes easier. It is also supported by Chalix (2015, p. 20) which stated that text genre awareness could increase understanding of language through social context. It seems acceptable because language is understood through contextual meaning. Moreover, in line with the previous statement, Devitt (2004, p. 337) agrees that Genres impact students as they read because genre provides schematic structures of the text that can enhance reading comprehension. From these statements, it can be concluded that genre awareness is essential for reading comprehension in the way it gives schemas to readers to detect the main idea of the text so that reading can be more efficient and comprehensive. Thus, it is admitted theoretically that the more aware the readers on text genre, the more comprehension the readers gain.

Relating to genre, reading in senior high school in Indonesia is one of language

components that implemented through genre-based approach. It is provided in various functional texts which consist of various text genres. There are some text genres which are taught in senior high schools such as procedural, analytical exposition, and factual report texts. These different texts have some various characteristics including purposes, structures, and language features (such as grammatical and vocabulary). The genre-based approach was implemented since 2004 through Competence-based curriculum; the students are asked to be able to communicate in English using several selected text of different genres. It is based on the idea that communication cannot be free from text. Those functional texts are taught aimed to enhance students' communicative competence. Besides, according to the 2013 curriculum, the goal of learning text is to teach students the social function and text structure with various language components of the text. It is shifted in the step of KI 3 in the syllabus. Still, text genre is taught in the newest curriculum aimed to force students' genre awareness to enhance students' language learning.

Beside genre awareness, one of skills needed in reading comprehension is critical thinking skill. Critical thinking can be seen as a part of reading comprehension and as a discrete attribute to reading. As it was cited from Ennis (2001, p. 3) critical thinking is classified critical thinking as skill and disposition. When it comes to skill, it is in the area of cognitive domain, and when it comes to disposition it is in the area of affective domain. Reading comprehension needs critical thinking skill because in comprehension involves the skill of how readers should make interpretation and extracting knowledge from text. Cited in Fahim and Sa'epoor (2011, p. 868), Paul stressed the connection between critical thinking and reading comprehension. He found that critical thinkers view things in reflective or careful way, so it supports language

comprehension. In fact, during the reading activity critical thinking is needed to support the meaningful understanding. Thus, it is one of aspects needed in reading comprehension. Critical thinking is one of the best techniques to know comprehension, because it is one of high-level thinking skills that can ensure that readers have good comprehension, known as critical reading comprehension. In that stage of reading, readers' critical thinking during reading is required in achieving this stage. Regarding the connection between critical thinking and reading comprehension, Wijayanti et al. (2014, p. 42) found that by using critical thinking, students had increased their schemata to analyze the text, so critical thinkers are good readers. She also emphasized that critical thinking made comprehension easier, for analyzing texts needs skillful readers. The skill of analysis, the sub-skill of critical thinking, is essential to support the comprehension because in reading comprehension readers need to be skillful in interpreting, classifying, inferring information, and so forth. Therefore, critical thinking can be seen as a skill needed to achieve reading comprehension.

Having discussed the connection between critical thinking and reading, critical thinking is well defined by Ennis (2001, p. 45) as the ability to evaluate and consider things by searching for reliable and sufficient information before making decisions, solving problems, evaluating situations and taking action on any tasks with the most appropriate and accurate ways. It is one of the crucial aspects for successful reading comprehension. It helps reading comprehension because reading contains complicated processes, which need readers to make careful interpretation during the reading. To interpret, readers need a careful and logic thinking. This thinking skill makes reading comes easier and more efficient. Arman (2014, p. 20) agreed that there is no reading without reasoning, thinking

logically. By using critical thinking, reading will be more meaningful and text misinterpretation can be avoided. Thus, some sub-skills of critical thinking are correlated to the indicators of reading comprehension; they almost indicate the same skill.

