



Improving Students' Reading Skill Through the Use of Reciprocal Teaching Technique

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to find out whether Reciprocal Teaching strategy able to improve the students' reading comprehension and also find out the factors which influence the improvement of the students' reading skill. This research was an action research. The participants of the research were the third semester students of 2018-2019 academic year of STIBA Persada Bunda Pekanbaru which consisted of 13 students. The instruments used to collect the data were from observation checklists, field notes, interviews, and reading tests. There were two main findings in this research. First, reciprocal teaching strategy was able to improve the students' reading skill. It could be seen from the improvement of their mean score in reading comprehension at the end of the cycle 1. Second, there were several factors that could influence the improvement of their reading skill involved teaching materials, teacher's knowledge, students' interaction, and assessment activities. To sum up, the implementation of reciprocal teaching technique was able to provide positive results on their reading comprehension.

Keywords: *Reading comprehension, reciprocal teaching*

Meningkatkan Pemahaman Bacaan dengan Menggunakan Strategi *Reciprocal Teaching*

Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apakah strategi reciprocal teaching mampu meningkatkan pemahaman membaca dan mengidentifikasi faktor apa yang mempengaruhi peningkatan tersebut. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian tindakan kelas. Peserta penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa semester III STIBA Persada Bunda pada tahun ajaran 2018-2019 yang berjumlah 13 orang. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah lembar observasi, catatan lapangan, wawancara, dan tes pemahaman bacaan. Ada dua temuan penting dalam penelitian ini. Pertama, *reciprocal teaching* mampu meningkatkan kemampuan pemahaman bacaan mahasiswa. Peningkatan tersebut dapat dilihat dari peningkatan nilai rata-rata pada akhir siklus 1. Kedua, faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi peningkatan tersebut antara lain materi ajar, pengetahuan guru, interaksi mahasiswa, dan penilaian perilaku. Hasilnya, implementasi *reciprocal teaching* mampu memberikan hasil yang positif dalam pemahaman bacaan mereka.

Kata Kunci : *Pemahaman Bacaan, reciprocal teaching*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading occupies large portion in teaching learning activities. Having a good ability in reading is a demand for students, especially for them who study in English department. It is reasonable since all their learning materials are delivered in English. If they have a good ability in reading comprehension, they will be able to gain the information well. As the result, they will be easy to follow the lecture well. But if they have lack ability in reading, they will fail or get difficulties during their study. So, the ability to comprehend a reading text is a key to be a successful learner

Students have to realize that the aim of reading is to comprehend the text rather than pronouncing the printed material in their effort to expand and enrich their knowledge. According to Heilman (1981:242) reading comprehension is a process of making sense of written idea through meaningful interpretation and interaction with language. Furthermore, Singer (1985:11) points out that reading comprehension is an interpretation of written symbols, the apprehending of meaning, and assimilation of ideas presented by the written, and the process of thinking while deciphering symbols.

In line with this point, Klinger et al. (2007: 8) assert that reading comprehension is a multicomponent, highly complex process that involves many interactions between readers and what they bring to the text (previous knowledge, strategy use) as well as variables related to the text itself (interest in text, understanding of text types). Then, Lems et al. (2010:170) said that reading comprehension is not a

static competency; it varies according to the purposes for reading and the text that is involved. When the prerequisite skills are in place, reading becomes an evolving interaction between the text and the background knowledge of the reader. From the definition, it can be inferred that reading comprehension is the power to get an idea or meaning from written text, understanding it by processing the experience and prior knowledge.

There are some factors that influence the students in reading. Some experts have identified a number of factors affecting comprehension skill. One of them is Widdowson (1979:220) who proposed five factors which affect the comprehension skill. First factor is intelligence. Every student has different level of intelligence, so it will be possible for them to produce different comprehension. The number of ideas that s/he understands and depth of her/his understanding will be depending on her/his general capacity to learn. Next is experience. Students with limited experience may have difficulty in comprehending many of ideas and activities which other students are familiar before they come to school. The last is mechanics of reading. Comprehension will be easier for the students if they have all mastered the skills of word attack and word meaning. Brown (2000:64) said that the mechanic of reading which significantly contributed to comprehension were identifying topic, identifying main idea, identifying detail, identifying reference, figuring out the meaning of vocabulary in context, and identifying explicit and implicit meaning. Then, the reading of mechanism was used as the indicator of

the test, but it was limited in identifying main idea, identifying reference, and figuring out the meaning of vocabulary.

