**IMPROVING STUDENTS’ READING COMPREHENSION OF THE ELEVENTH GRADE THROUGH RAP STRATEGY**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The objective of this research is to find out that the use of RAP (Read, Ask, Put) Strategy was effective in improving reading comprehension in narrative text at the eleventh grade students at SMA Negeri 9 Palu. Quasi experimental design was used in this study, that is non equaivalent control group. The population was XI IPA. Samples were selected by using purposive sampling technique, XI IPA 1 as the experimental group and XI IPA II as the control group. The experimental group was taught with RAP. Data were collected by using test (pre-test and post-test) and analyzed by applying t-test to compare two set of scores. Then, the t-counted and the t-table were compared to see the level of significant differences between those scores. The level of significance was set up 0.05 and 49 degree of freedom(df) obtained. The analysis indicates that the t-counted is greater than the t-table, which means the hypothesis is accepted. In other words, RAP strategy is effect in improving the students’ reading comprehension.*

*Keywords: RAP (Read, Ask, Put) Strategy, Reading Comprehension.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Reading is one of the four language skills in English. Reading can be silent (in our head), or aloud (so that other people can hear). Having good reading ability is really important because there are many advantages from studying reading. By reading, learners will be able to increase their knowledge, and can improve their vocabulary, writing and speaking skills. Nowdays, there is a lot of information that the students should know and they should find the sources of that information. Therefore, to get knowledge, the students should read more.

There are many kinds of reading text such as narrative, recount, report, descriptive, explanation, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, procedure, news item, and so forth. In Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidiksn (KTSP) 2006, it is states that curriculum of education the students are able to understand reading text especially narrative, recount, procedure, descriptive, news item, report analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, explanation, discussion, and review based on context of days life. In reading, the students are able to understand the information from the text, remembering their background knowledge, and getting new knowledge from the passage.

Based on the preliminary observation, the researcher interviewed some eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 9 Palu, and found several problems related to the English teaching and learning process of reading. The students have many problems in reading comprehension. There are constrained by some factors which include teaching technique, material and media used in the teaching and learning proccesses and the students.

The first issue is that teaching technique tends to be monotonous. The students just do silent reading by themselves. After that, the students are expected to answer the question from the text. The students feel bored because the teachers does not provide other interesting activities in the teaching and learning procces. In addition, the students are assigned to read the text then translate into Bahasa Indonesian. The method make the students bored in reading material. As a result, the students are lazy to read. Next, the students get difficulty in comprehending the text. It is hard for the students to find main idea and supporting details of a paragraph they read. In addition, they still have lack of vocabulary. Most of them said that they are not able to understand the text because it has a lot of unfamiliar words.

Based on the explanation above, an effective strategy to improve the students’ reading comprehension is needed to solve the problems. The researcher is interested in applying research to improve the students’ reading comprehension through RAP strategy at SMA Negeri 9 Palu. RAP is a three-step strategy: Read a paragraph, Ask myself, ”What was the main idea and two details?” and Put it into my own words. The RAP strategy is based on sound theory utilizing pharaprasing to help improve memory of main ideas and details in text (Hagaman and Reid, 2008). It is expected to help them in understanding the goals of reading. This strategy can be used for elementary, middle, and high school students across many different content areas (Hagman and Reid). It requres the students to engage in reading materials through questioning and paraphrasing to increase their comprehension of the material. From the questioning and paraphrasing, the students proccess information for better understanding of what they read.

**METHOD**

This research used quasi-experimental design with non equivalent control group design. This research consisted of two groups; experimental and control. Both groups took a pre-test and post-test. Only the experimental group received the treatment.

The design of this research is proposed by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison*,* (2000:214) as follows:

Group A O1 X O2

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Group B O3 O4

Cresswell (2009:145) states, “Population is any group of individuals who have the same characteristics”. In this research , the population was the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 9 Palu. The total number of the students is 140 students in IPA 1, IPA 2, IPS 1, IPS 2, IPS 3, and IPS 4. The researcher chose 2 classes as an experimental group and a control group.

According to Ary, *et all,. (*2002:163), “The small group that is observed is called sample.” This research used a purposive sampling technique. The teacher of English at SMA Negeri 9 Palu recommended to conduct the research in those two classes, XI IPA 1 as the experimental group and XI IPA 2 as the control group because they still had problems in learning English especially in reading.

