

## TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION BY APPLYING CLOZE PROCEDURE TECHNIQUE

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### Abstract

This research is intended to investigate the effect of cloze procedure technique application in teaching reading comprehension to the eleventh grade students of Senior High School (SMA) Negeri 8 Banda Aceh. The main purpose was to know whether the students who were taught by using cloze procedure technique would get a better performance in their reading comprehension compared to those who were not. The reading material given to the students was narrative text. The population and sample of the study was the eleventh year students of Senior High School Number 8 (SMA Negeri 8) Banda Aceh which consists of 58 students; 29 in each class. The data of this research was collected by giving the pre-test and post-test in every meeting which includes four meetings. The test given was in form of cloze procedure especially fixed-deletion technique. The data was analyzed using SPSS 15,0. The result of the data analysis can be seen from the result of the post-test of the experimental group in which that the mean of the post-test of the experimental group in the first meeting was 52,28, in the second meeting was 48,97, in the third meeting was 60,00, and in the fourth meeting was 76,38. Moreover, the mean score of the post-test of the control group was 44,14 in the first meeting, 42,59 in the second meeting, 44,83 in the third meeting, and 54,83 in the fourth meeting. By comparing t-test score of the experimental group and t-table score, it shows that the result of t-test in the first meeting is -5,508 while the result of t-table at a level of significance with  $\alpha = 0,05$  is 2,048. The t-test score in the second meeting is -4,930, in the third meeting is -9,452, and the fourth meeting is -21,216. From all t-test score, it indicates that the t-test score < the t-table 2,048. It means that the alternative hypothesis is accepted. So, it can be concluded that the students who were taught by using cloze procedure technique have a better performance than those who were not. As the follow up for this research, it is suggested that English teachers should use various technique in teaching. In teaching reading comprehension, cloze procedure technique can be an alternative to be applied in teaching English.

**Key Words:** *Reading Comprehension, Cloze Procedure Technique*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In big cities of Indonesia, English is taught from Elementary school up to university level. Reading is one of the skills that must be taught as a part of English language teaching. The aim of teaching reading comprehension is to help students understand the texts. According to 2006 curriculum, the aim of teaching reading for senior high school students is that the students are able to comprehend meaning in short functional texts and essay in daily life context to access science. Short functional text includes letter/email, messages, notice, advertisement, announcement, memo, etc while essays includes kinds of text as narrative, recount, descriptive, procedure, report, news item, exposition, explanation, discussion, and review.

Ideally, students who have learnt English for six years; since junior high school up to senior high school; must be able to comprehend reading passages. However, the fact shows that majority of senior high school students do not have good competence in comprehending reading. Several factors can affect the students' inability to have good reading skills. As a matter of fact, to most students, mastering reading comprehension is still a hard work and causes a lot of problems. This condition is caused by several factors. On the one hand, unlike in the other parts of the country, reading has not become one of the favorite hobbies for most students in Aceh. The students are not accustomed to reading especially reading the materials written in

English. Consequently, teachers spend more and harder time to encourage the students to read. It means it a hard work for English teachers to teach reading as one of the four language skills. Clearly, teachers' role is crucial. Teachers need to promote reading and by their own espousal of reading as a valid occupation, persuade students of its benefits.

Based on the researcher's experience during her teaching time for more than ten years, she found that around 65% or 15 of 23 students in one class of Senior High School number 8 (SMAN 8) Banda Aceh get difficulties in comprehending reading texts written in English. As consequence, the result of their reading test is commonly low; that is around 50 of average score and this is still below the standard of minimum criteria KKM) determined by the school that is 70 for English subject. If this condition keeps happening, the researcher worries about the students' readiness to face the National Final Examination. The students, therefore, need to be well-prepared with some skills or strategies about how to solve the reading comprehension questions. Besides, the students need to be equipped with some important materials that help them in comprehending the reading passages such as the knowledge about parts of speeches. They must be able to differentiate among Verbs, Noun, Adjective, Adverbs, preposition, conjunction, etc.

Referring to the above condition, the researcher as one of the English teachers teaching at SMAN 8 Banda Aceh is interested in teaching the students in a different way that

she never applies yet. She will apply cloze procedure technique to examine if it is effective or not to teach reading comprehension. The researcher is interested to apply cloze procedure technique in teaching English since 20% of the questions in National Final Examination are in form of cloze procedure. So, she needs to train the students to solve the questions in form of cloze procedure technique so that the students will be accustomed to answer the same types of questions in the National Final Examination.

