

PROMOTING STUDENTS' EXPLICIT INFORMATION SKILL IN READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

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Abstract: This research is carried out to (1) identify whether graphic organizers can improve students' reading comprehension; and (2) to describe the classroom situation when graphic organizers are employed in instructional process of reading comprehension.

The research is administered in two cycles 2014 in the second grade of SMP Muhammadiyah Sekampung, Lampung Timur. The procedure of the research consists of identifying the problem, planning the action, implementing the action, observing the action, and reflecting the result of the research. Qualitative data are collected through interview, observation, questionnaire, and research diary. Quantitative data are collected through test. To analyze qualitative data, the researcher used constant comparative method. It consists of four steps: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category; (2) Integrating categories and their properties; (3) delimiting the theory; (4) Writing the theory. Meanwhile, to analyze quantitative data, the researcher employed descriptive statistic.

The result of the research shows that using graphic organizers can improve students' reading comprehension and classroom situation. The improvement on students' reading comprehension is students are able to find explicit information in a text. The improvement of the classroom situation; (a) students come on time in the class (b) students are more motivated to join the class (c) Students pay more attention in the instructional process. In addition, the improvement also happens to the scores. The mean score increases from 57.56 in the pre-test, 63.34 in the formative test of cycle 1, and 69.56 in the post test of cycle 2

A. Introduction

Reading is regarded as a decoding skill, that is interpreting codes into ideas. In line with Nunan (1989: 33), he states that reading is viewed as a process of decoding written symbols, working from smaller units (individual letters) to larger ones (words, clauses and sentences). In other words, we use strategies to decode written forms in order to arrive at meaning. Besides that, reading always has a purpose, and according to Tomkins and Hoskisson (1994: 198-199) Reading has two purposes: they are reading for enjoyment and reading to carry away information. Reading for enjoyment focuses on the lived-through experience of reading. They concentrate on the thought, images, feelings, and associations evoked during reading. Reading to carry away information concentrates on the public, common referents of the words and

symbol in the text. Consequently, the existence of reading is very important for the life of human being. People usually say that reading is the window of the world. It is a means to see the world. Through reading, people can get the information entire the world without going anywhere. Furthermore, people can get the information from various media of communication such as internet, television, radio, newspaper, magazines and also books.

Even though reading comprehension is an important activity, student's reading comprehension in SMP Muhammadiyah Sekampung is still unsatisfying. It can be seen from test result of preliminary research, the average score is 57 with the highest score is 73.33 and the lowest score is 43.33. Besides that students have low motivation in joining teaching learning process. It may be caused by students do not recognize the

technique that can help them to comprehend the text easily. Dealing with this problem the researcher concludes that the attempt to improve reading comprehension in SMP Muhamadiyah Sekampung is needed.

Researcher found that the students had difficulty in reading comprehension especially in finding information which was explicitly stated in the text. Besides, based on my observation, I find (1) some students often come late; (2) they come to reading class reluctantly. It could be seen, when the bell is ringing, they don't enter the class directly; (3) they chat each other in the class. All of the facts above indicated the class is not an inspiring class.

The problem above may be caused by several reasons; could be the students or teacher. Based on my informal interview, (1) the students' vocabulary mastery was poor, so the students had difficulty to comprehend the text. Besides, the students have lack of motivation in language learning since the students get bored with teaching method used by teacher; (2) in the process of teaching learning, the teacher seldom gave motivation to the students. So it made students unmotivated to join the instructional process. Furthermore, the teacher still used conventional method in the process of teaching learning. In addition, the teacher still dominated the class by using English as the medium all the time. So that, it made the students didn't understand what the teacher said. As the result, student' reading comprehension is not satisfying.

To overcome this problem, I would like to propose graphic organizers to teach reading. Graphic organizer has been defined as a visual representation of knowledge. It is a way of structuring information, of arranging important information aspects of a concept or topic into a pattern using label. (Bromley, et el,

(1995: 7). Another idea about graphic organizer is from Gregory and Carolyn (2007: 101). They state that graphic organizers are useful thinking tools that allow students to organize information and allow students to see their thinking. They add that graphic organizers are visual/spatial, logical/mathematical tool that appeal to many learners for managing and organizing information.

B. Research Method

This research is carried out as classroom action research in collaboration with an English teacher of SMP Muhamadiyah Sekampung in the academic year of 2014. Some definitions of the action research that are proposed by experts are as follows: Burns (1993: 30) states that action research is the application of fact finding to practical problem solving in social situation with a view to improve the quality of action within it, involving the collaboration and cooperation of researcher, practitioners and laymen. In addition, Nunan (1998:229) states that action research is a form of self-reflective inquiry carried out by practitioners, aimed at solving problems, improving practice, or enhancing understanding. It is often collaborative".

