

Active Reading Comprehension Using the Paired Reading Strategy

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Teachers who are teaching in the classroom have a desire to increase their students' competence through various efforts. One of them by choosing the strategy they will apply in the teaching and learning process. The purpose of this research is to increase the students' ability in reading comprehension by using the Paired Reading Strategy. The methodology the researchers used is action research which consists of four steps, planning, action, observation and reflection, and the subjects are the eighth-grade students class B of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa. The findings show that the Paired Reading Strategy can increase the students' ability in reading comprehension by facilitating intervention and repetition

Key words: *Reading, comprehension, intervention, repetition, strategy, paired reading.*

Introduction

Reading is a process of getting a message from reading material where the readers explore the content to be their own. Reading not only increases our life skills but also extends our knowledge; it even goes much deeper, reading allows us to roam around the world. Barnett (1989) states that reading is an interactive process in which the reader and the text assort together to create meaning as the reader's mental processes actively engage with each other at different levels to make the text meaningful. In many aspects, reading can determine how we can think and that it has a fundamental effect on the development of the imagination, and thus it is a powerful influence on the development of our intelligence and therefore it can be seen what kind of person should be. By reading, someone's emotion can be influenced by the information he/she received, for example, he/she is probably very kind, sad, bad, respect, fanatic or even arrogant to the others. Based on the statement above, reading can be defined as an activity of the reader and the text to gather information or ideas to form comprehension according to the source of the reading material. Comprehension is the goal of reading. A reader's comprehension is influenced by a range of internal factors, including perceptions,

beliefs, motivated and problem-solving strategies, Don (2005). Reading comprehension has many processes not only perception, beliefs, motivation, problem-solving strategy but the activity of the reader to reading the text. Alderson (2000) argues that reading comprehension is a sophisticated cognitive process in which the reader creates meaning by using simultaneously all the accessible resources and information from both the reading passage and background knowledge by using vocabularies and syntax to monitor their meaning from one's mental storage, making inferences and applying schemata. The syllabus of Junior High School (2006), especially for the Eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa. The target of the competence should be achieved by the students in studying English, the competence standard that the students should be able to comprehend is the meaning of a short simple essay in the form of a recount and narrative text, to interact with the surrounding environment. The basic competence is responding to the meaning of the short simple essay accurately, flawlessly, and acceptably in the form of the recount and narrative text to interact with the surrounding environment. The indicator is the students can identify the meaning and the information of the narrative text and can retell the information that they have found in the narrative text. To achieve the target the school has determined the Minimum Competence Criterion of sixty-five. Wood (2001) reported that reading is a difficult skill for children to implement in their learning, that's why children always find problems in comprehending their reading material. The difficulties can be found in applying the strategies they have. Based on the results of the researcher's observations at the eighth-grade students class B of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa showed that the majority of students were not able to comprehend English texts. The problems were that the students were lacking the mastering vocabulary presented, it meant the students could not translate the meaning of the unfamiliar word. The students could not understand the generic structures of their reading material. The students were not able to determine the main idea from their reading material, The students were limited to exploring their thought in comprehending the content of their reading. The strategy used by the English teacher is still unable to solve the students' problems in comprehending the reading in narrative text. Thus, the researcher formulated the problem of this research "How does Paired Reading Strategy increase the students' ability in reading comprehension at the eighth-grade students class B of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa in 2018". Related to the students' problem above, the researcher proposed the implementation of the Paired Reading Strategy as a solution to increase the students' ability in reading comprehension. P. Macdonald (2010) A Paired Reading Strategy is a creative strategy for supporting reading in schools. This strategy can make students build relationships and encourage self-esteem and motivation. Topping (1995) defines the Paired Reading Strategy as a convenient and enjoyable way for skilled readers to help unskilled readers develop to get better reading skills. This strategy allows students to select the reading materials which are interested in them. A Paired Reading Strategy is a part of cooperative learning, where the students will take more participation in reading comprehension, building team spirit, no one person will dominate the thinking of others, with

the goal of making the students of pairs more active and creative in response to creating their comprehension to the text itself. Hopefully this strategy not only could make the students more active and creative to communicate their understanding in pairs but also give much time to share their point as a result of applying the strategy. Concerning the explanations above, the researcher tries to apply research, entitled, Increasing the Students' Ability in Reading Comprehension by Using Paired Reading Strategy at the eighth-grade students class B of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa in 2018

