SELF MONITORING APPROACH TO READING AND THINKING (S.M.A.R.T) STRATEGY FOR COMPREHENDING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS

Nurkhadijah Rambe, Iwan Supardi, Syarif Husin
English Education Study Program, FKIP Tanjungpura University, Pontianak
Email: nurkhadijah_rambe@yahoo.co.id

Abstract: This research was aimed to answer these problems; (1) if the S.M.A.R.T strategy improves students’ ability to comprehend descriptive texts, and if so, (2) how well the S.M.A.R.T strategy improves students’ ability to comprehend descriptive texts. The data of this research was collected by using measurement technique in form of multiple choice to measure the students’ achievement. The total of test items were 20 items. The researcher employed KR21 formula to calculate the reliability of try out test, and the result was 0.718 (Substantial). The finding of this research showed that the mean of pretest is 65.83, and for the mean of posttest is 78.89, it is shown improvement. Then, is 4.936 and the is 2.030, so the is higher than (4.936 > 2.030), it mean that Ha is accepted, the S.M.A.R.T strategy improves student’s ability to comprehend descriptive texts.

Keywords: S.M.A.R.T Strategy, comprehending, Descriptive Texts.


Reading is one of important language skill that must be learned by students, because through reading students can obtain more knowledge and information. Seyler (in Delpita & Dewi, 2012: 2) defines reading is process of obtaining or constructing meaning from a word or cluster of words. In other words, reading is a process of readers combining information and understanding the idea of information in the text. In addition, Linse (2005: 69) defines reading as a set of skill that involves making sense and deriving of meaning from the printed word. It means that the readers must be able to decode the printed words.

In some literature, researcher found the meaning of reading. There are some definitions of reading. First, Weaver (2009: 13) states “reading is both a psycholinguistic process (involving the mind actively processing the text) and a sociolinguistic one (with multiple social factors that can affect how one reads, how much one gleans from the reading, and more)”. Second, reading is a cognitive process. No two readers will ever produce the same meaning for a given text and no reader’s meaning will ever completely agree with the writers meaning. Making sense of texts involves complete control, by both the readers and the writers, of how language works and how texts are constructed, Goodman (in Cadena, 2006: 36). Third, Reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form via the medium of print, Urquhart & Weir (in Ueta, 2005).

Reading in language classrooms is an activity that interactive and mostly directed by teachers. Teachers use different techniques to make reading activity much meaningful; it can be handled in three phases to manage the task in a much proper and effective way. These three phases are pre-reading, while-reading and after-reading phases. "Pre-reading" (warm-up, into, before reading) activities introduce students to a particular text, elicit or provide appropriate background knowledge, and activate necessary schemata. "While-reading" (during, through reading) exercises help students develop reading strategies, improve their control of the foreign language, and decode problematic text passages. And the last, "Post-reading" (after, follow-up, beyond reading) exercises first check students' comprehension and then lead students to a deeper analysis of the text, when warranted (Toprak & Almacioglu, 2009:23). Each of them has its own important role. They are all necessary parts of a reading activity. In language classrooms, these phases have to be put in consideration in order to achieve the development of students’ reading skills.

Reading is one of the most important skills that should be learned by students in learning English. Harmer (2001: 70-71) states there are some principles for teaching reading: (a) Reading is not a passive skill; (b) Students need to be engaged with what they are reading; (c) Students should be encouraged to respond to the content of a reading text, not just to the language; (d) Prediction is a major factor in reading; (e) Match the task to the topic; (f) Good teachers exploit reading texts to the full.

Based on explanation above, in teaching reading, teacher should employ self-guided methods for improving reading ability to students. Making a connection is when a student can relate a passage to an experience, another book,
or other facts about the world. Making connections will help students understand what the author's purpose is and what the story is about.

Improving reading ability for Senior High School is not easy to do. Based on the writer's observation in SMA KEMALA BHAYANGKARI 1 Kubu Raya Regency, the result of teaching reading in schools is not satisfactory yet. Obviously, the lack of students’ reading ability might be caused by several factors. First, the lack of students’ vocabularies. Second, the text was difficult, that it was beyond from the students’ knowledge and experience. Third, the students’ motivation in learning reading was low and it influenced their achievement.

