

USING REDW STRATEGY TO IMPROVE NURSING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION IN AKPER PRIMA JAMBI

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the findings of a study which was undertaken at AKPER Prima Jambi. The aim of the study was to describe how the Read-Examine-Decide-Write (REDW) strategy can improve reading comprehension. The data were taken from observation, field notes, questionnaire, and achievement test. The result reveals that the REDW not only improves students' reading comprehension but also increases their motivation in learning.

Key words: *Comprehension, REDW, expository, reading skill, text.*

INTRODUCTION

Among the four language skills, reading is the most important one since every aspect of life involves reading. The ability to master this skill determines students' mastery of other skills. Its importance makes reading receive a special focus in many second or foreign language situations (Richards and Renandya, 2002:273).

The most important object in reading activity is text. Anderson & Anderson (2003:1) define *text* as something constructed when a person speaks or writes to communicate a message. The reading activity begins when a reader tries to understand the meaning of the transferred message. In general, there are two main categories of text: literary and informational. Literary and informational texts are marked by distinct structural characteristics that readers rely on as they seek to understand what they read (Goldman & Rakestraw, 2000). Literary texts aim to appeal reader's emotion and imagination, while informational (factual) texts aim to show, tell or persuade the audience (Anderson & Anderson, 2003:3). The nature of texts affects comprehension and different text types must be read in different ways (Pearson & Camperell, 1994). Therefore, the teaching of readings should emphasize the teaching of both literary and informational texts (NAEP Governing Board, 2008:7).

Among the two categories reader needs to work harder in reading for

information (informational texts) than in reading for pleasure (literary texts). Carnine (1990:339) state that in the attempt to comprehend expository materials reader is expected to extract, integrate, and retain significant main ideas and details presented in the material and to learn many specialized vocabulary terms. It is because expository uses new organizational structures, uses more difficult to decode and understand vocabulary, uses higher dense of concept, and introduces unique typographic features. As the result, expository is considered to be more difficult than narrative. According to Mason and Au (1990:126), students have more trouble comprehending exposition because (1) they do not have much experience reading expository texts, (2) teachers do not usually teach students strategies needed for understanding expository texts, and (3) students may not have sufficient background knowledge of the topic of the selection, or of the structure of the text. Much of the reading we do is for information-sometimes for school purposes and other times for our own.

Regarding the problems and the requirements of comprehension, consequently English teachers; particularly the reading teachers, needs to provide appropriate teaching and learning process of expository, texts by selecting and adapting appropriate teaching strategy that meets the requirement of comprehension and is

effective in solving problems in reading expository materials.

From the many strategies in teaching expository texts, the implementation of Read, Examine, Decide, Write (REDW) strategy can help the students to be active in teaching-learning process. The student gets motivation to improve their ideas through asking some questions and answering to find out main ideas. The students find it easier in interpreting and deriving the meaning of a text that they read. According to Gupta (2008: 80), REDW is a good strategy to use while finding the main idea in each paragraph of reading assignment. This strategy helps in comprehending the information contained in reading text.

This text comprehension strategy serves several purposes: (a) finding the major concept that the section is trying to explain; (b) creating a list of the words and phrases that may be important; (c) decide if each word is trying to explain the major concept that is covered in the section or if it is just trying to convey a fact or supporting detail, and (d) record the major concept that the section covers and record each of the key words that you identified. This strategy helps students to use textual aids and locational aids to retrieve information through four phases, namely: Read, Examine, Decide, and Write.

The focus of this article is in providing the answer to question "How can Read, Examine, Decide, Write (REDW) strategy improve students' comprehension in reading expository text?" It is aimed at describing the implementation of REDW strategy in improving the reading comprehension of the second semester students at AKPER Prima Jambi in academic year 2015/2016

METHODOLOGY

The study employed Collaborative Classroom Action Research (CAR) designs under the procedure of (a) identifying classroom problem(s), (b) planning, (c) implementing, (cl) observing, and (e) evaluating. The subjects of the study

were forty-one students of the second semester in AKPER Prima Jambi academic year 2015/2016. The data were both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data derived from the students' active participation during the implementation of the strategy while the quantitative data were taken from the result of reading achievement test conducted at the end of each cycle. The instruments used in collecting the data were achievement test, observation, field notes and questionnaire. To analyse the qualitative data, the researcher uses four stages based on Miles and Huberman (in Sugiyono, 2012: 338). They are data collection, data reduction, data display and verification. In analysing quantitative data, the researcher used statistic descriptive technique. It is done by describing the tests result. This was to find out means score.

The result of preliminary study conducted by the researcher in November 2015 showed that the students had problems in identifying topic and main ideas, distinguishing major and minor details, recognizing author's organization the text structure, drawing inference, and identifying literal information from the text.

