INCREASING THE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION BY USING RECIPROCAL TEACHING STRATEGY

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Abstrak

Tujuan Penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui: (1) apakah strategi pengajaran Reciprocal bisa meningkatkan nilai siswa dalam pemahaman membaca atau tidak; (2) sejauh mana pengaruh strategi tersebut dalam meningkatkan nilai siswa. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian Pre-Eksperimen dengan menggunakan desain satu kelompok Pre-test dan Post-test yang dilaksanakan terhadap siswa kelas sebelas SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pontianak Tahun Akademik 2011/2012. Teknik pengambilan data yang digunakan adalah teknik pengukuran. Analisa data menunjukkan bahwa nilai T lebih besar dari tabel T (2.127>2.021) pada level signifikansi 0.05. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa hipotesa keja diterima dan hipotesa nol ditolak. Nilai rata-rata pre-test siswa adalah 51.5 sementara nilai rata-rata post-test siswa adalah 80.8. Temuan ini menujukkan bahwa strategi pengajaran Reciprocal secara signifikan dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa. Analisa data juga menunjukkan bahwa pengaruh strategi pengajaran Reciprocal sangat tinggi. Dari temuan ini bisa disimpulkan bahwa strategi pengajaran Reciprocal sangat mempengaruhi pemahaman siswa dalam membaca dan dianggap sebagai strategi pengajaran yang efektif dalam meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa.

Kata Kunci : Meningkatkan, Reciprocal, Pemahaman membaca

Abstract

This research was aimed at finding out: (1) whether or not Reciprocal Teaching Strategy significantly increased the students' achievement in reading comprehension; (2) the effect size of the strategy in increasing the students' achievement. This research was a pre- experimental study using one group pretest-posttest design carried out at the eleventh grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pontianak in the Academic Year of 2011/2012. The data were collected by using measurement technique. Data analysis showed that t-value was higher than t-table (2.127>2.021) at 0.05 level of significance. It means that the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. The mean score of pre-test was 51.5 and the mean score of post-test was 80.8. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of Reciprocal Teaching Strategy significantly increases the students' reading comprehension. The analysis of effect size showed that the effect size was categorized as high category. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of reciprocal teaching strategy highly influenced the students' reading comprehension and was considered as effective teaching strategy in increasing the students' reading comprehension.

Keyword: Increasing, Reciprocal, Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the change of paradigm in national curriculum of teaching and learning process in Indonesia becomes a new phenomenon in positioning the teacher and the students' roles in the classroom. Competency-Based Curriculum and KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan), for example, brought a new system by emphasizing the students as the main actor during the teaching and learning process, which had created a new atmosphere of the classroom.

As the assumption of non-constructivist approaches toward learning has been believed that as long as students are provided with knowledge, they will be able to use it. Education based on that assumption is, thus, primarily concerned with transferring substance to the students, and little importance is placed on the role of the learning activity. From a constructivist view, on the other hand, learning is the process of constructing knowledge - not merely obtaining it - in social environments. Therefore, the teacher might select an appropriate teaching and learning strategy in order to come into the process of constructing knowledge.

One of the successful strategies in increasing the students' ability on reading skill, particularly on understanding the meaning of text is by applying the *Reciprocal Teaching* strategy. Palinscar and Brown (1984: 27) describe the concept of *Reciprocal Teaching* as an instructional activity that takes place in the form of a dialogue between teachers and students regarding to the segments of text. The dialogue is structured by the use of four strategies: predicting, clarifying, question generating, and summarizing. The teacher and students take turns assuming the role of teacher in leading this dialogue.

The purpose of *Reciprocal Teaching* is to facilitate a group effort between teacher and students as well as among students in the task of bringing meaning to the text. Each strategy was selected for the following purpose: (1) Predicting (2) Clarifying (3) Question generating, and (4) Summarizing, each of these strategies was selected as a means of aiding students to construct meaning from text as well as a means of monitoring their reading to ensure that they in fact understand what they read. On the other hands, *Reciprocal Teaching* is a technique used to develop comprehension of expository text in which teacher and students take turns leading

a dialogue concerning sections of a text. Four activities are incorporated into the technique: prediction, clarifying misleading or complex sections of the text, questioning, and summarizing.

