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PROCEEDINGS

Seminar on: "Method of Writing Scientific Article and Publishing in International Journal"

Conducted by English Study Program of
Teacher Training and Education Faculty of
Nommensen HKBP University
Pematangsiantar
20th April 2017

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ISBN: 978-602-269-212-6

Halaman Moeka Publishing

The Effect of Think Aloud Strategy on Students' Ability in Reading Comprehension

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Abstract: *This research is intended to know the effect of using Think Aloud Strategy to the students' ability in Reading Comprehension. As the result, experimental group (with using Think Aloud Strategy) is more effective than control group (without using using Think Aloud Strategy). The result is students are more active in comprehending the text in experimental group rather than in control group, because using Think Aloud Strategy as a learning strategy is interesting for them. The result is not just supported by the observation, but it is also supported by the scientific result as follows, The researcher finds that the score of t-test is higher than t-table ($3.57 > 1.67$) or $t\text{-test} > t\text{-table}$, where the t-table is 1.67 and t-test is 3.57. So, the data analysis shows that there is the significant effect in using Think Aloud Strategy to the students' ability in Reading Comprehension.*

Keywords: *effect, narrative text, reading comprehension, think aloud strategy*

I. INTRODUCTION

There are many languages in the world and some are used as international languages. As international languages. English is used by millions of people all over the world. It is used for communication in the field of politics, economy, science, technology, culture and education. In other words, English has important role in people's communication.

In learning English, there are four skills that the students need to be mastered. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of the important skills is reading. In reading skill, students should comprehend the texts. According to Harmer (2007:74), "Reading comprehension means making sense of what you read and connecting the ideas in the text to what you already know."

Reading activity also makes the students' knowledge become improve because from reading the students can gather many information and have broaden minds which are related to their life. Then, readers also can get some information and knowledge such as Technology, Progress, Social Politics, and Education.

In order to know the reading ability in a particular school, the researcher did an observation in SMK GKPI-2 Pematangsiantar and Based on that observation, the researcher finds there were many students at tenth grade have poor reading comprehension text. The students had some difficulties in getting information from the text, in this case it is narrative text. Firstly, they couldn't find the major elements of the narrative text including setting, character, conflict or problem, the goal and resolution in the text. Secondly, the students were difficult in pronouncing the words in the text. And the last, the score of students' reading comprehension ability is very low.

After that, the researcher thought that there must be a good strategy in learning process. Because, by conducting the class and using the conventional method, it tended to make the students become bored. So, the chosen strategy is Think aloud Strategy.

In undertaking this research, the researcher uses statistical hypothesis. Statistical hypothesis is used to decide whether the hypothesis will be accepted or rejected. So the hypotheses, which are formulated as follows:

- Ha : There is the effect of think aloud strategy to the students' ability in reading comprehension at grade X in SMK GKPI-2 Pematangsiantar.
Ho : There is no effect of think aloud strategy to the students' ability in reading comprehension at grade X in SMK GKPI-2 Pematangsiantar.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Reading

Nowadays, reading has become very important for learners of English as a second language or as a foreign language. Reading may help students not only to develop reading but also speaking, writing and listening skills. When people read, their level of thinking will increase. In other words, the more people read the more they learn.

According to Nunan (2003:68), "Reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from the text and their own background knowledge to build reading." It means that when doing reading activity readers make connection what the purpose of the author in reading materials and related it with background knowledge of readers before they receive an information about what they read.

Furthermore, Seyler (2004:23) says, "Reading is the process obtaining meaning from or constructing from word or cluster of words". It can be said that reading is the activity to understand what the writer sense in print words. So, when reading, should know the meaning of each word then make to be a something meaning as information that increase their comprehension and also their vocabulary.

Finally, Westwood (2008:2) also explains that "Reading is the fundamental skill upon which all formal education depends." Reading means to understand the meaning of printed words for example written symbols. Reading is not only a source information and a pleasurable activity but also as a means of consolidating and extending one's knowledge of the language. Reading is very necessary to widen the mind, gain, and understanding of the foreign culture."

From some explanation above, it can be concluded that reading is a skill which means to understand of the printed words. The readers need to be an active reader and deal with practice and the reading skill itself. Also the readers need pronounce the word and make the meaning of the word which they read. Reading is the combination of word recognition, intellect, emotion interrelated with prior knowledge to understand the message communicated.

B. Reading Comprehension

To understand the meaning of what the writer is trying to inform to readers is not easy. The readers need to relate between one words to another word to get the comprehension from what they read. The purpose for reading also determines appropriate approach to reading comprehension. Snow (2002:11) explains "Reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language." It means that we use the words extracting and constructing to emphasize both the importance and the insufficiency of the text as a determinant of reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension is very importance for everyone who to enlarge their knowledge and information. Sometimes some learners feel difficult to comprehend the text that they have read, so they get nothing from the text. So the teachers have to be more concern about the problem. Reading perceives a written text in order to understand its contents or silent reading. The understanding that result is called reading comprehension.