Based on the writer's experience in teaching reading skill in STIBA Persada Bunda, she found that most of students have low ability in reading. From the preliminary research, the result of their reading test showed that none of them got A which ranging from 80-100. Their average score was 60. They were unable to comprehend the text well as they often encounter difficulties when interpreting the text. It can be caused by several factors: First, the vocabulary is not familiar for them. This condition made them lack of motivation and interest in reading. It can be identified that they tend to give up easily when they found unfamiliar vocabulary without any effort to guess the meaning. As the result, they only guess the answer. Second, the lecturer was unable to choose appropriate strategy for teaching reading. The lecturer mostly used conventional method which she was too dominant in teaching-learning process. This strategy made students were not enjoy the process and tend to be passive in the class. From the previous factors mentioned, it is crucial to solve the problem. It is necessary to find appropriate reading strategy to improve students' achievement as well as their interaction during the class.

There are some strategies and techniques which can be applied to teach reading comprehension such as Collaborative Strategic Reading, Transactional Strategies Instruction, Reciprocal Teaching, and so on. Due to the needs to find strategy to improve not only students' score but also students' interaction. The technique might be

suitable to overcome this problem is reciprocal teaching.

Reciprocal teaching technique is an effective way to improve students' reading comprehension. It was developed by designing a social setting in which students study in the small group. Pallinscar and Brown (1986:117) defined reciprocal teaching as an instructional activity that takes place in the form of a dialogue between teacher and segment which is structured by the use of four basic strategies: questioning, predicting, clarifying, and summarizing. Moreover, Klenk (2001:1) assert that Reciprocal Teaching is an instructional procedure in which teacher and students take turns leading discussion of the text". The teacher and students take turns leading discussion about shared text through four comprehension strategies; prediction, clarification, summarization and question generate.

From the definition, it can be inferred that reciprocal teaching is a technique used to develop comprehension of text in which teacher and students take turns leading a dialogue concerning sections of a text. There are four activities that are incorporated into the technique: summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting.

Reciprocal teaching is a suitable technique to be applied for improving students' interaction during the process. The strategy which includes the four basic techniques helps them learn how to learn, remember, and motivate themselves. The technique may serve the good ways in raising students' motivation, cooperation, responsibility,

leadership, and social relation among them. Additionally, reciprocal teaching helps students with or without a teacher present, actively brings meaning to the meaningful world (Alverman and Phelps :1998)

Based on the previous explanation, the purposed of the research was to identify whether and to what extent reciprocal teaching can improve students' reading ability. And also explain the factors that influence the changes in reading ability

2. METHOD

This research was conducted by using action research. Cohen and Manion (1989:223) described action research as the spot procedure designed to deal with a concrete problem located in an immediate situation. It means that the step by step process is constantly monitored over varying periods of time and by variety mechanism so that the ensuring feedback may be translated into modification, adjustment, directional changes, and redefinition to bring about lasting benefit to the process by itself. Furthermore, Wallace (1991:12) had proposed a model for a teacher education at the core of which is process of reflection on professional action. He named the process as reflective cycle which provided the momentum for increased professional momentum. In addition, Wallace illustrated the cycle as planning, action, reflection, and evaluation.

This research was conducted at STIBA Persada Bunda Pekanbaru, Jalan Diponegoro number 42 Pekanbaru. The population of this research was the third semester was the third semester students

of 2018/ 2019 of STIBA Persada Bunda Pekanbaru. The sample was taken from regular class consisted 13 students.

In this research, both of quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Quantitative data were collected by using reading tests and tasks. Qualitative data collected by using observation and interview. This technique involved some form of observation of professional action in learning process. Wallace (1998:46) stated that the professional action in learning process might involve the use of video or audio techniques, and checklist or observation schedule. In this study, checklist or observation schedules were chosen as the technique for collecting the data. The method of recording the data was real time observation. It meant that the observation and interview observed and analyzed when the teaching and learning happen without using any electronic media to recall the data. These were doing by marking checklist and simply taking notes (Wallace, 1998:106).

In this research, two instruments were used namely quantitative and qualitative instruments. The quantitative instruments made in the form of tests and tasks. The indicator for reading test were identifying main idea, identifying reference, and figuring out the meaning of vocabulary in context. The tasks were given to students at the end of every meeting, while the tests gave to students at the end of every cycle. Whereas, qualitative instruments in the form of observation and interview. Observation conducted by using field note and observation guide. The observation guide was designed to observe students' activities during the class such as the

students' interaction in applying four strategies: summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting. The collaborator also used field notes to find out information that might happen in teaching and learning process. The interview was conducted based on the factors which might influence teaching and learning process: teaching material, classroom activity, teachers' knowledge, and assessment activities.

