UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE DIRECTED READING ON THE WRITING PERFORMANCE OF ESL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

TOURAN AHOUR

FPP 2010 37
EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE DIRECTED READING ON THE WRITING PERFORMANCE OF ESL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

By

TOURAN AHOUR

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

July 2010
EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE DIRECTED READING ON THE WRITING PERFORMANCE OF ESL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

By
TOURAN AHOUR

July 2010

Chairman: Jayakaran Mukundan, PhD
Faculty: Educational Studies

The aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of cooperative directed reading (CDR) on the writing performance of ESL students. A quasi-experimental research with non-equivalent control group pretest-posttest design was employed. Three intact classes of freshman students taking the expository writing course were used as the sample (N=102) of the study for the duration of one semester. The classes were randomly assigned into Cooperative Directed Reading (CDR) (n=41), Directed Reading without Cooperation (DR-C) (n=40), and No Treatment (NT) (n=21) groups. Two writing samples on two different but comparable expository writing prompts were collected from the groups at the pretest. Then, two main strategies of Cooperative Reading Circles (CRCs) with discussion roles and KWLH (what I know about the topic - what I want to know- what I have learned- how I can learn more) strategy were used in CDR group, while only KWLH strategy was employed in DR-C group. The No Treatment group had only their regular expository writing course activities. At the end of the program, the students were tested on the same writing
prompts as the pretest in order to find out the effect of the experiments on the writing performance of the students in two conditions when the writing prompt was thematically related to the reading topic and when it was thematically unrelated.

For evaluating the writing samples of the students two assessment methods were employed: (1) An analytical scoring scale as the subjective measure for evaluating the seven dimensions of writing (i.e., content, organization, cohesion, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, spelling), as well as fluency, accuracy, and overall writing performance of the students; (2) T-Unit count as the objective measure for assessing the writing fluency, based on Mean T-Unit Length (MTUL), and writing accuracy, based on Mean Error-Free T-Unit Length (MEFTU). In addition, a qualitative analysis of thought processes of students in CDR group was carried out, based on CRCs’ discussion transcripts and their written worksheets during the treatment, to show the effect of reading and discussion on the promotion of students’ critical and creative thinking which would influence their writing performance.

The results of one-way within-subjects (repeated measures) ANOVA and one-way multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) revealed that the CDR group had statistically more significant results, with medium and large effect sizes, in both conditions of the study compared to the DR-C and NT groups. This implies that adding the element of cooperation to the solitary task of reading can enhance the prerequisite knowledge of the students for writing which in turn can improve their writing quality. The results indicated the priority of using cooperative activities in the writing classes rather than individualistic ones. The findings verified the underlying
principles of cooperative learning theory and indirect model of reading for writing as one of the models of reading-writing connection theories.
Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

KESAN PEMBELAJARAN KOOPERATIF TERARAH (COOPERATIVE DIRECTED READING) KE ATAS PRESTASI PENULISAN PELAJAR SARJANA MUDA BAHASA INGGERIS SEBAGAI BAHASA KE DUA