Regarding to the explanation above, the use of reciprocal teaching has attempted to develop the students in learning the language by acquiring the knowledge through learning the language. The key point of reciprocal teaching is the strategy built in order to set the students in process oriented of learning. When the students read the text, they might understand the ideas. In reciprocal teaching strategy, each step of activity is applied systematically.

In attempting this strategy, the writer selected the eleventh grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah I Pontianak as the subject of research. The choice of this subject is because the writer found that the students were difficult to understand the ideas of the reading text when they were reading. Because of their lack of vocabulary, they focused on how to translate the unfamiliar words they found during the reading rather than try to use the context clues.

Therefore, the writer conducted an experimental research as the effort to bring the students out from their own problems of understanding the meaning of text in reading comprehension skill. To complete this research, the writer applied the *Reciprocal Teaching* strategy as a strategy to increase the students' reading comprehension on the reading text.

Considering the background above, the writer formulated the problems of this study as follows: (1) Does the use of reciprocal teaching strategy significantly increase the students' reading comprehension; (2) What is the effect size of reciprocal teaching strategy in increasing the students' reading comprehension?

Based on the problem statements above the objective of the study was to find out: (1) whether or not the use of reciprocal teaching strategy is effective in increasing the students' reading comprehension; (2) the effect size of this strategy in increasing the students' reading comprehension.

According to Beers (2000: 12-15), reading is a process that includes three phases: before-reading, during-reading, and after-reading. In the *before-reading* phase, the reader establishes in his mind a purpose and a plan for reading. Now

the reader begins to read the written text - the *during-reading* phase. While he reads, he will think about his purpose for reading and about his prior knowledge. This may occur during short pauses he takes.

The *after-reading* phase of the process occurs when the reader finishes reading the written text. The reader takes time to think about what he knew before the reading and what he learned or what connections he made during the reading, and then he links this information together to build new knowledge. Throughout the reading process, but specifically in the during-reading phase, vocabulary strategies can be useful to improve comprehension. While he reads, he will recognize the connection between vocabulary knowledge and reading ability.

In the pre-reading activity, the teacher might give the students an opportunity to talk to each other about segments of a short story, chapter, or poem and predict what will happen next. The teacher will make inferences and generalizations about the characters, setting, mood/tone, plot/action, conflicts, and point of view by discussing the segments to the students. Moreover, the teacher can also give students practice in predicting what a passage will be about. The students will also learn to activate prior knowledge by connecting some information concerning the topic when they approach a reading assignment. They will further develop their skill at monitoring their own reading comprehension and will develop their understanding of narrative conventions. Enables students to stop and make predictions prior to reading as well as encourages students to reflect on what they have read. Students form an impression of the chapters from a list of words, but are not able to create entire episodes that they will encounter in reading.

In relation to the explanation above, the teacher might also strongly concern to the process of reading. He should help the students to make predictions about the text; compare and contrast events, ideas, and characters; visualize the information that is described in the text; and make connections to prior knowledge. Then, he can help students to learn in monitoring their comprehension silently as they read; not only that, requiring the students to find a passage in the

text that illustrates an example of something, such as a literary element or a technique, specified by the teacher, then discuss and defend their choices.

The students retell specific events from the novel or retell the plot in its entirety, either written or spoken form. The teacher can provide a strategy for students to engage in critical thinking and reflection as they read, discuss, and respond to the book. A collaboration between critical thinking and reflection is the heart of this approach. This approach implies that the teacher will help the students to improve their reading comprehension by emphasizing the importance of careful, repeated readings of material.

Many educators believe that all teachers and parents should have access to some resources and to the research that forms the foundation upon which they are constructed. The central objective of reading is the comprehension of the materials being read. Though it is not only a facet of reading, related but also distinguished from aspects such as fluency and phonemic awareness, reading comprehension is still the "essence of reading" (Durkin, 1993: 38).

We, the teachers therefore address it early, because it is so crucial to future lifelong learning, and because the lesson plans, strategies, and even our worksheets and assessment tools should go to the heart of reading comprehension as a part of every subject. From the outset, it is clear that a student's exposure and experience are critical factors. Actually engaging in the study of language patterns the writers use, rather than just discussing them, promotes "completeness" in a student's competencies to comprehend new materials through text. As teachers and as parents, there are numerous things we can do to provide readiness at earlier grades and to further a student's arsenal of tools for full comprehension as they move into the later elementary years and beyond.