In addition, Klingner (2007:97) defines, "Reading comprehension is a multicomponent, highly complex process that involves many interactions between readers and what they bring to the text (previous knowledge, strategy use) as well as variables related to the text itself (interest in text, understanding of text types). It means that the primary activity of reading is to comprehend what the text is about."

Based on the opinions above, the writer concludes that reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process to know about meaning or information of the text. It is also about the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. So that the reader understands and they can answer the question about text. Then, they get some experiences to increase their knowledge. Moreover, reading comprehension involving many interactions between readers and previous knowledge also strategy use.

C. Think Aloud Strategy

1. Definition of Think Aloud

In this research, it was decided to implement the think-aloud strategy because it was used as an instructional approach, and also because this strategy helped readers to comprehend more easily what was being read by them. According to Oster (2001:64-69) "Think Aloud strategy is a technique in which students verbalize their thought as they read and thus bring into the open the strategies they are using to understand the text." Through this opinion, the students' metacognitive awareness is a crucial component of learning because it enables learners to assess their level of comprehension and adjust their strategies for greater success. They also have shown that students who verbalize their reading strategies and thoughts while reading score significantly higher on comprehension test.

In addition, Stronge (2004:152) also defines that "Think Aloud strategy is use to demonstrate what a thought process is." Teacher verbalize what are thinking as they perform a particular task, read a passage, or solve a problem to enable students to hear the inferences and choices that are being made. In other

words think aloud is also a process in which readers report their thought while reading. So, this strategy is useful because students are verbalizing all their thought in order to create understanding of the reading text. Through this strategy, think aloud is a joint process of teacher and students working together to construct understanding of text as they interact with it.

Based on some argument above it can be concluded that encloses all the issues that imply think aloud in reading process. Thus, this strategy is useful because students are verbalizing all their thought in order to create understanding of the reading text. Additionally, think aloud help students to learn, think, and reflect upon the reading process. That is students not only make sense about what they read but also move beyond literal decoding to comprehending. It also helps students to make sense of what they read, student may be more able to comprehend what they read.

Example 1:

When students use think out loud with teachers and with one another, they gradually internalize this dialogue [...] it becomes their inner speech, the means by which they direct their own behaviors and problem-solving processes. Therefore, as students think aloud, they learn how to learn, and they develop into reflective, metacognitive, independent learners, an invaluable step in helping students understand that learning requires effort and often is difficult.

2. Procedures of Think Aloud Strategy

In order to apply the Think-Aloud effectively in the class, there are some procedures to be done. Many experts have their own procedure in conducting Think Aloud methods. Oster (2001:64), mentions the procedures she did when conducting Think Aloud. They are:

- a) The Think Aloud can be done in an individual or a pair set.
- b) Direct students to write down their questions and comments as they read. Written comments provides the teacher with valuable information on student's comprehension abilities in areas such as basic knowledge, vocabulary, relating new to old information, literal comprehension.
- c) The teacher should give an example of Think Aloud by modelling it in the front of the class. A modelling of Think Aloud will give students a better understanding of it.
- d) After this demonstration, the teacher may ask the students what kinds of comments the teacher just made, and the teacher and students are possible to talk about how those comments could help them to understand the story. The teacher emphasizes that his thoughts at this points might be incorrect, and the teacher might have revise them later on.
- e) The example of the teacher's Think Aloud could be as follow: *The day Professor Herbert [Professor-that must be mean this is a college] started talking about the project for each member of our general science class, I was more excited than I had ever been. ["I" this is the first person narration, the main character in the story is telling it himself. Also, he must like science. Well, it might not be a he, I don't know yet.]. I wanted to have an outstanding project. I wanted it to be a greater, to be more unusual than those of my classmate. [He has high hopes! or,*

he is ambitious.]. *I wanted to do something worthwhile, and something to make them respect me. [I wonder why he needs their respect].*

- f) After that, the teacher can ask student to give their Think Aloud toward a sentence or more chosen by the teacher.
- g) The teacher may ask students to write their Think Aloud in the white-board to choose appropriate responses among their response or their Think Aloud.
- h) The teacher asks students to compare their comments or responses with other to find out whether theirs is the same with other.

H. Narrative

1. Definition of Narrative

According to Oshima and Hogue (2007: 24) "Narrative text is one of kind of story consisting of series of events which is constructed in a chronological order." For addition, the purpose of narrative text is to amuse or entertain the readers; it deals with actual/imaginative experiences in different ways. It usually talks about fiction story. It can be folk, tale, legend, fable, etc."

2. The Generic Structure of Narrative

- a) Orientation
Introducing the characters of the story, the time and place the story happened. (Who/What, When, and Where).
- b) Complication
A series of events in which the main character attempts to solve the problem.
- c) Resolution
The ending of the story containing the solution.