Another definition comes from Mills (2006: 6) who states that:

Action research is any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counselor, or other stakeholders in teaching/learning environment, to gather information about the ways that their particular school operates how to teach, and how well their students learn. This information is gathered with the goals of gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effective positive changes in the school environment (and on educational practices in general), and

improving students outcomes and the lives of those involved.

Furthermore, Burns (1999: 30) said that there are four characteristics of action research:

1. Action research is contextual, small scale and localized, it identifies and investigates problems within a specific situation.
2. It is evaluative and reflective as it aims to bring about change and improvement in practice.
3. It is participatory as it provides for collaborative investigation by team of colleagues, practitioners, and researcher.
4. Change in practice is based on the collection of information or data which provides the impetus for change.

C. The Model of Action Research

The model of action research used in this study is the model developed by Kemmis Mc Taggart (1998) stated in Hopkins (1993: 48). According to the model, the implementation of action research consists of four essential moments: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

D. The Procedure of the Action Research

The Procedures of the classroom action research are as follows:

1. Problem Identification
Problem identification is conducted by identifying problems of the students' reading comprehension. In this case, the researcher makes use of observation technique and Pre test.
2. Planning
After identifying the problem, the researcher makes a plan about what kind of action that will be carried

out. Then, I prepare everything dealing with the action research requirements such as preparing the material, making lesson plan, preparing observation sheets to record students' activities, and preparing teaching aids and instrument.

3. Acting
In this stage, the researcher observed the action by making field note of instructional activity intended to know the class situation, what happen to students and the instructional activity when conflict dissection graphic organizer is applied. Here, the implementation of the action was according to scenario planned: the instructional activity in the classroom was conducted based on lesson plan.

4. Observing
In this stage, the researcher and the teacher of SMP Muhammadiyah Sekampung observe and monitor the activities in the classroom during and after teaching learning process by making notes of students' progress on reading comprehension.

5. Reflecting
After carrying out teaching and learning activity using graphic organizers, the researcher recites the occurrences in the classroom as the effect of the action. The researcher and English teacher evaluate the process and the result of the implementation of graphic organizers in teaching reading comprehension. The evaluation gives advantages in deciding what the researcher and the English teacher have to do in next cycle.

6. Revising the plan
The revision is carried out according to the weaknesses found in the

previous cycle. By revising the plan, it is hoped that the rest of the problems can be handled in the following cycle.

E. Technique of Collecting Data

In data collecting, the researcher involved two kinds of data: quantitative data and qualitative data. The quantitative data are gained from test: pre- and post test. It is conducted in order that the researcher gets the data pertaining to whether or not there is significant improvement on students' reading comprehension after being introduced with graphic organizers technique.

For collecting qualitative data the researcher used interview, observation, documentation and questionnaire.

1. Interview

The interview is carried out to get information from the students and the English teacher. The information covers their idea about the use of graphic organizers in teaching reading, and their motivation toward reading, the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of graphic organizers when they are used in teaching reading. The interview covers their personal perception, experiences, opinion, and ideas related to this classroom action research. To get the valid qualitative data, the triangulation is used. In this research the data are collected from three methods: (1) Observation; (2) Interview.; (3) Questionnaire

2. Observation

In this research the observation is carried out to cover the process of implementation of graphic organizers in the teaching reading. The observation notices classroom events and interaction between teacher and students and among students in the classroom. In this research,

the researcher observes students' activity during the instructional process.

3. Documentation

The documents that are searched in this research are written materials sheets of classroom observation, lesson plans, and list of students' score in reading test.

4. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is carried out to get information from the students about the information that covers their data about teaching the use of graphic organizers in teaching reading, and the strength and weaknesses of the implementation of graphic organizers in teaching reading.

F. Technique of Analyzing Data

The techniques that are used to analyze the data are:

1. Quantitative Data

In analyzing quantitative data, the researcher used descriptive statistics analysis. It is used to find means, percentage of students' achievement and so forth. The steps in analyzing quantitative data are as follows:

The quantitative data in numbers form gotten from

- a. Checking the students' answer on the written test that is carried out the implementation of cycles whether they are right or wrong.
- b. Computing the students' correct answers.
- c. Calculating the students' score on written test is done as follows;

- 1) Calculating the percentage of the correct answers of each student by using percentage correction. The percentage is used to measure the students' reading comprehension.