There are some aspects of reading comprehension to be mastered by the students, they are:

1. Understanding the Main Ideas

According to McNeil & Dunant (1982: 215-219), Good readers are active readers. From the outset they have clear goals in mind for their reading. They constantly evaluate whether the text, and their reading of it, is meeting their goals.

Good readers typically look over the text before they read, noting such things as the structure of the text and text sections that might be most relevant to their reading goals. As they read, good readers frequently make predictions about what is to come. They read selectively, continually making decisions about their reading--what to read carefully, what to read quickly, what not to read, and what to re-read, and so on.

Furthermore, good readers construct, revise, and question the meanings they make as they read. They draw upon, compare, and integrate their prior knowledge with material in the text. They think about the authors of the text, their style, beliefs, intentions, historical milieu, and so on. They monitor their understanding of the text, making adjustments in their reading as necessary. Furthermore, good readers try to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts in the text, and deal with inconsistencies or gaps as needed. They evaluate the text's quality and value, and react to the text in a range of ways, both intellectual and emotional.

Good readers read different kinds of text differently. For example, when reading narrative, good readers attend closely to the setting and characters; when reading expository text these readers frequently construct and revise summaries of what they have read. For good readers, text processing occurs not only during 'reading' as we have traditionally defined it, but also during short breaks taken during reading, and even after the 'reading' itself has commenced. Comprehension is a consuming and complex activity, but one that, for good readers, is typically both satisfying and productive.

In addition, at the end of the reading comprehension activity, the readers are supposed to define and to understand the main ideas and supporting ideas from the reading text. Understanding the main and supporting ideas is a skill that the readers can find what is the reading text telling about in general. The concept of general or main ideas of the text can be described within three characteristics, they are:

a) Inductive process, the process of searching the main ideas of the text that is assumed in the beginning lines of paragraph.

b) Deductive process, the process of searching the main ideas of the text that is assumed in last lines of the paragraph.

c) Beyond the lines, the process of searching the main ideas of the text is assumed that the ideas are not mentioned in lines (written) however, it is required from the higher understanding on the text.

The way to find out the main ideas of the text can be searched by connecting the other information in the text that related to support the ideas we assume. Here, supporting ideas are very important to know because we cannot find out the main ideas whenever the supporting ideas are missed to get. Therefore, the supporting ideas of the text should be considered as the way how the reader comes to the main ideas of the text.

2.Understanding Details of Information

Good reading strategy helps the students to read in a very efficient and effective way. Using it, the aim to get the maximum benefit from the reading process/activity will spend the minimum time. It means that with strategy applied, the students can minimize the time-consumed during they are reading the text. To get the specific or detail ideas of the reading text, the students may seem to scan the text till they get what they are searching. The following strategies will describe how the strategy can minimize the time-consumed during the reading process (Laurie, 2000: 3 - 5). They are:

a) Strategy 1: Knowing what we want to know

The first thing to ask ourselves is: Why we are reading the text? Are we reading with a purpose or just for pleasure? What do we want to know after reading it? Once we know this, we can examine the text to see whether it is going to move s towards this goal. An easy way of doing this is to look at the introduction and the chapter headings. The introduction should let you know whom the book is targeted at, and what it seeks to achieve. Chapter headings will give you an overall view of the structure of the subject. Asking ourselves whether the book meets our needs. Ask ourselves if it assumes too much or too little knowledge. If the book isn't ideal, would it be better to find a better one?

b) Strategy 2: Knowing how deeply to study the material

Where we only need the shallowest knowledge of the subject, we can skim material. Here we read only chapter headings, introductions and summaries. If we need a moderate level of information on a subject, then we can scan the text. Here we read the chapter introductions and summaries in detail. We may then speed read the contents of the chapters, picking out and understanding key words and concepts. At this level of looking at the document it is worth paying attention to diagrams and graphs.

Only when we need detailed knowledge of a subject is it worth studying the text. Here it is best to skim the material first to get an overview of the subject. This gives us an understanding of its structure, into which we can fit the detail gained from a full, receptive reading of the material.

