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THE INFLUENCE OF INFERENCING STRATEGY TOWARD STUDENTS' READING ABILITY IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract: Inferencing strategy is an activity to help the students focus on their understand of what they read. Students often become dependent on dictionaries for looking up new words as they read. This strategy used alone, can slow them down and lead them to incorrect definitions. Often, the information that students need is available if they look at other parts of the task and at their own resources. Guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words can help them quickly solve problems without their having to go to other people or reference material. Students can use resources to verify their guesses. The objectives of the research were to identify: (1) whether Inferencing Strategy is more effective than conventional technique to teach reading; and (2) whether average score of students' reading ability which is taught through Inferencing Strategy higher than which is taught through conventional technique. The research method used in this research was experimetal method. The population of this research was the eleventh grade students of SMAN 7 Bandar Lampung, Lampung. The sample of research was XI Science 6 consisted 36 students and XI Science 7 consisted 34 students. The students in XI Science 6 were as experimental class who were taught using inferencing strategy and the students in XI Science 7 were as control class who were taught using conventional technique. The data were in the form quantitative data and they were taken from a test. They were the scores of students' reading test after having eight times treatments for each class. The researcher analyzed the data using t_{test} formula. Based on the result of data analysis, the research findings are: (1) Inferencing strategy is an effective which can be used by the teacher to

improve students' reading ability; and (2) average score of students' reading ability in experimental class was higher than in control class.

Keywords: *Reading ability, Inferencing Strategy.*

INTRODUCTION

In learning English, Reading is a process of building an understanding of the written text. It requires a reader to focus on the information provide in the text. A reader gets information from a writer through words, sentences, paragraph of a text. Reading is one of the skill that should be taught to the students. Through reading activity a students can get information, knowledge from written text or printed text. Grabe and Stoller (2002 :9) say that "Reading is the ability to draw meaning from printed page and interpret this information appropriately". It means that through reading activity the readers try to get the meaning of language used in the text, in order to be able to catch the information provided by the writer.

Reading is assumed to be the central means for learning new information and gaining access to alternative explanations and interpretations (Murcia,2001 :187). In this case when the readers read a text

they will get new knowledge and information which they do not get before. However, the amount of the information and knowledge they got will increase. Through reading a text, the readers can get some knowledge and information and by getting those benefit they can share news idea in written form. It is clearly supported by Maximilian (2016:191) who writes that reading is the process of understanding meaning from a writen language involving reader, text, and the interaction between the reader and the text

Unfortunately, most of the students do not have a good ability in reding text. Based on the observation done, the students average score in reading comprehension is still low. It show that the students still have any problem in reading. The problems are: a) students are not aware in pronounce english word well which caused misunderstanding of the word means; b) students have limited vocabulary to understand the meaning of word in a text ; c) students have lack

of grammar mastery; d) students have difficulty to comprehend English text. That is related to students' motivation in reading English text which needs to be increased. Students seem lazy to read English text because the words which are more challenging and differencing from Indonesian. All of the problems posed have some factors, one of them is a teaching technique which makes students feel bored in reading activity.

Based on problems above, the researcher applied Inferencing strategy to improve students' reading ability. The strategy can help students to unlock the meaning of new words while reading. This strategy, used alone, can slow them down and lead them to incorrect definitions. Therefore, the research questions which were formulated in this research are: 1) Is there an influence of inferencing strategy toward students' reading ability? ; 2) Is the average score of students' reading ability which is taught through Inferencing Strategy higher than which is taught through conventional technique.

INFERCING STRATEGY

Inference strategy is the strategy that provides information and thought

for understanding. It is a powerful technique to create comprehension to fill the gaps and guess the general meaning of the text. In accordance with the idea stated above, Chamot (1999:25) explains "inference involves guessing the meaning of unfamiliar language based on what you know". Beers and Michela Kopitski, "An inference is the ability to connect what is in the text with what is in the mind to create an educated guess". Students may be able to evaluate the usefulness of a strategy for a particular task such as inferencing for reading but still not automatically transfer this strategy to another type of task, such as reading.