In general, critical thinking plays a central role in academic instruction because it is what students need to be successful in both academic and real-life situations. One of academic purposes used critical thinking is in language learning. According to Atac (2015, p. 728), critical thinking approaches have more comprehensive view of language. Through shifting critical thinking, students can be more aware of how to learn the language rather than thinking of what to learn. Also, it leads students to be independent learners, which they will not depend on teachers as the only source of knowledge. Also, Arslan (et al., 2014, p. 44) emphasized that although thinking skill is an innate capacity, it is teachable and learnable. Thus, thinking skill can be improved as a basic competence in developing syllabus and lesson plan. The 2013 curriculum, which is still partially used in some schools, emphasizes critical thinking as an approach to make learning more efficient. It carries the term problem based-learning. The learning is conceptualized in students-centered learning. The teaching of critical thinking in school is aimed to prepare students to face globalization era and make the learning more efficient. Thus, critical thinking is shifted to the national curriculum due to its importance and its advantages to take learning more comprehensive.

In spite of the significance and the connection among the controlled variables to reading comprehension, some problems are considered to be the fundamental aspects of conducting further research. First, since the genre is taught in high school, the teaching of genre is seen still unsuccessful, the fact that

students are still not aware of why they are taught language through text genres. Thus, students cannot implement what they have learned about genre into real situation. Meanwhile, it has been explained that genre awareness gives significances for language comprehension. Then, the teaching and learning are less efficient because English learning in schools is accommodated through learning text genre. That is why students are mostly failed in English examination.

Second, some theories found supporting the connection between genre awareness and reading comprehension. Since language is understood through understanding word meaning and the process of language comprehension, as its nature which has been elaborated in some theories above; in fact, reading is relied on the power of the brain to recognize words and to connect word meaning as a whole. In other words, the skill of inference is needed more than knowing text structure. Mazloomi (2014, p. 432) revealed that there is no actual relationship between genre awareness and language proficiency, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. He found that genre awareness is intangible, independent constituent of language which is autonomously thriving. From this point of view, genre awareness is seen as an attribute of language learning which is usually taught formally and a variable which is proven insignificantly correlated to language proficiency which explained that there is no actual relationship to language proficiency. Therefore, the relationship of genre awareness and reading comprehension is still considered questionable and need to be concerned because in Indonesia genre are taught in schools and to know the correlation to its outcome is important.

Next, critical thinking is one of aspects shifted in the newest curriculum, the 2013 curriculum, aimed for students to be independent learners. However, plans are

sometimes plans, because its realization still not accomplished yet. The teaching and learning in the classroom still use the conventional teaching, teacher-centered. Therefore, critical thinking skill is rarely disposed of by students. Additionally, critical thinking skill is not enough, because critical thinking would never be applied without the intention or the tendency of the critical thinkers to use it when the time calls for it. The tendency to use critical thinking when the time calls are called as critical thinking disposition. Once, critical thinking disposition is defined as an intrinsic motivation to use critical thinking abilities when the situation asked. And, it is also defined as an attitude of person on critical thinking. In other words, critical thinking disposition is an attribute of a person for being critical thinker. Zin and Eng (2014, p. 143) saw the correlation between critical thinking disposition and critical reading comprehension, the highest level of reading. They found that there was a correlation between those variables. However, that study was conducted in Malaysia, in which English is a second language. Thus, it found a correlation between both variables. However, in EFL context, it is still unfixed because English is usually used in the context of classroom. A person may be disposed with critical thinking (in first language context), yet the ability of a person to comprehend foreign language text is still unknown. Thus, this research will be concerned with investigating the correlation between critical thinking dispositions and reading comprehension in EFL context.

Based on the existing problems and the need for further investigation regarding the relationship between the variables in the context of EFL high school students, it is attempted to know the relationship of genre awareness, critical thinking disposition, and reading comprehension. Through this research, the investigation will be conducted theoretically, and

in field research regarding the correlation among the variables, so this research will be valid information to the readers about the correlation between genre awareness and critical thinking disposition, with reading comprehension.

Method

This research is conducted using the quantitative method, and the design is correlational study. Three variables are examined in this research, two independent variables and one dependent variable. The first, the independent variable (X1) is correlated to dependent variable (Y). Then, the independent variable (X2) is correlated to dependent variable (Y). The last, the two independent variables (X1) and (X2) is correlated to dependent variable (Y). The design can be illustrated such as bellow:

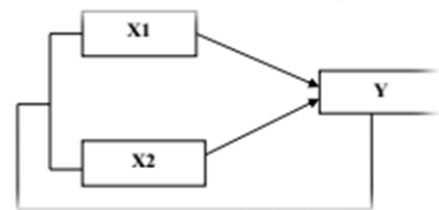


Figure 1.