3.Interpreting the Words/Phrases

In reading the text, the students will meet some words or phrases in the sentences. Of course, each word or phrase has its own meaning as its single position; however, in reading comprehension the students should not define every word or phrase they meet because the words or phrases might have different meaning when they join together with other words. Therefore, interpreting its meaning is an important skill in order come to what the author's message originally. Furthermore, reading is not translating activity. When someone reads a text, s/he should ignore the single meaning or words or phrases. The process will be failed when s/he comes closer to the words' meaning without considering the theme or topic.

A number of studies have investigated the effectiveness of reciprocal teaching. Rosenshine et al (1996: 20) review sixteen studies of the technique and concluded that reciprocal teaching is effective at improving comprehension of text. This was evident from both experimenter-developed comprehension tests and, to a lesser extent, from standardized tests of comprehension. In another review of research on the approach, Carter (1997: 45) also found reciprocal teaching to be effective across multiple studies. Reciprocal teaching has been compared to a number of other approaches to comprehension instruction, including teacher modeling alone, explicit instruction and worksheets alone, daily practice at reading test passages

and answering accompanying questions, and training at locating information to address different kinds of comprehension questions. In all cases, reciprocal teaching was found to be a more effective approach.

Based on those researches, as Palincsar (1986: 22) describes the concept of reciprocal teaching as an instructional activity that takes place in the form of a dialogue between teachers and students regarding segments of text. The dialogue is structured by the use of four strategies: summarizing, question generating, clarifying, and predicting. The teacher and students take turns assuming the role of teacher in leading this dialogue.

In another reference, Palinscar and Brown (1984: 35) define that *Reciprocal Teaching* is an instructional method that involves guided practice of reading comprehension that follows the four concrete steps of: Prediction, Clarification, Question generation, , and Summarization.

From the two notions above, it can be concluded that the *Reciprocal Teaching* is an instructional method of teaching reading skill that involves the students and the teacher in form of dialogues in order to encourage the students' activities in making prediction on the text, clarifying on what they do not understand to their friend or to the teacher, generating questions, and summarizing on the text.

Thus, *Reciprocal Teaching* moves the process of reading from whole class instruction modeled by the teacher, through whole class and small group instruction modeled by students to individualized silent reading. In effect, students teach themselves to read by modeling the strategies that good readers use. This strategy is focus on how effective the role of the teacher to provide modeling, scaffolding, feedback, and explanation for the students. Both the teacher and the students cooperate in making efforts of understanding the material that is being taught.

The purpose of Reciprocal Teaching is to help students, with or without a teacher present, actively bring meaning to the written word. The strategies chosen not only promote reading comprehension but also provide opportunities for students to learn to monitor their own learning and thinking. The structure of the

dialogue and interactions of the group members require that all students participate and foster new relationships between students of different ability levels.

The purpose of reciprocal teaching is to facilitate a group effort between teacher and students as well as among students in the task of bringing meaning to the text. Each strategy is selected for the following purpose:

1.Predicting occurs when students hypothesize what the author will discuss next in the text. In order to do this successfully, students must activate the relevant background knowledge that they already possess regarding the topic. The students have a purpose for reading: to confirm or disprove their hypotheses. Furthermore, the opportunity has been created for the students to link the new knowledge they will encounter in the text with the knowledge they already possess. The predicting strategy also facilitates use of text structure as students learn that headings, subheadings, and questions imbedded in the text are useful means of anticipating what might occur next.

2.Clarifying is an activity that is particularly important when working with students who have a history of comprehension difficulty. These students may believe that the purpose of reading is saying the words correctly; they may not be particularly uncomfortable that the words, and in fact the passage, are not making sense. When the students are asked to clarify, their attention is called to the fact that there may be many reasons why text is difficult to understand (e.g., new vocabulary, unclear reference words, and unfamiliar and perhaps difficult concepts). They are taught to be alert to the effects of such impediments to comprehension and to take the necessary measures to restore meaning (e.g., reread, ask for help).

3.Question generating reinforces the summarizing strategy and carries the learner one more step along in the comprehension activity. When students generate questions, they first identify the kind of information that is significant enough to provide the substance for a question. They then pose this information in question form and self-test to ascertain that they can indeed answer their own question. Question generating is a flexible strategy to the extent that students can be taught

and encouraged to generate questions at many levels. For example, some school situations require that students master supporting detail information; others require that the students be able to infer or apply new information from text.