Oleh

TOURAN AHOURL

Julai 2010

Pengerusi: Jayakaran Mukundan, PhD
Faculti: Pengajian Pendidikan

Matlamat kajian ini ialah untuk melihat kesan Pembacaan Kooperatif Terarah (Cooperative Directed Reading (CDR)) ke atas prestasi penulisan pelajar-pelajar Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa ke dua. Kaedah berbentuk kuasi-eksperimen dengan desain pra-ujian – pasca ujian kumpulan terkawal tidak setara telah dipilih untuk penyelidikan ini. Sampel yang digunakan dalam penyelidikan ini terdiri daripada tiga kelas pelajar tahun dua yang mengambil kursus penulisan ekspositori \((N=102)\) bagi tempoh satu semester. Kelas-kelas ini dibahagikan secara rawak kepada kumpulan-kumpulan Pembacaan Kooperatif Terarah (Cooperative Directed Reading (CDR)) \((n=41)\), Pembacaan Terarah tanpa Koperasi (Directed Reading without Cooperation (DR-C)) \((n=40)\), dan Tanpa Rawatan (No Treatment (NT)) \((n=21)\). Dua sampel penulisan ekspositori dorongan yang berlainan tetapi boleh dibandingkan diambil dari kumpulan tersebut semasa pra-ujian. Kemudian, dua strategi utama iaitu Lingkaran Pembacaan Kooperatif (Cooperative Reading Circles (CRC)) dengan
peranan perbincangan dan strategi KWLH (apa yang saya tahu megenai topic tersebut- apa yang isgin saya tahu- apa yang saya telah pelajari- bagaimana saya boleh belajar dengan lebih mendalam) telah digunakan dalam kumpulan CDR, manakala hanya strategi KWLH telah digunakan dalam kumpulan DR-C. Kumpulan Tanpa Rawatan hanya menjalankan aktiviti penulisan ekspositori yang biasa dalam kursus mereka. Di hujung program, pelajar telah diuji dengan dorongan penulisan yang serupa sebagai pra-ujian untuk melihat kesan eksperimen tersebut ke atas prestasi penulisan mereka dalam dua keadaan, iaitu tema dorongan penulisan berkaitan dengan topik bacaan dan tema dorongan penulisan tidak berkaitan dengan topik bacaan.

Dua metod penilaian telah digunakan bagi menilai sampel penulisan pelajar: (1) Skala skor analitikal (analytical scoring scale) sebagai pengukuran subjektif untuk menilai tujuh dimensi penulisan (isi kandungan, organisasi, kohesif, perbendaharaan kata, tatabahasa, tanda bacaan, ejaan), dan juga kelancaran, ketepatan dan prestasi penulisan keseluruhan pelajar; (2) Pengiraan Unit-T (T-Unit) sebagai pengukuran penilaian kelancaran penulisan, berdasarkan Purata Panjang Unit-T (Mean T-Unit Length (MTUL)), dan ketepatan penulisan berdasarkan Purata Panjang Bebas-Kesalahan Unit-T (Mean Error-Free T-Unit Length (MEFTU)).Tambahan pula, satu analisis proses pemikiran pelajar- pelajar di dalam kumpulan CDR telah dilaksanakan, berpandukan pada transkrip perbincangan CRC dan hasil penulisan kertas kerja semasa rawatan, untuk menunjukkan kesan pembacaan dan perbincangan dari promosi pemikiran secara kritikal dan kreatif para pelajar yang dapat mempengaruhi prestasi penulisan mereka.
Analisis satu-arah dalam subjek (pengulangan langkah-langkah) ANOVA dan analisis satu-arah multivariat kovarians (MANCOVA) menunjukkan bahawa kumpulan CDR secara statistiknya mempunyai keputusan yang lebih signifikan, dengan saiz kesan sederhana dan besar, dalam kedua-dua kondisi berbanding kumpulan DR-C dan NT. Ini menunjukkan bahawa dengan menambah elemen koperasi kepada tugas membaca secara berseorangan dapat meningkatkan pengetahuan yang diperlukan oleh pelajar untuk tugas tugas penulis yang mana akan meningkatkan pula kualiti penulisan mereka. Hasil kajian membayangkan kepentingan menggunakan aktiviti kooperatif dalam kelas penulis berbanding aktiviti secara individu. Dapatan kajian juga mengesahkan prinsip-prinsip asas teori pembelajaran kooperatif dan model pembacaan tidak langsung untuk penulis sebagai salah satu model yang berkaitan dengan teori pembacaan-penulis.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all I am grateful to GOD for giving me the strength, patience and hope throughout the ups and downs of my PhD journey.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to Associate Professor Dr. Jayakaran Mukundan the chairman of my supervisory committee for his invaluable guidance and suggestions throughout the completion of this study. He was a great help in promoting my research knowledge and experience. Without his guidance and encouragement this work would not be possible.

I would also like to thank Associate Professor Dr. Arshad Abu Samad, my supervisory committee member and the Deputy Dean of the Faculty, for his guidance and encouragement throughout the process. With patience, whenever needed, he readily expressed his opinion on my work.

My special thanks go to Associate Professor Dr. Shameem Rafik Galea, my supervisory committee member and head of the English Department in the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, for her encouragement and intellectual support. I sincerely appreciate her great help during the course of the study and in providing the condition for my data collection.