Considering those conditions, the researcher is trying to offer a solution that will increase students’ interest in reading and enhance students’ ability of reading. In addition, by students’ interest in reading expected to improve their achievement especially in English. The researcher offers a new strategy for teacher in teaching reading that is SMART strategy. Garvie (in Cadena, 2006: 98) states “teaching students how to use strategies effectively should be a primary concern in the English classroom”. Classroom strategies make the students actively think about what they are reading and to apply what they have learned. The strategies as activities that permit students to interact with other students tend to increase both motivation to learn and as a result of the study. Teacher expected students to grow from dependence to independence in learning by using strategies in their teaching. Furthermore, strategies guide students in assessing the learning situation, setting their own purpose, choosing the most effective actions, and evaluating their success in learning process.

In previous research conducted by Susilawati (2008), that was applied SMART strategy to teach second semester students of UNISMUH PALU. Her study provided some data from the use of SMART strategy. The mean score increased from 59.50 in preliminary study to 65.57 in cycle 1 and 67.89 in cycle 2. The number of the students getting higher scores increased from 17 students (67.85%) in cycle 1 to 20 students (71.42%) in cycle 2. The mean score and the students' individual score indicated higher than predetermined criteria of success that were 20 students out of 28 students who got score of 65 in cycle 2. In the end of her study, based on the student’s achievement using SMART strategy she concluded that SMART strategy can improve the students reading ability and it was suggested that the English lecturers apply this technique in teaching reading skills.

SMART strategy is a strategy in teaching reading that helps students to get idea based on the premise that successful reading begins with recognizing what did and did not understanding from a passage (Buehl, 2001). According to Underwood (in Okanlawon, 2011: 221), Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking (SMART) can be adopted in improving the reading comprehension skills of students. This is because SMART has been found to help matured readers in self-assessing their reading comprehension. Furthermore, Crilly (in Delpina & Dewi, 2012) states that SMART strategy is a strategy that helps students to think about how their reading is proceeding.
Buehl (2001) explained Self Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking (SMART) Strategy as follow:
a. Read
   Read a section of the text. Using a pencil, place a tick next to each paragraph that you understand. Place a question mark (?) next to each paragraph that contains something you do not understand.
b. Self-Translate
   At the end of each section, stop and explain to yourself, in your own words, what you read. Look back at the text as you go over the material.
c. Troubleshoot
   Go back to each (?) and see if you can make sense of the paragraph.
   1). Re- Read the trouble spot to see if it now makes sense. If it still does not make sense,
   2). Pinpoint a problem by figuring out why you are having trouble:
      a). Is it a difficult word or unfamiliar vocabulary?
      b). Is it a difficult sentence or confusing language?
      c). Is it a subject about which you know very little?
d. Try a Fix-Up Strategy
   1). Use the glossary or some other vocabulary aid.
   2). Look over the pictures or other graphics.
   3). Examine other parts of the text.
   4). Explain to yourself exactly what you do not understand or what confuses you.
   5). Get Help. Ask a friend or your teacher.
This strategy helps students to develop metacognitive skills so that they can monitor their own comprehension. This strategy requires students to check for understanding and reread portions that they do not understand. According to Buehl (2001), SMART offers a number of advantages as a teaching strategy, they are:
(1) Students can actively monitor their reading success; (2) Students learn to verbalize what they do and do not understand in a reading; (3) Students are encouraged not to be satisfied until an entire reading makes sense, and they are given specific steps to try to clear up trouble spots; (4) Students become involved in putting the material into their own words thus helping them to remember as well as understand it.
This strategy can monitor students to be aware of what they do understand and identify what they do not understand. Moreover, to use appropriate strategies can resolve students’ problems in reading comprehension. Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking (SMART) can be used and also appropriate to most subject areas from elementary until high school students.

METHODOLOGY
This study was conducted by pre experimental research to prove the hypothesis. “Pre-experimental design is the least effective, for it provides either no control group or no way of equating the groups that are used” (Best & Kahn, 2006: 177). According to Ary, et al (2010: 266), an experiment has three characteristics:
1. An independent variable is manipulated;
2. all other variables that might affect the dependent variable are held constant; and
3. The effect of the manipulation of the independent variable on the dependent variable is observed.

The pre experimental design in this research applies the one group pre-test post-test. The one group pre-test post test there is no control group, and the students are give treatments for a period of time. At the beginning of the period of time, the students have pre-test, and at the end of it the students have post-test. Ary, et al (2010: 303) states, the one group pre-test post test design usually involves three steps:

1. Administering a pretest measuring the dependent variable;
2. Applying the experimental treatment X to the subjects; and
3. Administering a posttest, again measuring the dependent variable.