Literature Review

Reading Comprehension

Reading allows people to increase their knowledge. They may explore around the world where they get new things which make them get a better life. Meneghetti, Carretti & De Beni (2006) define reading as a process to infer meaning and construct knowledge with the help of background knowledge. Then, Kendeou (2014), reports that to understand a sentence, one must visually process the individual words, identify and access their phonological, orthographic, and semantic representations, and connect these representations to form an understanding of the underlying meaning of the sentence. Farhadi et.al (2006), state that reading comprehension is a crucial part of the process of learning and teaching and it is believed to be the most important skill for language learners. Moreover, Clarke, et al (2014) states that reading comprehension is situated within the text itself, developed understanding comes from the interaction between the text and the reader's to response it. Another definition is stated by Snow (2002) where reading comprehension will be defined as, "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language". Therefore, reading comprehension is the process of getting meaning from reading the text in which the reader has to decide linguistic symbols and reconstruct them up to a meaningful whole intended by connecting the reader's background knowledge. Reading comprehension is a complex process in getting the message from reading the text because it involves the mental process which applying a certain strategy. The process needs the readers to interact with the printed material by understanding the elements of the reading text.

Building Reading Comprehension

Clarke & Emma Truelove, et al (2014), state that reading comprehension involves many activities for example initial predictions are confirmed by later information, potentially ambiguous vocabulary is resolved by context and assumptions based on previous experience are tested, making connections between parts of the passage in order to build up an interpretation requires recognition of the words, an ability to hold information in mind, an ability to scan backwards and forwards to relevant words and phrases, an understanding of

cues from sentences structure and punctuation. As Nathan & Stanovich (1991) found, fluent word recognition may be a prerequisite for good comprehension and enjoyable reading experience. To improve comprehension the readers should summarise the main points and monitor the understanding of the text, predict what might come to the next, clarify unclear or ambiguous words or phrases, generate questions and answering them, Palinscsar and Brown (1984). Those activities may help the students build their comprehension or finding the message from the text.

Reading Comprehension Level

Reading comprehension involves searching and thinking processes that are stimulated by reading comprehension questions to find the message from the text. The types of reading comprehension level give the reader information on what level will be. Pearson and Johnson (1972) and Nuttal (1996) explain the six types of reading comprehension level namely:

- a. **Literal Comprehension.** Literal Comprehension refers to an understanding of the straightforward meaning of the text, such as facts, vocabulary, dates, times, and locations
- b. **Reorganisation.** The reorganisation is based on a literal understanding of the text. The students must use information from various parts of the text and combine them for additional understanding.
- c. **Inference.** Inference involves the students combining their literal comprehension of the text with their knowledge and intuitions. The students may initially have a difficult time answering inference questions because the answers are based on material that not explicitly stated. The reader should manipulate the information with the background knowledge of the text.
- d. **Prediction.** Prediction involves the students using both their comprehension of the passage and their knowledge of the topic and related matters in a systematic fashion to determine what might happen next or after they read a story.
- e. **Evaluation.** Evaluation requires the reader to give a global or comprehensive judgment about some aspect of the text.
- f. **Personal Response.** Personal response requires the reader to respond with their feelings for the text and the subject. The answers are not found in the text, they come strictly from the readers but must relate to the content of the text and reflect a literal understanding of the material. Generally, the emphasis at this level of comprehension is on actively bringing the reader's general understanding to bear on the ideas and concepts contained in the reading passage. The synthesis is necessary for higher comprehension, especially on difficult material. The researcher applied the level of comprehension by adjusting the questions to the students at the eighth-grade students class B of SMP Negeri 1 Alo'oa.

Paired Reading Strategy

Reading comprehension is more than decoding skill, but the readers should be able to comprehend what they have decoded from the text. Reading comprehension is the readers' skill in applying the strategy to understand the reading purpose which makes the readers comprehend more messages from their reading text. Understanding the reading purposes allows the readers to develop their knowledge with other information. The strategy and reading purpose are both steps that should be understood by the readers and those become the responsibility of the English teacher to help the students master those activities. In this research, the researcher chooses the Paired Reading Strategy because some experts propounded that this strategy allows the students to comprehend the content of their reading text easily by summarising their comprehension in pairs. The students are trained to arouse their questions related to their summarising. Paired Reading Strategy has a very broad evidence base with many positive results and, consequently, advocates of the approach emphasise the need to use the method exactly as it has been designed, Morgan (1986). Paired Reading method for peer or parent tutoring is a form of supported oral reading which enables students to access and comprehend texts somewhat above their independent readability level, within a framework of predictable and non-intrusive error, correction Topping (2014). Then, Li (2001) stated that Paired Reading is an instructional method that involves the pairing of a skilled reader with the less-skilled reader by demonstrating appropriate reading rate, inflection and pausing for the less-skilled reader. In conclusion, the Paired Reading Strategy can motivate the students working together in pairs as they share the information they get by the available questions from their teacher to promote critical thinking from the students.