Among narrative, descriptive, and expository texts, the latest was considered to be most difficult. The identified causes were because of the lack of background knowledge, the lack of knowledge of reading strategies the lack of use of reading strategies the lack of students' active involvement during the teaching and learning process, and the lack of students' awareness of the reading process.

In order to solve the classroom's problem, together with the collaborator teacher the researcher designed the lesson plan and the criteria of success of the study at the *planning* phase; *implemented* the REDW strategy in two cycles with four meetings for cycle 1 and three meetings for cycle 2; recorded and collected data dealing with the teaching and learning activities of Reading Comprehension using Read, Examine, Decide, Write (REDW) strategy in the

classroom and data about any aspect or event that occurs in the teaching and learning process at the observing phase; and evaluates the strength and the weakness of the strategy implemented in the class at the reflecting phase.

THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The findings presented in this section comprised the steps in conducting Reading Comprehension using REDW strategy and the students' active participation during the class. Based on the results of the achievement test, overall progress of observation results, reflections from questionnaire, results of the field notes and results of students' worksheet, it was conducted that the students had successfully

improved their achievement in term of reading comprehension and their learning participation in term of active and positive engagement in learning process.

By the end of the Cycle 2, the students gained significant improvement in the achievement, reflecting that the process of learning had effectively touched the main causes of their reading difficulties. The increased ability to recognize structure used by writer in organizing expository text in the restructuring activity has relevancy to the increase of their reading comprehension. The following is the improvement of students' scores from pre-test, cycle-1 and cycle-2.

Table 1 Mean Score and T-value

The Mean of Pre-Test	The Mean of Post-Test 1	The Mean of Post-Test 2	T-value of cycle 1	T-value of cycle 2
64.8	70.4	78.3	2.937	11.290

As in the figure above, there was decrease in the number of students whose score at the poor and fair category. Based on the result of the research, the improvement of the action is supported by the mean score of the test. The result of the mean score in pre-test was 64.8, in the post-test 1 was 70.4 then in the post-test 2 was 78.3. The improvement of score from pre-test to post-test 2 means that there is a significant improvement of the students' reading comprehension. Besides that, there was an improvement from t- test value, the result of t- test also shows that there is a significant improvement when the students learn reading skill using the Read, Examine, Decide, Write (REDW) strategy.

This improvement showed the utilization of REDW solved students' problems in comprehending expository text through enabling the students in identifying the topic, main idea, literal information within the text writer's organization and text structure by utilizing the text structure strategy and being aware of how the text organized.

Besides, the procedure of DRTA with restructuring as proven to be effective. In providing opportunity for the

students to think like good readers do: activate and build schemata, and utilize effective strategies during reading. In the first place, the DRTA was effective in activating and building students' schemata. Under the teacher's direct instruction students' schemata were built by pictures and key words vocabularies given at the pre-reading activities. This procedure was in line with Anderson's (1999:72) theory that before asking the students to reading teacher needs to establish background so that they have sufficient information to understand the text. Within the process of learning using REDW, the students utilize what they have known about the text and try to find its relation with the existing information the text provides as they verify the preciseness of their prediction. By doing this, the students construct meaning by using all the variable resources from both the text and previous knowledge (Yazdanpanah, 2007: 64). This schemata building activity gained positive response from the students particularly the low proficient readers - as the number of students raised hands to state oral prediction increase during the implementation of the REDW. With the

teacher's encouragement, the students were motivated to state their previous knowledge (activate their schemata) and making pre-assessment of what information to be delivered by the writer in the text.

Besides activating schemata, good readers utilize strategies during reading. Stahl (2004: 598) states that strategies in reading can be tools in the assimilation, refinement, and use of content, and it is believed as the reader is actively engage in particular cognitive strategies (activating prior knowledge, predicting, organizing, questioning, summarizing, and creating a mental image), he/she will be likely to understand and recall more of what they read.

The procedure of learning reading using DRTA provides opportunity for the students to utilize reading strategies. First of all, the materials were arranged in order to make the students aware of the main component of standing and memory of the text, and this is not done without guidance." In other words the students do not automatically utilize effective strategies during reading. Moreover, Meyer (1980) believe "good readers employed a text structure strategy, which is a strategy entailed searching for the primary thesis of or text structure that subsumed or essays. Intentionally, the teacher provides marks the introductory sentences, thesis statement, controlling ideas, major and minor details, and concluding sentences. During reading, the students learned to move their eyes effectively only the important information. Along with time, the students were gradually able to read in chunk. This procedure was given on the basis of Brown (1995: 256) statement that "able readers with the most reading abilities coordinate the use' of multiple reading strategies to improve their under bound large chunks of information into clusters of related details corresponding to the macrostructures in reading. Another reading in chunk activity occurs when the students complete the graphic organizer. They have determined of what they need to know in the text (use of structure) and complete the graphic organizer. This activity enables students remember the important information in the text.