Based on the above background, the research questions of this study can be formulated as follows:

1. Is there any significant difference in reading comprehension between the students who are taught using cloze procedure technique and those who are taught using intensive reading technique?. 2. Is the students' achievement in reading comprehension the same in every meeting?

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **1. An Overview of Reading**

#### **Comprehension**

Reading may appear to be a very unique skill and play an important role in science development and it is also as a means of communication. Iskandarwassid (2009:245) described that Reading is said to be a very unique skill because not all people, even though they have got a reading skill, are able to develop it to be a tool to empower themselves or even to make the reading becomes a habit for themselves.

In addition to the above definition, there are also other definitions are common among teachers. Reading can also be defined as a thinking process. It requires some kinds of response on the part of readers. Reading is "an exercise dominated by the eyes and brain. The eyes receive message and brain then has to work out significance of these message" Harmer (1985 : 153). On the other hand, Haris and Sipay (in Elvinda, 1990:8) described that reading is the meaningful interpretation of printed or written verbal symbols". Similarly, Alderson (2000:27) acknowledge that reading comprehension depends heavily on knowledge about the world as well as knowledge of language. In addition, reading entails making inferences and evaluating what is read. Readers construct new knowledge from the interaction between texts and their own background knowledge. Perego and Boyle as quoted by O'Malley (1996:94)

Reading processes in a second language are similar to those acquired in the first language in that they call for knowledge of sound/symbol relationships, syntax, grammar, and semantics to predict and confirm meaning. As they do in their first language, second language readers use their background knowledge regarding the topic, text structure, their knowledge of the world, and their knowledge of print to interact with the printed page and to make prediction about it.

This explanation means that readers should have a complex components of knowledge to enable them to get a good comprehension of the texts.

### **2. The Teaching of Reading**

Reading is one of the four language skills taught at Senior High Schools in Indonesia. Along with listening, reading belongs to an active receptive skill in language learning but it is different in the way they are transferred. Listening skill is used to measure learners' ability in comprehending an oral language while reading is used to measure a written language.

The 2006 English Curriculum places reading equal to other English language skills, listening, speaking and writing. According to the 2006 English Curriculum, the objectives of English instruction at the two levels of secondary school (junior and senior high school) is ,in general, to develop communicative competence in spoken and written English language which comprise listening, speaking, reading and writing. Raising awareness regarding the nature and importance of English as a foreign language, developing understanding of the interrelationship of language and culture. While specifically the competency standard of reading comprehension for senior high school students is to comprehend meaning of short functional texts and simple essay in genre recount, descriptive, procedure, report, narrative, news item, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, explanation, discussion, and review in daily life context and to access science.

### **3. An Overview of Cloze Procedure**

#### **Technique**

The term cloze was introduced by Taylor (1953:415). It derived from the word

"closure" which is a concept borrowed from the Gestalt School of Psychology. Taylor reasoned that the same psychological tendency would exist with respect to written materials if there were missing pieces. So, it would be a natural psychology tendency for people to fill in the gaps by achieving a complete whole and familiarity of language and context of the sentence may create a tendency to close or to complete the sentence.

O'Malley (1996:112) defined that cloze procedure involves systematically and purposefully omitting words within a text selected for developing and evaluating reading comprehension, and asking readers to fill in the blanks. According to Walker (2005:93) the purpose of cloze procedure are: 1) determine students' knowledge regarding reading. 2) determine the level of a specific text and clarify its independence, instruction, and frustration level (placement focus), 3) evaluate students' critical reading strategies along with their ability to use context (diagnosis focus), and encourage students to think critically and analytically about the text. 4) encourage students to control the meaning of what they read and 5) evaluate students' lexicon and subject-matter knowledge.

Djiwandono (1996:79) defined that cloze is the omitting words in the passage, the omission used intentionally in order to leave a blank space. The original passages which contain more words and it would be possible to omit the words that approximately 50 questions. The large passage used is the more words deleted and the more difficult to fill in.

So that, cloze test related to the students thinking process as in their ability to comprehend the appropriate words in one of the passage.