The Procedure of a Paired Reading Strategy

The Procedures of Paired Reading Strategy have been implemented by Wilhoit (2018) and Morgan (1986), they elaborate some procedures of a Paired Reading Strategy:

First procedures (Wilhoit, 2018):

- a. The helping reader should sit with the student and place the reading text so both readers can see it.
- b. Before reading, the student should be informed that he or she should signal when the student wants to read alone.
- c. Both readers start reading aloud until the student signals to read alone. The helping reader should continue to read silently.
- d. If the student hesitates or makes an error while reading, the helping reader should point to the word, say it, and have the student repeat the words.
- e. Both the readers continue to read until the student signals to read alone again.

Second procedures (Morgan, 1986):

- a. Reading should be started with the person with whom reading will be done in an appropriate setting.
- b. If reading is done together, the adult reads the text out loud sentence by sentence while the child repeats with a low tone voice. If reading is done independently, the aider follows the child and guides him/her with hand gestures when intervention.
- c. The adult tries to prevent reading mistakes of the reader by making him/her read again those parts where he/she makes mistakes during reading
- d. The partner who makes reading done motivates the reader during the paired reading process.
- e. If the child reads independently, the adult helps him/her for the words he/she skips or hesitates.
- f. The reader is rewarded with stickers, badges or other gifts to promote his/her reading.

The procedures above are a guide for the researcher applying the Paired Reading Strategy by modifying them with a suitable condition to the eighth-grade students class B of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa.

- a. The researcher prepares the reading material for the students in narrative text.
- b. The researcher groups the students in pairs. One skilled reader and the weakness one.
- c. The researcher distributes the reading text to the students which consists of three paragraphs in the narrative text, while the next meeting the researcher prepares the longer one.
- d. The researcher is reading aloud and the students listen to by doing the silent reading.
- e. The researcher points the skilled reader to read aloud and the weak readers will listen to him/her by doing the silent reading. When mispronouncing a certain word the skilled reader notes as an error and correct it.
- f. The unskilled reader is given the time to read aloud as better his/her friend.
- g. The researcher gives the time to the students to ask questions to their partner to build their comprehension.
- h. The researcher gives praise to the students who do better in reading comprehension as a reward.

The readiness and preparation of the researcher to demonstrate the procedures will result in the teaching and learning process is more interesting for the learners in comprehending the reading material and resulted in significantly greater rates of progress for the students' performance in participating in the classroom. The teacher collaborator observed the researcher and students' activities during the teaching and learning process that happened in the classroom.

Problem

The problem that stated from the background of this research, how a Paired Reading Strategy increases the students' ability in reading comprehension to eighth-grade students of class B of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa in 2018. The research question gives a clear direction for the researcher about how to clarify and explain the process of the research.

Discussion

The discussion phase is needed to explain how the researcher got and analysed data of the research. Without a discussion phase, it is difficult for the readers to understand the findings of the research. The methodology used by the researcher was action research.

Action research is the action of the researcher in improving the situation of social even where it needs to be better includes the atmosphere of teaching and learning process of English classroom at the eighth-grade students class B of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa in 2018. McNiff (2009) explains that action research is a self-reflective practice that involves thinking and reflecting the process. Mills (2003) argues that action research is a systematic way for the teachers in gathering data for the purpose of understanding how they teach and how the students learn. Furthermore, Philips (2010) states that action research is an activity for the teachers to improve their classrooms in pedagogy and students learning. Stringer (2007) states that action research is not a panacea for all ills and does not resolve all problems but provides a means for people to get a handle on their situation and formulate effective solutions to problems they face in their public and professional lives. The process of action research helps teachers in assessing needs, documenting the steps of inquiry, analysing data and making the decisions that can lead to desired outcomes. This is simply the procedures of the action research are planning, action, observation, and reflection. This research was conducted in the odd semester (April to May) in 2018 by the subjects in the eighth-grade students class B of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa where the amount of the students is 21 Students.

The Process of Getting the Data

The implementation of this research was done in two cycles, each of cycles consisted of three meetings. In meeting one and two, the researcher focused on explaining reading comprehension, narrative text, and procedures of the Paired Reading Strategy. It was done to make the students fully understood the strategy. That's why in meeting three, the researcher evaluated the students' ability in reading comprehension by distributing the evaluation paper (essay test). There are six questions by considering the six comprehension level. During the

teaching and learning process which was running, the English teacher as teacher collaborator and researcher observed the students' activities and got the data as follows:

Observation and Students' Achievement in Cycle I

Observation

The results of the observation showed that thirteen students (61.9 %) were active and eight students (38.1 %) were inactive. There were fourteen students (66.7 %) who were cooperative and seven students (33.3 %) who were uncooperative.