Then, along with the four phases of REDW, the students find the major concept that the section is trying to explain. Once they have a general idea of what the section is trying to explain, try to examine the section one sentence at a time. If they understand the sentence, write down the key points that the sentence conveys. If they do not understand the sentence, try to focus on what the sentence is talking about rather than what it means and write each of the words or phrases that seem to be important on a piece of paper. This will help the students create a list of the words and phrases that may be important. Then the students decide if each word is trying to explain the major concept that is covered in the section or if it is just trying to convey a fact or supporting detail. The students might then decide that the words that are trying to actually explain the major concept of the paragraph, which is of course the REDW strategy, would be "note taking strategy," "read," "examine," "decide," "write," and "break complicated paragraph into series of ideas." Then, once they have decided which words are important and which are not, they can record the major concept that the section covers and record each of the key words that they identified.

Another effectiveness of the procedure of REDW in enabling the students to do what other good readers do is in enabling the students monitor their comprehension. By being constantly aware of the connections they make between text knowledge, the students monitor their comprehension by comparing the formulated prediction with the existing information used in the text.

In regard with the students' participation in the teaching and learning process of each cycle, the data obtained from observatory showed positive results. The low proficient students' involvement in Cycle 2 gradually improved much better than in the previous cycle. The changes on the procedures in Cycle 2 displayed good impacts to the group. The students enthusiastically formulated and verified prediction orally.

During the learning process in cycle-1 and cycle-2, the students realized

the importance of restructuring activity' as they effectively raised hand in identifying the use of particular structure in expository text in facilitating their comprehension and in completing the graphic organizes. This finding recommends that the procedure of REDW improves students' self-confidence. Students' self-confidence improved as they given opportunity to practice interacting with the text and identifying key components of the text. Under the teacher's direct instruction through modelling and guidance in the forms of leading questions, the students were able to scrutinize the text efficiently and effectively as they have determined and achievable goal and clear steps in the effort to accomplish the goal. The improvement in self-confidence reflected in the increase of number of students who raised their hands to formulate prediction orally, to verify the preciseness of their prediction orally, to confirm their comprehension. Furthermore, this strategy is recommended to be used in reading any kinds of reading material by other students.

Besides their self-confidence, the students' motivations to learn were also improved during the implementation of the REDW strategy. Through the teacher's active involvement by giving direct instruction, students were motivated to be actively involved in all the stages of the reading process. This finding supports Purba (2010:9) statement that REDW strategy was effective in teaching reading comprehension because it help guide the students while finding main idea in each paragraph of reading assignment and this strategy helps in comprehending the information contained in the reading text and also could encourage the students' interest, enthusiasm and motivate the students to be more active in reading activity. While, Hutagaol (2012:1) statement that teaching reading comprehension through REDW strategy can improve students' achievement in reading comprehension.

During the teaching and learning process, the teacher's involvement during the teaching and learning process was very important to provide help for the students in achieving the goal of the

learning: to comprehend the content of expository text. However, the 'help' provided by the teacher here does not merely test students' memory of the text read. Instead, the procedure leads the students to process the text by providing guidance and at the same time gradually release the responsibility to the students.

CONCLUSIONS

The research findings showed that affirmative development of the students' reading comprehension was rendered from the increase of language proficiency in relation to expository writer's organization they recognized through sequential activities of the REDW.

The achievement gain showed encouraging result as indicated by the increasing mean score which was 64.8 in preliminary study and steadily increased 70.4 in Cycle 1 and reached 78.3 in Cycle 2. In regard with the students' participation the teaching and learning process in the two cycles (six meetings), the analysis of observation, field notes, and questionnaire data demonstrated positive results in that the students actively engaged in the learning process.

To follow up the conclusions, some suggestions are proposed to the English students, teachers/lecturers and other researchers. The Read, Examine, Decide, Write (REDW) strategy was effective and suitable to improve reading comprehension in terms of providing the students opportunity to utilize reading strategies, to enhance students' self-confidence, and to produce independent learners. However, since the REDW is effective for reading both literary and informational, the students suggested applying the strategy independently not only, in the classroom but also outside wherever they are reading any type of text.

For English teacher/lecturer, regarding the effectiveness of REDW they are recommended to teach reading using REDW and also in improving reading comprehension or other skills (e.g. listening, speaking, and writing). Finally, for other researchers, the development of appropriate procedure of REDW strategy in another action research can be

conducted with different reading micro skills and different level of proficiency.

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