This research was conducted to improve reading skill by using reciprocal teaching. There were two data which analyzed differently. Quantitative data were analyzed by using the scoring system. After counting and calculating the mean score, then it was compared with the level of standard ability in order to determine the level of ability by using criteria from Persada Bunda in Maspufah (163:2018) scoring system as the following:

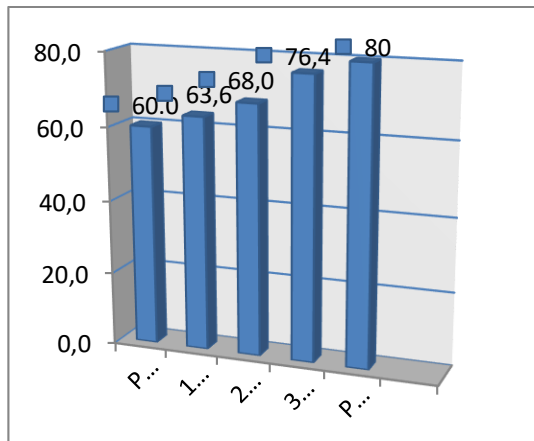
Score	Category
80 – 100	Very Good
60 – 79	Good
40 – 59	Fair
0 - 39	Poor

The qualitative data which gathered from observation checklist, field notes, interview, and test transcripts will be presented in qualitative description as proposed by Gay (2000:239-253) that there are some steps can be done such as data managing, reading or memoing, classifying, and interpreting

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Both of qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed to meet the finding. The cycle was done in four meeting, including the post test. It was applied the four step of action research: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The first meeting, the students were informed that a research would be conducted by applying reciprocal teaching technique. The technique was introduced to them with the lecturer as the role model. At the end of the session, the task was given. In the second meeting, the lecturer guide students to lead the discussion in their group. The task was also given at the end of the meeting. In the third meeting, the discussion was led by the students. They were successful in implementing every step of reciprocal teaching. The interaction occurred among them. At the end of the meeting, they were given a task.

At the end of the cycle or in the fourth meeting, the post test was given to students to see the technique effectiveness. The result of the task in every meeting was 63.6, 68, and 76.4 and for the post test was 80. The students' reading ability could be seen in the following graph.

Diagram 1: Students' Mean Score

Based on the quantitative result, it showed that there was a better improvement from the first meeting to the post test. It can be inferred that reciprocal teaching strategy improved the students' achievement. Since their post-test score was 80, their ability could be classified into very good category.

From the interview, it could be inferred that classroom activity was one factor of effective teaching-learning process. Reciprocal teaching strategy was effective to create a good interaction among students. They shared their opinion with other friends. Furthermore, they were not shy to ask about something to their friends. This interaction made them easier to understand the text.

The data from observation checklist and field note showed that most of students were able to run the discussion well. The students had a good interaction among them. In addition, the reading material given made they felt challenged to understand it. As the result, they felt the strategy gave

improvement in their reading comprehension.

From the finding, it was shown that the implementation of reciprocal teaching made effective teaching – learning process in reading comprehension. The classroom interaction made students more confidence to do the test and improved their skill in reading comprehension, especially in identifying main idea, identifying reference, and figuring out the meaning of vocabulary in context.

The findings were in line with Alverman and Phelps (1998) who said that reciprocal teaching helps students with or without a teacher present, actively bring meaning to the meaningful world. Reciprocal teaching strategy was chosen as it promoted not only reading comprehension, but also to monitor their own learning and thinking. Besides that, the reciprocal teaching strategies may serve the good ways in raising students' motivation, cooperation, responsibility, leadership, and social relation among them.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the data presented in the previous sections, it can be concluded that reciprocal teaching strategy had successful in improving students reading comprehension. Their post-test average score was 80 and categorized in very good level. The successful of reciprocal teaching strategy in improving students reading comprehension was influenced by several factors such as classroom activity, material, teachers' knowledge, and assessment activities.

Since reciprocal teaching strategy is very useful in improving students' reading comprehension, it is recommended to lecturers as well as

teachers to implement this strategy to their class. The text used could be selected based on the students' need. Finally, the result of this research could be useful for other researcher who wants to conduct a further research.

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