Referring to some references about cloze procedure designing and scoring, in this study the researcher will apply the following strategies as suggested by O'Malley (1996:114).

1. The teacher selects a passage and retype it. The passage is an excerpt from a story and text book for the cloze activity. In this case, she chooses the **narrative texts**.
2. Then she retypes the text. She decides to use all techniques suggested by O'Malley; they are **rational deletion, fixed-deletion, maze and limited techniques** because she wants to prove which technique is the most appropriate for her students level of ability. The deleted words is based on the techniques used.
3. In fixed-deletion, the researcher will delete every fifth words without considering the parts of speech in the text. In rational technique, the first sentence is typed exactly as it appears in the original text. Beginning with the second sentence, one of the first past form verb is deleted and replaced with a blank Then every past form of verbs in the remainder of the passage is deleted and replaced with a blank. While in maze technique, three word choices are provided all together at each missing word interval. For limited cloze, word choices; one per blank; are

provided all together in a word blank at the top or bottom of the page.

4. After that students read the entire text silently, then they predict or "guess" the word that goes in each blank. Students write the words in the blanks.
5. At the first time, the students will work in the whole class with the words' choice provided before they are asked to provide words by themselves. Then the students work in groups, and later they work individually to complete the cloze passages.
6. The teacher scores the students' work. The researcher will use acceptable scoring method in which she will award one point each time the missing word is correctly identified. The percentage of correct answers is determined by dividing the number of points by the number of blanks.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is an experimental research which is referred to true-experimental design. According to Arikunto (2006:130) an experimental study is the study in which the researcher involved directly in conducting the research. There are two classes; the control and experimental groups; that will be observed at two time points; one before the treatment and one after the treatment which is aimed at obtaining the information for the study. In this study the researcher will focus on the application of cloze procedure technique in teaching reading.

The sample of this research was chosen randomly by considering the homogeneity of the students. It means that the sample have the same or similar characteristics without considering the number or the quantity of the sample. There are two Social Science classes selected from three classes in which both selected classes are similar in many cases. The sample are homogeneous in which the participants chosen are alike; that is the participants come from the same cultural background, family background, ability level, and characteristics. Most of the students in both classes come from middle level of social background whose parents are mostly civil servants and sellers. Their English ability is at low level and they have quite low motivation in learning English so that they are passive most of the time.

The experimental class consists of 30 students; 20 female and 13 male, while the control class consists of 29 students; 17 female and 12 male. Consequently, the total samples are 59 students of SMAN 8 Banda Aceh of 2013/2014 academic year.

There is one instrument used in collecting the data needed for this study; that is a test.

The method used in is an experiment this study to get the primary data is an experiment where the researcher herself teaches in the class and observes directly the aspects which are expected to support the English teaching process. Before the research is done, the researcher told the students that they are going to learn English using new method to

introduce them a model of test appearing in the National Examination.

Before the experiment is carried out, the materials are prepared by the researcher herself. Certain teaching steps which have been prepared in advance are followed in order to help the students learn seriously and comprehend the exercise or tests more easily. As has been told in the previous part, the materials are mostly taken from the English text book and National Examination test which are considered more appropriate with the students' background knowledge and level of English comprehension. In teaching reading comprehension for this experiment, the researcher sets quite different procedure from her ordinary teaching since she wants to create a more interesting classroom atmosphere.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