Note:

X1: Genre Awareness

X2: Critical Thinking Disposition

X3: Reading Comprehension

The data were obtained through some research instruments spread to nearly 180 students that were selected using purposive sampling technique. The instruments are reading comprehension test, genre text awareness test, and critical thinking disposition questionnaires. There were 50 items of reading comprehension test, 40 items of genre text awareness, and 75 items of critical thinking disposition questionnaires. The data then analyzed using SPSS 21 Program by applying “r” correlation

product moment formula and multiple regression.

Results and Discussion

This research is aimed to see the relationship among three variables, students' genre awareness and critical thinking which was assumed in line with students' reading comprehension ability. The research was conducted at SMAN 4 South Tangerang located in Cempaka Putih, Ciputat. Some points occurred to be the reason of why this research was conducted. There are two main reasons that the researcher found to be the problems of this research, so this research is worth to be conducted in the scope of English language teaching. The first reason is due to the reading is an activity which most Indonesian failed in the way they read. They mostly failed in reading due to they are not interested in doing it and because they have low ability at understanding the reading passage. The second reason relying this research is the theory of Alderson (2000, pp. 32-84) stated that reading comprehension is influenced by two factors, reader and text factors. Reader factor is the skill of the reader in affecting the reading activity such as motivation, skill, background knowledge, anxiety, and so forth (skill and psychological aspect). The text factor is about the readability, genre, and coherency of the text.

The critical thinking disposition is seen as students' inclination on the tendency to use critical thinking in certain situation. This is seen as psychological aspect which is related to the success of reading comprehension since reading comprehension needs critical thinking in understanding, interpreting, concluding, and paraphrasing the reading passage. Then, another variable, genre awareness, is also important for reading comprehension because some people associate with certain text while with another is

not. Also, text genre is taught at school for English language approach to teach the students a language context.

The research found that there is a simultaneous relationship between these three variables, students' genre awareness, critical thinking disposition, and their reading comprehension based on the statistical analysis. The statistic found that the role of genre awareness and critical thinking disposition is 77.5% affecting the success of reading comprehension. It is a high percentage value in affecting reading comprehension meaning that students' success of reading comprehension is 77.5% affected by the independent variables. This is in line with the theory of reading comprehension that reading comprehension is not a skill that can stand alone. Some variables affect the success of reading activity. In this research, it was confirmed that students' reading success is determined by their awareness of genre and critical thinking disposition. So, it is justified that this research can state reading comprehension needs the knowledge of genre text and critical thinking disposition.

Regarding the finding of the correlation among the three variables, three hypotheses were formulated to see the determination coefficient of the independent variables toward the dependent variables. In fact, it can be tested at one time using the multiple regressions, but the correlation between one independent variable and the dependent one cannot be stated. Therefore, the testing was conducted in three steps. The first hypothesis testing is testing the correlation between genre awareness and reading comprehension ability of 12th-grade students of SMAN 4 South Tangerang. The statistical analysis found that there is a high correlation between students' genre awareness and reading comprehension in 0.876, meaning that students' genre awareness is very important to support students' reading comprehension.

Tabel 1. Model Summary

model	R	R square	adjusted R square	standard error of the estimate	change in R square	F change	df numerator	df denominator	significance change
1	.881 ^a	.775	.773	5.171	.775	305.463	2	17	.000

The knowledge of genre is good for students because by understanding genre text which is taught in English subject make them aware of the language context in appropriate with the time boundaries made in the English language structure such as understanding the use of past tenses, presents continuous tens, and so forth. Also, the knowledge of genre enables students to detect main idea easily because understanding genre understands the rhetorical concept of a text, such as knowing the structure of the text which is efficient for reader to do reading activity. This is in line with the statement of Richard & Renandya (2002, p. 279) stating that genre has a structure of language that contributes the development of students' reading comprehension. Therefore, this research found that there is a correlation between students' genre awareness and their reading comprehension as well these variables were analyzed statistically and theoretically.