The Students' Achievement

The researcher evaluated the students to get the students' achievement in comprehending the reading text, the data showed that there were two or 9.52 % students were at a very good level, eight or 38.10% of students were at a good level, eight or 38.10% students were in enough level and no one student in less and fail level. Meanwhile, there were three or 14.28 % of students who could not achieve the Minimum Competence Criterion sixty-five that has been decided in that school. Further, the students' score got the highest was eighty-eight, the lowest was fifty and the average was 71.56. In this cycle, the students could not succeed to get the whole comprehension from their reading text because some factors might influence the students' comprehension. Some students did not agree if their friends would guide them in reading, some male students wanted to dominate the female students, the students still hesitated to do the procedures of the Paired Reading Strategy, it was to take a long time to train the students' in pronouncing some words or phrases and correcting the students' question. These conditions might make the students' concentration did not focus on comprehending their reading text.

Observation and Students' Achievement in Cycle II

The result of the students' observation paper showed that there were 20 students or 95.65 % who were active and only one student or 4.34 % who were inactive. While all students were cooperative they worked together happily and prepared themselves fully in achieving their comprehension from the passage they read. Based on the result of the students' evaluation papers, the result showed that there were eight or 38.10% students were at a very good level, nine or 42.86% students were at a good level, four or 19.04% students were in enough level, no student was in less and failed level. All the students passed the Minimum Competence Criterion. Furthermore, the students' scores showed the highest was 95 and the lowest was 66 and the average was 80.78%. The results of the analysis of the data showed the students' achievement can be seen in the table below:

Table 1

Cycle	Students	Level	Frequency	%	Highest score	Lowest score	Average of students' score
		Very Good	2	9.52 %			
		Good	8	38.10 %			
I	21	Enough	8	38.10 %	88	50	71.56
		Less	3	14.28 %			
		Fail	-	-			
		Very Good	8	38.10 %			
		Good	9	42.86 %			
II	21	Enough	4	19.04%	95	66	80.78
		Less	-	-			
		Fail	-	-			

The table explains that the average of the students' achievement is better in cycle II (80.78) than in cycle I (71.56). As mentioned in chapter one the Minimum Competence Criterion (MCC) has been decided namely sixty-five. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Paired Reading Strategy can increase the students' ability in reading comprehension.

Research Finding

After analysing the data, the results showed that Paired Reading Strategy can increase the students' ability in reading comprehension at the eighth-grade Students class B of SMP Negeri 1 Gunungsitoli Alo'oa in 2018. The findings can be achieved because of facilitating by repetition and intervention.

Repetition

The repetition is the action where the students got a chance to practice many times of words to utter, thus this action contributed to the students' activities. The students are more aware of the mistake they made and more comprehensible to the text they read. The researcher observed the students' pronunciation and the results showed that the students who repeated a word five to ten times got better fluency, accuracy than the students who did not repeat the word as many as expected. Tannen (1989) emphasised that repetition is an activity that happened in our native language interaction, it facilitates production, enabling a speaker to produce language in more efficient and makes comprehension easier since the listener needs to process less information and facilitates comprehension in teaching and learning process. Furthermore, Taguchi; Greta Gorsuch; Kristi Lems; Rory Roszell (2016) stated that



repetition facilitated readers' ability to pick up details in a text. In conclusion, repetition gives motivation and support for the students to increase their ability in reading comprehension.

Intervention

Intervention is the action of the skilled reader to help his/her partners be to succeed in getting reading comprehension. The intervention has proved that there are many benefits associated with self-assessment, and peer-assessment to the students, teachers, and institutions at large. The intervention fosters continuous and quality improvement in the teaching field (Macherra 2017). Reading comprehension can be improved with some basic skills: word training (Tan & Nicholson, 1997), repeated reading (LaBerge & Samueks, 1974; Rashotte & Torgesen, 1985; Sindelar, Monda & O'Shea, 1990); vocabulary instruction (Beck et al, 1982; Pany, Jenkins & Schreck 1982). The intervention was applied by the skilled reader with negotiating with his partner who unskilled the reader in comprehending the text. The student was instructed to follow along during reading, the student read the same passage. If the student miscued or omitted words, the skilled reader did not interrupt but made notes of any errors. However, if the student hesitated, the skilled reader waited for five seconds and if the student did not respond, the skilled reader pronounced the word for the student and recorded it as an error. Gradually, each passage became longer.

Conclusion

Teaching reading comprehension needs a serious effort from the English teacher to succeed the students successfully. He/she may apply various strategies to get the students' attention to concentrate on what they will read. The researcher, in this case, presented the Paired Reading Strategy to increase the students' ability in reading comprehension as well as intervention and repetition. The Paired Reading Strategy allows the students to reduce their pressure and anxiety which they often experience in reading classes as usual and flexible for the students who are at very low reading skills.



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