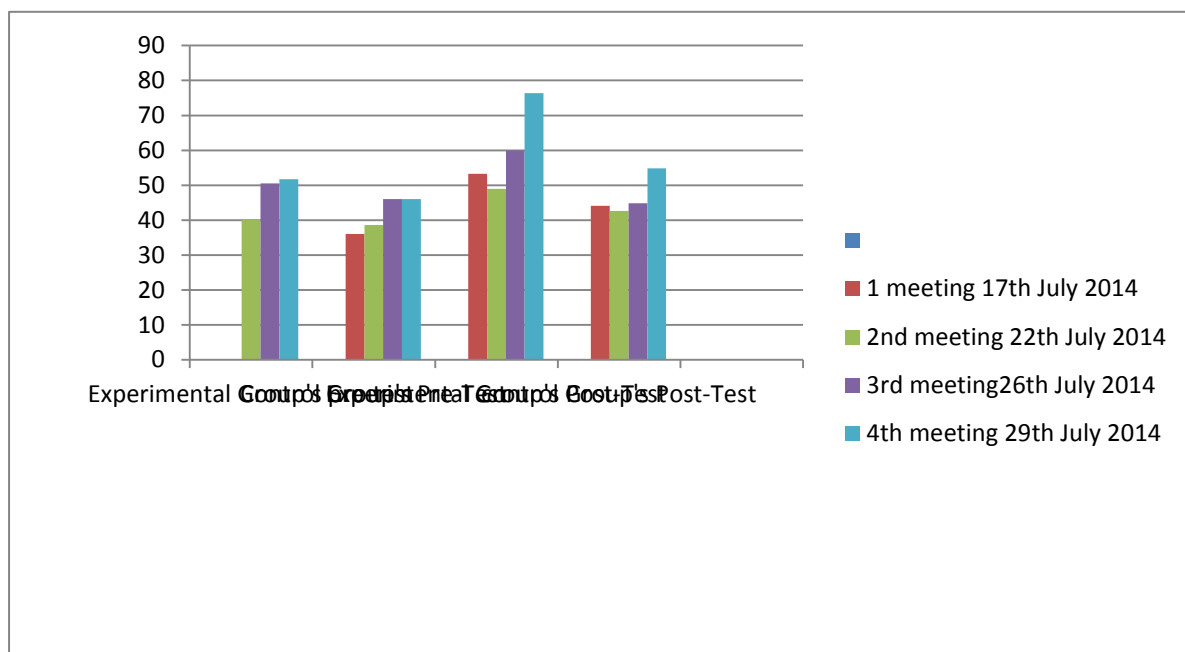
### **1. Result of Pre-test and Post-Test**

The pre-test was given in the early session of each meeting for both the experimental and control groups and the post-test was given at the end of every meeting. So, there were four pre-tests and post-test given in this study. The pre-tests were conducted in order to find out the students' ability in reading comprehension before the treatment was given while the post-tests were given to see if the application of make a match technique gives different result of the students' achievement. The data of all pre-tests and post-tests can be seen in the table and the diagram below.

**Table 1. Mean of Pre-Test and Post-Test of the Experimental and Control Groups**

Meetings	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	Experimental Group	Control Group	Experimental Group	Control Group
1 <sup>st</sup> meeting	40,34	36,03	53,28	44,14
2 <sup>nd</sup> meeting	40,17	38,62	48,97	42,59
3 <sup>rd</sup> meeting	50,52	46,03	60,00	44,83
4 <sup>th</sup> meeting	51,72	46,03	76,38	54,83

The mean of pre-test and post-test of the experimental and control group can also be displayed in the following bar chart.

**Bar Chart 1. Mean of Pre-Test and Post-Test of the Experimental and Control Groups**

The above chart shows the mean of the pre-test and post-test of both the experimental and the control groups. From the above chart, it can be seen that for the experimental group, the mean of the first meeting is 40,34. In the second meeting, the mean is 40,17 and in the third meeting, the

mean is 50,52 while in the fourth meeting, the mean is 51,72. For the control group, the mean of the first meeting is 36,03, the mean of the second meeting is 38,62, the mean of the third meeting is 46,03, and for the fourth meeting is 46,03. Based on the above description, it can

experimental group is 45,69 while the average mean of the control group is 41,58. In other words, the average mean of the pre-test of the experimental group is higher than that of the control group.