Then, the second hypothesis testing to confirm the correlation between students' critical thinking disposition and their reading comprehension was conducted through applying Pearson correlation test. The research found that there is a correlation between the independent variable (X₂), critical thinking disposition, and reading comprehension (Y). The statistical analysis found that the correlation value is r_o 0.263 which is higher than the r_{table} 0.149. The hypothesis testing was confirmed and the result showed that there is a correlation between critical thinking disposition and reading

comprehension. However, the value of correlation coefficient interprets that the correlation value is low.

Although the correlation exists, the significant value does not represent the data. In other words, the research states that there is a slight correlation between students' critical thinking disposition and their reading comprehension. Reading may be affected by critical thinking disposition slightly, so critical thinking disposition has a role to affect the success of reading comprehension although it has little impact on reading comprehension. This result confirmed the theory with state critical thinking disposition is in line with students' success in reading comprehension activity since reading comprehension calls for readers to be critical in analyzing, paraphrasing, interpreting, and reacting or judging the reading passage. It does not end with comprehension but also beyond the text (Wallace, 2004, p. 93). Thus, based on the statistical analysis and theoretical principles, the research state that the relation of critical thinking disposition and reading comprehension happen, although it was not like genre awareness that gives contribution 0.876 to reading comprehension, critical thinking disposition makes some relations to reading comprehension.

Moreover, based on the result of correlation coefficient between critical thinking disposition and reading comprehension, critical thinking disposition did give only slight impact on reading comprehension it can also be stated that if students have low critical thinking disposition, they still can do reading activity. This is reasonable since the reading passages given to the students are in English in which language skill is more needed than psychological aspect like critical thinking disposition. Thus, it does not matter a lot if students' critical thinking disposition is low toward their reading comprehension ability. On the contrary, genre

awareness is a language skill that students should deal with English language learning to support their ability in reading activity.

Also, in doing a correction on students' working on the test, some information obtained. In genre awareness test, some students mostly failed in understanding analytical exposition text and mostly good at knowing and understanding narrative text. This was found from the students' answers that most of them were failed and gave the wrong answer to the part of analytical exposition text. While in reading comprehension test, they mostly failed at understanding questions of judgment, or critical reading questions. In this type of question, students were asked to react to the text or to determine whether the statement is correct based on the reading passage. However, they made it good at answering questions that contain asking some detailed information. This was known as type of testing comprehension at the literal meaning level or the surface level of reading comprehension. From these, it can be concluded that the students of the twelfth grade SMAN 4 South Tangerang only have reading comprehension ability in the literal meaning only, while the upper ability such as making inference and judgment are still low.

In conclusion, reading comprehension ability is found to be in line with students' genre awareness and critical thinking disposition. It was statistically analyzed that there was a simultaneous relationship among the variables showing that the correlation coefficient among the variables is 0.881. It was a strong correlation value based on correlation coefficient. Then, reflecting from the statistical analysis, genre awareness gives more contribution on reading comprehension ability than critical thinking disposition. It was known from the analysis that genre correlates reading comprehension in 0.876 which means give that contribution to reading comprehension and critical thinking contributes

in only 0.263. Then, it is genre awareness that matter or gives impact on reading comprehension based on this research.

Conclusions

Based on the finding of this research, genre awareness is strongly correlated with students' reading comprehension. Then, it is recommended for English teachers in this institution to enhance more on students' genre awareness with various techniques to let students easily understand language in context so their reading comprehension skill is supported.

Moreover, critical thinking disposition also gives contribution to reading comprehension. It is good for teacher to use certain technique to raise their critical thinking disposition because no matter what, critical thinking is needed during reading activity because reading does not only stop with comprehension but there is an activity beyond it called high level of reading comprehension. This action needs to be addressed realizing that most of the students failed at understanding critical reading questions mentioned in the research finding.

Students' ability in reading comprehension is mostly on average or good based on the result of the research. However, they need to be more familiar with English reading to make their reading activity goes effortlessly. Some students did find it difficult to deal with time given during the research, so some of the run out of time before finishing the test. Then, reading a lot of sources is recommended for them.

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