The form of one group pretest-posttest as follows:

Pretest | Treatment | Posttest
--- | --- | ---
O1 | X | O2

Where:

O1 : The dependent variable before the manipulation of the independent variable X
X : The independent variable, which is manipulated by the experimenter, it will also be reffered to the treatment
O2 : The dependent variable after the manipulation of the independent variable X

The population of this research is the tenth grade of social students in SMA KEMALA BHAYANGKARI 1 Kubu Raya Regency in academic year 2013/2014. It consist of 189 students that are divided into five classes. In selecting the sample, this study was used cluster random sampling technique because the population chosen is not an individual but, rather, a group of individuals who are naturally together. The experimental class was choosen by using lottery technique. X Social 1 as experimental class that get treatment in teaching descriptive paragraph by using S.M.A.R.T strategy. Then, class X Social 3 as class that used to try out the test.

The technique used in this research is measurement technique. The measurement technique is applied to collect the data by administering a test which is constructed for the purpose of this research. According to Cohen, et al (2005: 317), “In tests, researchers have at their disposal a powerful method of data collection, an impressive array of tests for gathering data of a numerical rather than verbal kind”. It is intended to measure the students’ ability in reading the descriptive text by using S.M.A.R.T strategy before and after the treatment.

In collecting the data, this research used observation and reading test. First is observation, the researcher observed the students of SMA Kemala Bhayangkari 1 Kubu Raya Regency, X Social 1 during treatment by using S.M.A.R.T strategy. By this the researcher is able to recognize the real process in teaching reading. The researcher also knows the advantage and disadvantage of strategy in line with the strategy applied, students’ expression to understand the course (cognitive), attitude of the student to the new method (affective), students’ activity to follow the course, attention, enthusiasm for study, self-confidence and study
The second is reading test, the kind of test of reading test is twenty numbers of multiple choice. The reading test on pre test and post test use the same kind of test. The aimed is to know the students ability by their achievement after the implementation of SMART strategy. The result is compared to the criteria of success to know whether the students get improvement in reading or not.

The test consists of 20 multiple choice items. All of the test items cover level of reading comprehension, rhetorical structure of descriptive texts, main idea, synonym, antonym and reference. The try out was conducted to ensure the validity, level of difficulty, and discriminating power and reliability of test item. The try-out was administered on May, 13th 2014 to the X Social 3 class. The total number of students are 40 students, 5 students were absen. So, total students who joined the try out were 35 students.

The implementation of research procedure are pretest, treatment, posttest and the last analyzing the test result. Pretest was given before the treatment was held. The purpose is to know the condition of students’ achievement on descriptive text before treatment. The pretest was administered to the X Social 1 students of SMA Kemala Bhayangkari 1 Kubu Raya, which consists of 39 students, 3 students were absen, so only 36 students was took the pretest. The pretest was held on May, 14th 2014, Students was given 45 minutes for doing the test. The treatments were the use S.M.A.R.T strategy to comprehend descriptive text. The first treatment was held on May, 19th 2014, Second treatment was on May, 20th 2014 and the last treatment was on May, 21th 2014. After having the treatments, the students were given the posttest. The purpose of posttest is to know the students’ achievement or the result of comprehend descriptive text after the treatment was applied. The posttest was applied on may, 22th 2014. To find out the mean score of pretest and posttest, both test results were analyzed by comparing the result of pretest and posttest by using t-value.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In order to gain the valid and reliable data, the researcher tried out the test in X Social 3 class. The analysis of the try-out test computed the level of difficulty, discriminating power and the reliability. The mean level of difficulty for test item is 0.633 (Moderate), the mean of discriminating power for the test item is 0.341 (Sufficient), the standard deviation is 3.824, and the last, the reliability (KR21) of test item is 0.718 (Substantial).

In this research, the researcher applied Self Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking (SMART) strategy for improving students’ ability to comprehend descriptive texts to the tenth grade students on SMA Kemala Bhayangkari 1 Kubu Raya Regency in academic year 2013/2014.

After conducting the research, the researcher obtained the scores of pretest and posttest. The analyzing of mean, standard deviation, and standard error mean of the pretest and posttest can be seen in the table below:
Table 1
Paired samples statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>65.83</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15.376</td>
<td>2.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>78.89</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12.768</td>
<td>2.128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, it shows that the mean of pretest is 65.83. The standard deviation is 15.376, and standard error mean is 2.563. And for the mean of posttest is 78.89. The standard deviation is 12.768, and standard error mean is 2.128. it can be conclude that there is improvement between mean of pretest and posttest.