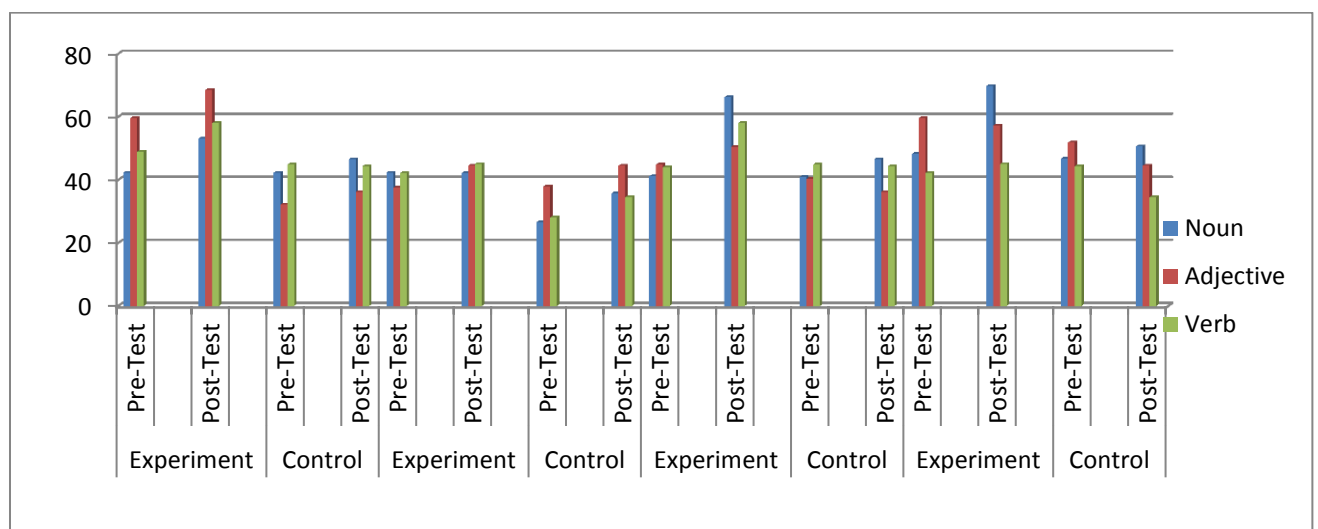
The above chart also presents the mean of the post-test of both the experimental and the control groups. It reveals that for the experimental group, the mean of the first meeting is 53,28. In the second meeting, the mean is 48,97 and in the third meeting, the mean is 60 while in the fourth meeting, the mean is 76,38. So, the average of the mean for the experimental group is 59,66. For the control group, the mean of the first meeting is 44,14, the mean of the second meeting is

42,59, the mean of the third meeting is 44,83, and for the fourth meeting is 53,83. Based on the above description, it can be concluded that the average mean of the experimental group is 59,66 while the average mean of the control group is 46,59. In other words, the average mean of the post-test of the experimental group is higher than that of the control group. The difference is 13,07 point.

## 2. The Percentage of Students' Correct Answer in Parts of Speech Word Deletion

The percentage presented here is the three parts of speech deletion which consisted of noun, adjective, and verb deletion. The chart below shows the level of students' achievement in completing the correct parts of speech in the appropriate blank spaces.

**Bar Chart 2. The Percentage of Students' Correct Answer in Parts of Speech Word Deletion**





The above chart shows the result of pre-test and post test given to the experimental and control groups. There were four meetings carried out during this experimental study. In the above chart, it can be seen that there are three colors; blue, red, and green. The colors indicate that there are three kinds of deletions according to parts of speech. The blue one is noun deletion, the red one refers to adjective deletion, and the green one refers to verb deletion. In the first meeting, the experimental group get the most correct answers in adjective deletion both in the pre-tests that is 59,60% and in the post-tests; 68,86% and the most incorrect answer are in noun deletion. For the control group, the most correct answer they can get is noun deletion, and the most incorrect answer is adjective deletion.

In the second meeting, most students in the experimental group get the most correct answers in verb deletion that reaches 44,48% in the post test, followed by adjective deletion and noun deletion. Similarly, the control group gets higher achievement in adjective deletion, followed by noun and verb deletion.

While in the third meeting, the experimental group gains the most correct

answers in noun deletion that is 66,20, followed by verb deletion and noun deletion. On the other hand, the control group gets the most correct answers in noun deletion, followed by verb and noun deletion.

In the last meeting; the fourth meeting, the experimental group get the highest percentage in answering the adjective deletion in the pre-test while in the post-test, the experimental group gets the highest achievement in noun deletion; that is 69,81%, followed by adjective and verb deletion. Like the experimental group, the control group also gets the highest percentage in adjective deletion in the pre-test but they get the highest percentage in noun deletion in the post-test.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The conclusion of this study can be drawn as follows. (1) there is a significant difference in reading comprehension between the students who were taught by using cloze procedure technique and those who were taught through intensive technique, (2) Cloze procedure technique significantly improves the students' reading comprehension. Among the four meetings, in the fourth meetings, the students get the highest progression.

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