

The course consisted of two English passages as an initial test, twenty Indonesian passages, and two more English passages as a final measure of transfer. The control group, which consisted of English department students, received only the four English passages. The length of the passages ranged from 675 to 775 words. Each passage was followed by ten multiple choice questions. Each question had four choices. The English passages were written within a 500 word vocabulary and the Indonesian passages were within an 800 word vocabulary. Each group was given two passages per week. No homework was given and there were no associated lectures except one given at the beginning of the course. A small amount of individual advice was given.

Results

Effects of training in reading speed

Groups	n	Indonesian		English	
		Before	After	Before	After
Control	24	—	—	206	230
	(a) 16	213	375	206	364
English dept	(b) 12	213	329	206	355
	(a) 20	173	267	126	211
Education dept	(b) 20	171	270	133	237

(a) without before-questions
(b) with before-questions

The results show

- For English Department students
- a gain of 65% in Indonesian reading speed.
 - a gain of 75% in English reading speed as a result of transfer.
 - a superiority of 5% for the method not using before-questions

For Education Department students

- a gain of 54% in Indonesian reading speed.
- a gain of 72% in English reading speed.
- a superiority of 11% for the method using before-questions.

Comprehension remained at the desired level for both groups. The control group made an increase in speed of 12%. When this is subtracted from the average of the two experimental groups, the increase in English reading speed as the result of transfer is 62.5%.

DISCUSSION

The results of the experiment show that there is a large amount of reading speed transfer from Indonesian to English. Where English is taught as a foreign language it would seem desirable for a variety of reasons, several of them not directly pedagogical, to give speed reading training in the national language or the mother-tongue. The necessary material is not difficult to prepare, consisting merely of passages with questions.

The results regarding the use of before-questions is contradictory. One group showed a greater increase with before-questions, the other showed a greater increase without before-questions. It seems that before-questions do not necessarily have effect suggested by West.

Further research needs to be done to compare the effect on English reading speed of training in English with training in the mother-tongue or national language. As Indonesian was not the mother-tongue of most of the subjects in this experiment, training in the mother-tongue could be compared with training in the national language. One may predict however that whatever approach is used, the transfer will be considerable.

REFERENCES

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- West, M. 1941. Learning to Read a Foreign Language. London: Longmans.