Table 2
Paired Sample Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comparison of mean ($\Sigma D$) is -13.056. Standard deviation is 15.869. Std error mean is 2.645. And then, $t$ is -4.936. Regardless the minus, it does not indicate negative score. For degree of fredom (df) is 35, it is from N-1. So, df is $36 - 1 = 35$. And the last, sig (2 tailed) where, $\alpha = 0.05$ (Determine of the level of significance). That can be shown in the table that the sig (2 tailed) is 0.000, so sign (2 tailed) $= 0.000 < \alpha (0.05)$, it mean’s that, there is significance increase after the S.M.A.R.T strategy is used in comprehending descriptive texts.

Statistical hypotheses are:

1. If the result of $t$ is higher than $(>)$, the Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted.
2. If the result of $t$ is lower than $(<)$, the Ho is accepted and Ha is rejected.

From the result of calculation, $t$ is 4.936 and the $t$ is 2.030, so the $t$ is higher than $(4.936 > 2.030)$. It means that Ha is accepted, the S.M.A.R.T strategy improves students’ ability to comprehend descriptive texts.
After having process of describing the t-test score, the researcher described findings of significant effect of treatment in order to see how well the S.M.A.R.T strategy in improving students’ ability to comprehend descriptive text, the researcher took the formula of “effect size”.

a. Standard deviation of pretest (Sc)
   From the table 1, it shows that the standard deviation of pretest (Sc) is 15.376

b. Standard deviation of posttest (Se)
   From the table 1, it shows that the standard deviation of posttest (Se) is 12.768

c. Standard Deviation (Sp)
   From the the table 2, it shows that the standard deviation of pretest and posttest (Sp) is 15.869

d. Effect Size of treatment (ES)
   To find the effect size of treatment, the formula is:

\[
ES = \frac{78.89 - 65.83}{15.869} = \frac{13.06}{15.869} = 0.82
\]

If ES > 0.5 the effect size of treatment is strong effect. From the result of effect size ES above, the effect size of treatment is 0.82. So, 0.82 > 0.5, it means that the effect size of treatment in this research is strong. From the result above, can be conclude that the treatment, the S.M.A.R.T strategy is good in improving students’ ability to comprehend descriptive texts.

The analysis of observation during the treatment, at the beginning of the lesson in the first treatment, some students looked nervous and some were enthusiastic on the researcher coming. So, the researcher explained to them, that they could be relaxed and enjoyed the time during the study. When the researcher said that she would introduce a new strategy for reading, that is S.M.A.R.T Strategy, the students responded enthusiastically.

During the first treatment, students did not really understand how to use the S.M.A.R.T strategy, They still confuse what the S.M.A.R.T strategy is. In second and third treatment, most of the students actively read the text by using S.M.A.R.T strategy, because they have known and understood well the S.M.A.R.T strategy. They tried to use the steps of S.M.A.R.T strategy to help them understand the text. The researcher found that the students were excited and enjoyed in learning reading by using S.M.A.R.T strategy, they could understand the descriptive texts more easier. Although, the reading activity was held individually, but they can ask their friends or researcher to fixed up the text. However, researcher sometime ordered the students who did not give much attention to read the text, in order to catch their interest. From this point of view, she would conclude that they gave much attention during the study.
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis above, this study can be conclude as follows: The S.M.A.R.T Strategy improves students’ ability to comprehend the descriptive texts, it is can be seen from the improvement of pretest and posttest result. Also it can be seen from is higher than \( (> \) ), is 4.936 and the is 2.030. It means that Ha is accepted, the S.M.A.R.T Strategy improves students’ ability to comprehend descriptive texts. In addition, the S.M.A.R.T strategy is good in improving students’ ability to comprehend descriptive texts. It is can prove from the result of effect size (ES), the effect size of treatment is 0.82. So, 0.82 > 0.5, it means that the effect size of treatment in this research is strong effect.

Suggestion

By considering the result that showed the use of SMART strategy, the researcher would like to give some suggestions with a purpose of increasing students’ reading ability as follows: The English teacher is expected to use various teaching methods in the classroom. One of them is S.M.A.R.T strategy as one of the alternatives strategy for improving students’ reading ability. The researcher expects that by this research can motivate the English teachers to adopt creative and effective strategy in teaching English especially in teaching reading. Then, SMART strategy makes the students add a new experience in learning English. It can motivate students to be more active in joining the English class to improve their English achievement, especially in reading learning. The student can use the same strategy in different reading types to improve their ability in reading.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