Even though inferencing works well for reading, inference is a skill that all readers need in order to comprehend text. In order to figure out necessary information that the author does not explicitly tell the readers, making inferences focuses on the way in which, having decided what the message form is (or, more probably, while arriving at this), the competent reader knows a good deal more than is actually specified in the message.

According to Michela Kopitski (2007: 16) Making inferences is a skill that all readers need in order to

comprehend text. In order to figure out necessary information that the author does not explicitly tell the reader, readers need to be able to take their general knowledge and add it to the text. Other inferences help the reader to identify author's biases, provide details about the setting, or figure out the meaning of an unknown word. There are many types of inferences that are crucial in helping the reader comprehend the text. Readers may need to develop details or explanations about particular events, understand characters' beliefs, or offer conclusions based on facts presented in the text. These particular inferencing skills are necessary for everyday reading activities, as well as standardized tests. Here are the procedure of using inferencing strategy in teaching reading by Chamot et al (1999: 215).

1. Give students a text and have them scan through and jot down all new words.
2. Then, ask them how they would normally find the meanings of these words, and list their strategies on the board.
3. Introduce students to the strategy inferencing.
4. Put a page from the text on the overhead projector and model the strategy inferencing.
5. Review with the students the strategy you used.
6. Have students work in pairs to use inferencing to find the meanings of the words on their list of new words from the text. Students fill in a chart. In column one, "New word", students write the word. In column two, "What Do You Think the Word Means?", they write their guess. In column three, "How Did You Use to Check the Meanings?", they write how they made the guess. In column four, "What Resources Did You Use to Check the Meaning?", they write the resource they used to check the meaning, if it was necessary.
7. Have students share answer from the worksheet as a class and discuss how they made their guesses.
8. Assign additional reading from the text for homework. Students should use inferencing on their own while reading and then write a reflection to evaluate their success with the strategy. Have students answer some or all of the following questions in the reflection.

According to Beers (2003:4) there are 13 benefits of Inferencing, those are; 1) Recognize the antecedents for pronouns; 2) Figure out the meaning of unknown words from context clues; 3) Figure out the grammatical function of an unknown word; 4) Understand intonation of characters' words; 5) Identify characters' beliefs, personalities, and motivations; 6) Understand characters' relationships to one another; 7) Provide details about the setting; 8) Provide explanations for events or ideas that are presented in the text; 9) Offer details for events or their own explanations of the events presented in the text; 10) Understand the author's view of the world; 11) Recognize the author's biases; 12) Relate what is happening in the text to their own knowledge of the world; 13) Offer conclusions from facts presented in the text. Furthermore, Keene and Zimmermann (1997) also explain some benefits of inferencing strategy, they are; Inferencing helps readers expand on their current background knowledge through reading and Inferential skill helps readers learn how to think critically and ask questions about texts that they read, all of these activities help students reflect

on their reading. Theoretically, it is clear that Inferencing strategy is better to be applied in teaching english reading than conventional technique.

METHOD

This research is descriptive quantitative research. To conduct the research, the writer uses experimental design. Experimental design is the most powerful quantitative research method for establishing cause and effect relationship between two or more variables. This research involves two variables. The independent variable in this research is Inferencing strategy (X) The dependent variable is the students' reading ability (Y). In this case, Population of this research is the eleventh grade students of SMAN 7 Bandar Lampung. The sample of the research was two classes taken from the population. The first class is as an experimental and the other class is as a control class. The first class XI Science 6, is as an experimental class that consist of 36 students and the other class, XI Science 7, is as a control class that consist of 34 students. Therefore, the total sample in this research is 70 students. The sampling used for the research is cluster sampling technique

and in this case the researcher used multiple choice test to collect the data to know the students' reading ability. To know the validity of the test, the writer used content and construct validity tests and to know the reliability of the test, the writer used split-half technique.

