



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

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

TOURAN AHOUR

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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**

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of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**EFFECT OF COOPERATIVE DIRECTED READING ON THE WRITING
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July 2010

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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.



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

Oleh

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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 mengenai 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 penulisan yang mana akan meningkatkan pula kualiti penulisan mereka. Hasil kajian membayangkan kepentingan menggunakan aktiviti kooperatif dalam kelas penulisan berbanding aktiviti secara individu. Dapatan kajian juga mengesahkan prinsip-prinsip asas teori pembelajaran kooperatif dan model pembacaan tidak langsung untuk penulisan sebagai salah satu model yang berkaitan dengan teori pembacaan-penulisan.

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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.

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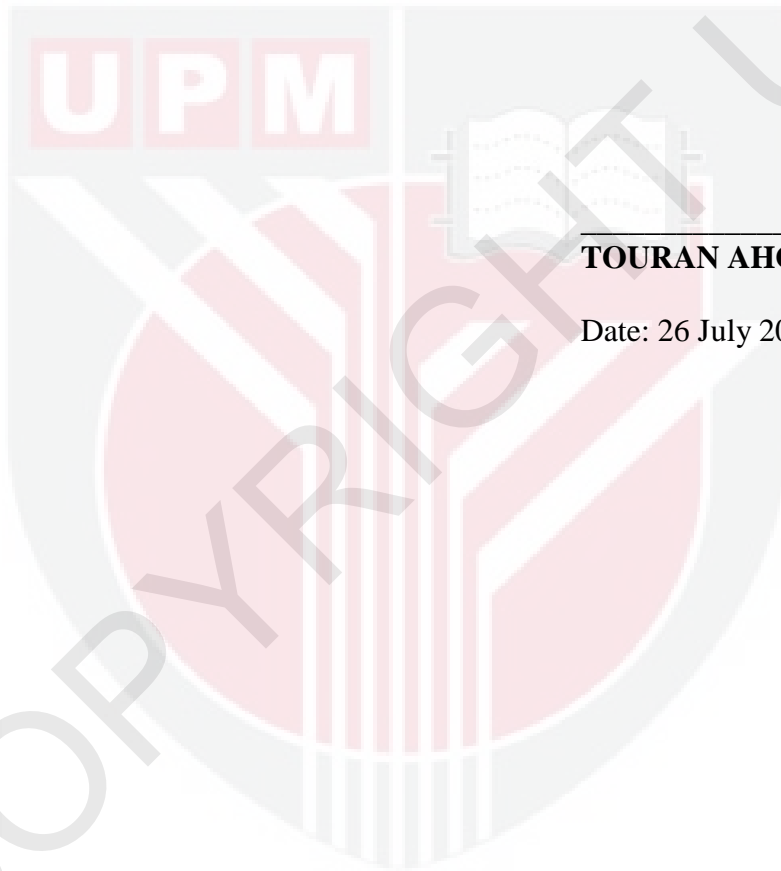
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DECLARATION

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.



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Date: 26 July 2010



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