4. Summarizing provides the opportunity to identify and integrate the most important information in the text. Text can be summarized across sentences, across paragraphs, and across the passage as a whole. When the students first begin the reciprocal teaching procedure, their efforts are generally focused at the sentence and paragraph levels. As they become more proficient, they are able to integrate at the paragraph and passage levels.

In summary, each of these strategies was selected as a means of aiding students to construct meaning from text as well as a means of monitoring their reading to ensure that they in fact understand what they read.

Based on the theoretical description above, the hypotheses are formulated as follows: (1) Null Hypothesis says that the use of reciprocal teaching strategy does not increase the students' reading comprehension; (2) Alternative Hypothesis says that the use of reciprocal teaching strategy increases the students' reading comprehension.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pontianak located on Jl. Parit Haji Husin 1 Pontianak, Kalimantan Barat. A Pre experimental study with a single group pre-test and post-test design was employed in this research. This design was written O_1 x O_2 which indicated a pre-test and post-test were given to all subjects. They were also given treatment.

The population of this research was the eleventh grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah I Pontianak in the Academic Year of 2011/2012 which consisted of 240 students. The sampling technique used was cluster random sampling. After applying this sampling technique, class XI IPS7 consisted of 40 students (17%) was selected as the sample of this research. Technique of collecting data used was measurement technique. There were two kinds of tests conducted, pre-test and post-test. Tool of collecting data used was the objective test which consisted of

the identifying the main idea, supporting idea, and interpreting words or phrases based on the context. In order to answer the research problems and the test hypothesis, the researcher analyzed the data by using t-test formula and Effect Size formula.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the result of computation data, the calculation of t–value indicated 2.127. The test at 0.05 level of significance with df (the degree of freedom) N-1 (40-1)=39 is 2.021. The result indicated that t-value was higher than t-table (2.127>2.021). It means that the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. In addition, the students' score of pretest and post test had significant difference. The mean score of pre-test was 51.5 and the mean score of post-test was 80.8. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of RT (Reciprocal Teaching) strategy significantly increases the students' reading comprehension.

The analysis of effect size showed that the effect size (ES) was categorized as high category. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of reciprocal teaching strategy highly influenced the students' reading comprehension. Thus, it can be concluded that reciprocal teaching strategy is effective teaching strategy in increasing the students' reading comprehension.

Based on the research findings above, it can be inferred that the treatment given to the students significantly influenced the students' achievement in reading comprehension. The treatment here was teaching reading comprehension by using reciprocal teaching strategy. Thus, it can be concluded that reciprocal is effective teaching strategy to teach reading comprehension. It is considered effective because the stages of reciprocal teaching strategy help the students to understand the reading text. In predicting stage, for example, students are helped to activate the relevant background knowledge that they already possess regarding to the topic. It links the students to the new knowledge they will encounter in the text with the knowledge they already possess. The predicting strategy also facilitates use of text structure as students learn that headings, subheadings, and questions imbedded in the text are useful means of anticipating what might occur next. In

Clarifying activity**,** they are taught to be alert to the effects of such impediments to comprehension and to take the necessary measures to restore meaning and understand the meaning of difficult and unfamiliar words.

In addition, Question generating stage of reciprocal teaching strategy reinforces the summarizing strategy and carries the learner one more step along in the comprehension activity. When students generate questions, they first identify the kind of information that is significant enough to provide the substance for a question. They then pose this information in question form and self-test to ascertain that they can indeed answer their own question. Summarizing activity provides the opportunity to identify and integrate the most important information in the text. Text can be summarized across sentences, across paragraphs, and across the passage as a whole. In conclusion, each of these strategies was selected as a means of aiding students to construct meaning from text as well as a means of monitoring their reading to ensure that they in fact understand what they read.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion above, it can be concluded that (1) the use of RT (Reciprocal Teaching) strategy significantly increases the students' reading comprehension. It can be proved by the value of t–test which was higher than t-table (2.127>2.021). It means that alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected; (2) the analysis of effect size showed that the effect size (ES) was categorized as high category. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of reciprocal teaching strategy highly influenced the students' reading comprehension. These results indicate that the use of RT strategy in increasing the students' reading comprehension significantly works in the treatment process. In short, the use of reciprocal teaching strategy is effective in increasing the students' reading comprehension. It is considered effective because the stages of reciprocal teaching strategy help the students to understand the text.

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