RESULT

Based on the result of this research, the writer found that the average score of students' reading ability in the experiment class who learn reading through Inferencing Strategy the best technique was higher than the average score of students' reading ability in the control class who learn reading through the conventional technique (The average score in the experimental class was 71.67 and the average score in the control class was 59.44). The writer also found that the result of calculation by using t_{test} formula showed that t_{test} was 4.55. After consulting t_{test} to the t_{table} with significant level 5% and 1% showed that significant level 5% was 2.00 and significant level 1% was 2.66. It showed that the result of t_{test} was higher than t_{table} ($4.55 > 2.00 > 2.66$). Therefore, in this case the writer would like to say

that using Inferencing Strategy is motivating and increasing students' comprehension in learning English especially in reading ability.

Inference strategy is the strategy that provides information and thought for understanding. It is a powerful technique to create comprehension to fill the gaps and guess the general meaning of the text. In accordance with the idea stated above, Chamot (1999:25) explains "Inference involves guessing the meaning of unfamiliar language based on what you know". Beers and Michela Kopitski, "An inference is the ability to connect what is in the text with what is in the mind to create an educated guess". Students may be able to evaluate the usefulness of a strategy for a particular task such as inferencing for reading but still not automatically transfer this strategy to another type of task, such as reading.

During the process in learning reading, the problems which the writer still found are as follows:

A. Class situation

1. There were some students who still did improper activities in the class, like chatting and doing their homework in other lessons.

2. There were some students did not respond to the teacher commands and did not doing the assignments.

B. Reading comprehension before treatment

1. Some students still had difficulties in identifying the main idea of the text.
2. Some students still had difficulties in identifying the supporting idea of the text
3. Some students still had difficulties in identifying the Vocabulary of the text.
4. Some students still had difficulties in identifying the reference of the text.
5. Some students still had difficulties in identifying the Infrence of the text.
6. Conventional technique used in the learning process makes the students bored.
7. The students have low motivation in reading.

So, the researcher gave more control to the students' activities to do the exercises. The researcher gave more control to the students in order to make the students did not copy their friend's work or even did not do it. The researcher realized that there were improvements of the students' reading

comprehension, but the researcher still found a problem faced by the students. Some students still had difficulties in identifying the main idea, supporting idea, vocabulary, infrence and refrence of the text. Besides, some students still did improper activities like sleeping, chatting, drawing, and very noisy, doing homework the other lesson. some Students did not respond to the teacher commands and they just copy their friend's work or even did not do it.

Therefore, the final result of the research are as follows:

1. The students were interested and motivated in teaching learning process, especially in reading class.
2. The students paid full attention to the teacher's explanation and actively involved in discussing the text and the tasks. They also brave to ask to the teacher when they found difficulties.
3. They worked in group cooperatively after the researcher gave reward to the group who got the highest score.
4. The students can identify the main idea and the referent of the text.
5. The students' score of all reading ability aspects improved.

The main objective of learning and teaching reading is to get knowledge, information and understand the content of reading text. To get them clearly, the students need appropriate technique which can help them to understand and to comprehend the text well. The Inferencing strategy has important part to success in teaching process. It is one of strategies to improve students' reading ability. By using Inferencing strategy students are more interested in learning reading through inferencing strategy the learners can unlock the meanings of the new words while reading. Inferencing strategy is an activity to help the students focus on their understand of what they read. Students often become dependent on dictionaries for looking up new words as they read. This strategy used alone, can slow them down and lead them to incorrect definitions. Often, the information that students need is available if they look at other parts of the task and at their own resources. Guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words can help them quickly solve problems without their having to go to other people or reference material. Students can use resources to verify their guesses.

Based the explanation above, the writer concluded that teaching reading by using Inferencing Strategy can increase the students' confidence in their reading. By using Inferencing Strategy the students interested in reading English text. It also helped the students to comprehend the content of the text.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and hypothesis test , the researcher concluded that there is a significant influence of using Inferencing Strategy towards students' reading ability and the students' reading ability who learn reading through Inferencing Strategy is higher than those who learn reading through conventional technique. The students in the research have a limited vocabulary to understand the meaning of words in a text, they also have lack of grammar mastery so they have difficulty to comprehend English text. Therefore, the writer choose the Inferencing Strategy to increase the students problems above.

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