Variables of this research consist an independent and a dependent variable. The independent variable is RAP (read, ask, put) strategy and the dependent variable is the students’ comprehension in reading a narrative text. Furthermore, the research used one instrument, test. The test consisted of pretest and posttest for collecting data. The students was given the test to measure reading comprehension of students in narrative text. Before conducting the treatment, the pre-test was administered to the experimental group and the control group. This test was to measure the students’ knowledge on reading comprehension before the treatment. The pre-test prior has questions 40 multiple-choice. Each correct answer is scored 1.

The post-test was given to the two sample classes after the treatment. In order to measure and to know the students’ reading comprehension after the treatment. During the treatment, the researcher taught reading compehension in narrative text by using RAP strategy to the experimental group, and taught narrative text without using RAP strategy to the control group. In conducting the treatment, the researcher used the following steps adapted from (Yunitasari, 2015). Firstly, the teacher gives students a short text to read and asks them to identify the main idea and details in the paragraph. As the students identify each element, the teacher instructs them to write their responses in the appropriate section of the corresponding worksheet to prompt the students to identify what the paragraph is about and what additional information is included in the paragraph. After that, the students put synonym and identify the definition of word based on the words in the text. It helps the students to paraphrase and improve their vocabulary. Finally, the strategy works well teaching in a simple, systematic, and stepwise procces that incorporate self-monitoring (i.e., self-regulation) and goal setting.

**FINDINGS**

The data were obtained by testing both the experimental group and the control group. The pretest was conducted to find out the students’ reading comprehension at the first meeting. While, the post-test was conducted to measure the effectiveness of using RAP Strategy in improving reading comprehension. The results of the pretest and posttest for both groups are completely as presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

**Table 1**

**The Pre-test Score of the Experimental and the Control Group**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Standard Score** | **Mean Score** |
| Experimental | 1285 | 49.42 |
| Control | 1120 | 44.8 |

Table 1 show that the pre-test score of the experimental group and control group. There are five measures of central tendency. In the experimental group the minimum score is 17.5, the maximum score is 87.5, the mode is 42.5, the median is 45 and the mean score is 49.42. In the control group of pretest, the minimum score is 20, the maximum score is 82.5, the mode is 42.5, the median is 42.5 and the mean score is 44.8. The data show the difference of mean score between experimental and control group. So, the difference between two groups was about 4.62 It means that the level of knowledge of those groups was closely equal before given treatment.

After giving the pre-test, the researcher gave treatment to the experimental group for six meetings. The treatment was only given to the experimental group before conducting the post-test. It was started on August 4th 2016. In the first meeting the English teacher introduced the researcher to the students. Then, she greeted the students. After introduced herselfs to the students then, recall students background knowledge before she started explained about the material. First of all, the students divided into the small groups then they listen carefully and gave their attention to the researcher’s explained about narrative text. Then, the students was given the opportunity to ask about the material that they don’t understand. Next, the researcher gave the students reading text and worksheet. Based on worksheet they had, the first students *read* and identify the generic structure in narrtive text. and then put the synonym words available in the worksheet it’s help the students to parapahrase later. After that, *ask* what the main idea and two supporting details. The students discuss and *put/paraphrase* the main idea and two details (supporting sentences) by using synonym words. While the students discussed with their group, the researcher walk around the class to asked the students what parts of the material that they do not understand. The last the students read the result of paraphrasing of the text. In the final of learning activity the researcher gave feed back to the students and conclude about what they have learned.

The researcher was treated the students in six meeting with difference topic of each meeting. First meeting about The Mouse-deer Stole Cucumbers, the first respons of the students about identifying the main idea in narrative text was they were getting confused. Therefore, the researcher wrote some example on the whiteboard related to the topic and they began to understand. Second, about A fox and A Little Rabbit Story, the researcher repeat again the steps of RAP strategy to the students, and explined how to find the main idea and supporting sentence. Third meeting, about A Greedy Dog Story, the students get significant improvement in identifying the main idea. Fourth, about A Bear and a Rabbit Story. Fifth about The Goose and the Golden Eggs. And the last meeting about A farmer and his three sons. However, the improvement among the students were not same. The most improvements found to the active students in every meetings while the passive students got improvement slightly.

After conducting the treatment, this research administered the post-test to measure the effectiveness of using RAP Strategy in improving reading comprehension. This research used the same of test as in the pre-test. The result of the post-test was presented in table 2.

**Table 2**

**The Post-test Score of the Experimental and the Control Group**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Standard Score** | **Mean Score** |
| Experimental | 1990 | 76.53 |
| Control | 1365 | 54.6 |

Table 2 shows that the post-test score of the experimental group and control group. There are five measures of central tendency. In the experimental group of the posttest, the minimum score is 60, the maximum score is 97.5, the mode is 80, the median is 77.5 and the mean score is 76.53. In the control group of posttest, the minimum score is 25, the maximum score is 90, the mode is 30, the median is 52.5 and the mean score is 54.6. From the data above, it can be said that the mean score of the post-test in the experimental group is higher than that in the control group. It shows that the experimental group improved significantly after getting the treatment based on the data which showed difference.