3. Language Feature of Narrative

- a) Focus on specific and individualized participants
 - b) The use of material process (action verb)
 - c) The use of behavioral and verbal process
 - d) The use of relational and metal process
 - e) The use of past tense, and
 - f) The use of temporal conjunctions and circumstances
- The example of narrative text:

The Monkeys and the Cap Seller

Orientation

Once, a cap seller was passing through a jungle. He was very tired and needed to rest. Then, he stopped and spread a cloth under a tree. He placed his bag full of caps near him and lay down with his cap on his head.

Complication

The cap seller had a sound sleep for one hour. When he got up, the first thing he did was to look into his bag. He was startled when he found all his caps were not there. When he looked up the sky, he was very

surprised to see monkeys sitting on the branches of a tree, each of the monkeys is wearing a cap of on its head. They had evidently done it to imitate him. He decided to get his caps back by making a humble request to the monkeys. In return, the monkeys only made faces of him. When he begun to make gesture, the monkeys also imitated him.

Resolution

At last he found a clever idea. "Monkeys are a great imitator," he thought. So he took off his own cap and threw it down on the ground. And as he had expected, all the monkeys took off the caps and threw the caps down on the ground. Quickly, he stood up and collected the caps, put them back into his bag and went away.

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To sum up, narrative can be concluded as a text which is used to amuse and entertain the readers through its story. In addition, some steps to make a narrative text should be paid attention for better construction. Narrative sounds an interesting kind of text. In line with reading comprehension, it must be easy for students to understand and comprehend narrative text. Although reading comprehension is the ability that is not easy to do, but by doing this activity continuously in every single leisure time and adding by appropriate technique for students, it is not possible for them to comprehend narrative text easily.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

In order to know the effect of using picture, this research is conducted by using qualitative research. This research is also called experimental research. It means that there is a certain experimentation applied to the population or sample.

There are two groups in this study. Experimental group is a group that receives treatment by using picture. While control group is a group that receives different treatment without using picture.

B. Population and Sample

The population of this research is tenth grade students of SMK GKPI-2 Pematangsiantar that consists of 107 in four classes. Then, the writer takes a sample from 2 classes of tenth grade students of academic year 2016/2017. The sample of this research is 60 students' which are divided into two classes, namely experimental group and control group that consists of 30 students for each class.

C. The Technique of Data Analysis

There are two groups of data, those of experimental and control. To analyze data, The T-Test formula use as follow (Arikunto, 2010:354):

$$T - Test = \frac{M_x - M_y}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\sum x^2 + \sum y^2}{N_x + N_y - 2}\right) \left(\frac{1}{N_x} + \frac{1}{N_y}\right)}}$$

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Result

There were several discoveries that found by the researcher, these were the following:

1. The effect of Think Aloud Strategy was more significant to the ability of the students in Reading Comprehension than the effect of Conventional Method. Think Aloud Strategy also gave a positive influence to the students activity in reading comprehension. It was proved from the mean of the score in pre-test 62.56 and Post test 77.7, also in post test the range of the score could be seen that it was dominantly started from 56 till above 90. The students who got the score in post test above 90 were more than five students.
2. The researcher found that the effect of Conventional Method was lower than the effect of Think Aloud Strategy to the ability of the students in Reading Comprehension. Conventional method that focused on explanation didn't give a significant change, and the class tended to be bored and clumsy. It also affected the students' achievement in understanding the reading comprehension, and the statement was proved from the mean of score in pre-test 56.93 and post-test 65,83 in control group. After the class taught in conventional method, the highest score had been got by only one student and it was 80 and dominantly the researcher found there were some students who got under the score of 50 in post-test. The result of experimental group was higher than the result of control group. After that, it was proved by counting the t-test. The t-test was 3.57 and t-table was 1.67. So, Ha was accepted and H0 was rejected.

B. Discussion

As what have been mentioned previously, the purpose of this research was to find out the students' ability in Reading Comprehension can be achieved by using Think Aloud Strategy. In order to get the answer, the researcher collected the data by giving multiple choice tests to 60 students of SMK GKPI-2 Pematangsiantar. As what Oster (2001:64-69) said that Think Aloud Strategy is a technique in which students verbalize their thought as they read and thus bring into the open of the strategies that they are using to understand the text. Through this opinion the students' metacognitive awareness is a crucial component of learning because it enables learners to asses their level of comprehension and adjust their strategies for greater success. The researcher also agreed with that statement, because it showed after the researcher analyzed the data. The researcher found the answer of the main problem of this research. Therefore, the researcher would like to interpret the finding of the research.

From all the analyzed data, the researcher found that there was a significant improvement of students' ability in reading comprehension that was

taught by using Think-Aloud Strategy. It was proved from the t-test that had been calculated. The t-test showed the value of t-test was higher than t-observed, it meant that the test was higher than t-table ($3.57 > 1.67$). So, based on the value, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. There was a significance difference between variable X and variable Y.

So, Hypothesis testing was accepted and there was a significant effect of applying the Think-Aloud Strategy to the ability of the students in Reading Comprehension at grade ten in SMK GKPI-2 Pematangsiantar. Based on the result of the research, the researcher concluded that using Think-Aloud Strategy to the students' ability in Reading comprehension was more effective than using Conventional Method.

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