Finally, I would like to offer my special gratitude to my parents for their emotional support without which this journey would be difficult to come to an end.
I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 26 July 2010 to conduct the final examination of Touran Ahour on her doctoral thesis entitled “Effect of Cooperative Directed Reading on the Writing Performance of ESL Undergraduate Students” in accordance with the Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

Members of the Thesis Examination Committee were as follows:

Ghazali Mustapha, PhD  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Chairman)

Nooreen Noordin, PhD  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
/Internal Examiner

Chan Swee Heng, PhD  
Professor  
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
/Internal Examiner

Hitomi Masuhara, PhD  
Lecturer  
Leeds Metropolitan University  
United Kingdom  
/Internal Examiner

SHAMSUDDIN SULAIMAN, PhD  
Professor and Deputy Dean  
School of Graduate Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date: 30 September 2010
This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Jayakaran Mukundan, PhD  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Chairman)

Arshad Abu Samad, PhD  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Member)

Shameem Rafik Galea, PhD  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Member)

HASANAH MOHD GHAZALI, PhD  
Professor and Dean  
School of Graduate Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  

Date: 21 October 2010
DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

__________________________
TOURAN AHOUR

Date: 26 July 2010
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRAK</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROVAL</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECLARATION</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>xv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>xviii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF APPENDICES</td>
<td>xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</td>
<td>xxii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION

**Background**

1

**Statement of the Problem**

10

**Objectives and Hypotheses of the Study**

14

**Significance of the Study**

18

**Limitations of the Study**

21

**Operational Definitions**

22

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Introduction**

29

**Directed Reading and Teachers’ roles**

31

**Cooperative reading in Non-Fiction Literature Circles**

33

**Studies on the effect of cooperative activities on learning**

37

**Studies on Reading-Writing connection**

43

**Studies in L1**

43

**Studies in L2**

51

**Shared Knowledge and Process in Reading-Writing Connection**

61

**Performance-based Correlational Studies**

61

**Process-based Correlational Studies**

62

**Experimental Studies**

62

**Thought Process in Reading and Writing**

63

**Theories Related to the Study**

64

**Cooperative Learning Theory**

64

**Reading-Writing Connection Theories**

68

**Reading Theory**

73

**Writing Theory**

76

**Schema Theory**

78

**Second Language Acquisition Theories: Input Hypothesis**

82
| Theoretical Framework of the Study | 83 |
| Conceptual Framework of the Study  | 87 |

3 METHODOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of the Study</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Framework of the Study</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity of the Design</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot Study</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability and Validity of the Instrument</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-rater Reliability</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis and Results</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the Findings from the Pilot Study</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Study</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling and the Sample Size</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of the Study</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raters and Rater Training</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-rater Reliability</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-posttest within Group Differences in Writing Fluency and Accuracy</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Differences in Overall Writing Performance</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Differences in Writing Fluency and Accuracy</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Differences in Seven Dimensions of Writing</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-posttest within Group Differences in MTUL and MEFTUL</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Differences in MTUL and MEFTUL</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the Results</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Analysis of Thought Process</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role of Discussion Roles in the Process of Thinking</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Complete Scenario of a Focused Group CRC</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role of KWLH Strategy in Thinking Process</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Description of the Classroom Condition of Reading in DR-C group</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION

Introduction 228
Summary of the Quantitative Findings 228
  Within Group Comparisons 228
  Between Group Comparisons 230
Findings from the Qualitative Analysis of 231
  Thought Process
Gains from the Pretest to the Posttest for Each Group 234
  Effect of CDR on the Writing Fluency and Accuracy 234
  Effect of DR-C on the Writing Fluency and Accuracy 236
  Effect of NT on the Writing Fluency and Accuracy 238
Effect of Reading on Writing 238
  Thematically Related versus Thematically Unrelated 242
  Reading-Writing Connection
Effect of Cooperative Activities on Writing Performance 244
Indirect Model of Reading for Writing in the Study 246
Cooperative versus Individualistic Learning 248

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND 249
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH
Introduction 249
Summary of the Major Findings 250
Implications 253
Recommendations for Future Research 254
Conclusion 258

REFERENCES 260
APPENDICES 276
BIODATA OF STUDENT 367
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS 368