The mean deviation of the experimental group is 27.11 and the control group is 9.8. After computing the mean deviation of each group, the researcher computed the t-counted to find out the significant difference between the control group and the experimental group. The value of t-counted $(5.34) $is obtained. Testing hypothesis was done to find out whether the treatment is successful or not. If the t-counted is greater than the t-table. It means that the hypothesis is accepted. In other words, using RAP (read, ask, put) strategy is effective to improve the reading comprehension of the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 9 Palu.

The result of the data analysis shows that the tcounted is 5.34. By applying 0.05 level of significance with the degree of freedom (df) Nx + Ny – 2 = 49. The researcher found that the tcounted (5.34) is higher than the ttable(2.011). It means that the research hypothesis is accepted. In other words, using RAP (read. ask. put) strategy can improve reading comprehension of the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 9 Palu.

**DISCUSSION**

The scope of the research is limited at finding out the generic structure, social function, and lexical gramatical of narrative text in improving reading comprehension through RAP (read, ask, put) strategy. Therefore, this research discusses the findings related to the aspects of reading comprehension: main idea, supporting sentences and vocabulary. When the researcher did the treatment, the students got difficulties to identify the generic structure, the main idea, and supporting sentence in narrative text. In addition, the students had difficulty in understanding narrative text because their also had lack of vocabulary. Therefore, to solve the problems the researcher explained about narrative text especially how to identify the generic structure, how to get main idea and supporting sentence, as well as using synonym words to improve their vocabulary based on the narrative text by using RAP strategy.

Based on the result, it shows that the teaching learning process by using RAP strategy in teaching narrative text can improve the students reading comprehension. The researcher relates this recent study to the previous study by Yunitasari (2015). The results of her research reveal that the use of RAP strategy has succesfully improved the students’ reading comprehension skills. This strategy helps the students improve their enthusiasm and attention in the process of teaching and learning English, especially reading comprehension. Their vocabulary and understanding of new words also improve. In relation to their comprehension of narrative texts, the students are able to identify main ideas and supporting details of paragraphs correctly. Their interaction and involvement in the reading class also improve. In addition, the students become more active and enjoy the process of teaching and learning reading. It is similar to this recent study. In this research, the researcher found that in the pre-test the students got difficulties to find out the generic structure, main idea, supporting sentence, and they difficulty to do task about synonym words. Therefore, after the treatment the students’ comprehension in narative text was improved in the post-test. Ellis and Graves (1990) used the RAP strategy with 47 middle school students with learning disabilities (LD) to asses its effects on students’ ability to find the main idea of stories. Results of multiple-choice tests showed that compared to control students, students given the RAP strategy could identify significantly more main ideas from passages than students. In contrast to previous study, which find out the main idea. The researcher also find out the generic structure of narrtaive text to added students’ comprehension in reading.

In the process of teaching and learning reading, the researcher applied RAP strategy to teach reading comprehension in narrative text. When the researcher did the treatment, the students is active and enjoy the process of learning. In this case, some students not bring dictionary while this strategy need dictioniory to help them to find out the synonyms in narrative text. To solve it, the researcher let them to borrow dictionary to their friends, and they could discuss with their group. In addition,the students could ask to the researcher.

After conducting the treatment, the researcher gave post-test of the two groups. The objective of the post-test is to measure their improvment in reading comprehension by using RAP strategy. Based on the result of post-test, the use of RAP strategy is efffective to improve students’ reading comprehension. The effectiveness is proven by using the t-test formula. It shows that the result is 5.34. It is greater than the t-table 2.011. The t-test is greater than the t-table result. It means that using RAP strategy in teaching narrative text gives an effect to improve students reading comprehension.

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

After discussing and analyzing the data, it can be concluded that using RAP (read, ask, put) strategy can improve reading comprehension of the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 9 Palu.It improves the students’ attention when they are asked to read a narrative text. It can be seen by the mean score of post-test of the experimental group (76.53) and of the control group (54.6). it indicates that the reading comprehension of the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 9 Palu in using RAP Strategy can be improved after the treatment.

The result of this research is useful for English teacher and students. The English teacher can use RAP strategy to improve the students’ reading comprehension. In the learning process, we can make sure the students have understood and have enough vocabulary and information about narrative text. It is also suggested that the students need to pay attention to the English teachers and to be more active in the teaching lerning process.

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