The percentage formula that is used is:

$$S = \frac{R}{N} \times SM$$

Where:

S = the students' mastery in %

R = the students' right answer

N = the maximum number of the whole answer

SM = standard mark (100) (Arikunto, 1998: 38)

- 2) After analyzing the scores of the written test, the researcher uses a statistical technique to find students' mean score. The researcher uses the following formula:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where:

M = mean (the score)

$\sum X$ = the total score

N = number of students

Formula proposed by Purwanto (1985: 38)

2. Qualitative Data

To analyze the qualitative data, the researcher applied constant comparative method as suggested by Glaser (1980: 105-115). The method consists of four steps: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category; (2) integrating categories and their properties; (3) Delimiting the theory; and (4) writing the theory. The following is a brief description of each step:

- a. Comparing incidents applicable to each category
In this stage, the researcher starts with making the code of every incident in his data from the observation and questionnaire.
- b. Integrating categories and their properties

In this stage, the researcher compares the data which are taken during the observation and from the questionnaire. It is followed by finding the relationship between them.

c. Delimiting the theory

In this stage, the researcher disregards some concepts initially noted but evidently irrelevant to the inquiry. In addition to the number of categories being reduced, the theory itself becomes simpler.

d. Writing the theory

The researcher arranges the research findings based on the result of the previous stages.

G. Discussion

This research is an action research which is implementing graphic organizers to improve students' reading comprehension. The result of this research was satisfying in term of; (1) the improvement of students' reading comprehension; (2) the changes of the classroom action research. Each point is described more detail as follows:

1. The improvement of students' reading comprehension

Based on the findings, it can be theorized that the use of graphic organizers can improve the students' reading comprehension. The improvement is identified from scores to scores in each cycle.

a. The appropriate selections of graphic organizers were effective to improve students' reading comprehension.

Jiang and Grabe (2007: 4) stated that: In the literature of GO research, not all GOs are constructed to reflect the discourse structures of a text. Many GOs create a very general frame for listing and sorting information from a

text without requiring recognition of how the discourse structure of the text organizes information. If GOs that represent the discourse structures of a text consistently facilitated reading comprehension, then the problem of ineffective GOs may rest with the types of GOs that do not represent the specific discourse structures of a text. In other words, GOs that do not represent the discourse structure of the text may be less affective than the ones that represent the discourse structures.

Based on the theory above, GOs that represent the discourse structure of a text would be effective to improve students' reading comprehension. Whereas, GOs that don't represent discourse structure of a text would be less effective to improve students' reading comprehension.

b. Graphic Organizers (Conflict Dissection and Character Traits) are helpful for explicit information, vocabulary, main idea and inference.

Graphic organizer is a kind of technique which is employed to promote students reading comprehension. In this case, conflict dissection GO is used to improve students' reading comprehension such as explicit information.

In addition, comes from Masterminds Publishing, llc (www.hoover.k12.al.us/hcsnet/dves/.../Adobe%20Reader/.../FAQ@GOs) states that:

Organizing information onto the graphics allows you to implement a variety of robust activities that otherwise might not be possible. For example, the organized information is conducive to a wide array activities involving in depth discussions,

prioritization's of the information, elaboration's, debates, drawing conclusions, making connections to other ideas, making inferences, and extending students' understanding of important concepts, making decisions, proactive planning, and so forth.

Based on the explanation above, graphic organizers are great tool to improve students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, Student eventually improves their vocabulary as they fill in the blank graphic organizers. During this process, the students put the extracted meaning from the passage in shortened version. This makes students have to find the similar ideas to replace the original words from the given text. Hyerle in Zwiers (2006: 17) states:

For students, the process designing the graphic organizers reinforces their understanding of the material by requiring them to reconstruct the information in their own words and to create connections that other students may not have noticed.

2. The improvement of students' classroom situation

a. Graphic organizers are helpful for workgroup activity and independent activity

The application of graphic organizers on teaching reading brings benefits for the students. The benefits are related to workgroup activity and independent activity. In the process of teaching learning, graphic organizers assigned the students with group work activity and independent activity.

b. Graphic organizers enhance students' participation

The new given technique provide students with different option of interest.

This condition generates student's eagerness to ask and respond question. Furthermore, graphic organizers provide more chances for students to actively develop themselves. This condition helps them in participating during the class. Jones, Pierce and Hunter in Tommaso (2008: 2) state:

When Constructing a graphic representation, students first survey the text with attention to the title, subheadings and illustration to determine the topic and objectives of the text. Students then begin to form a theory of the structure of the text and which graphic representation (map, chart, web, etc.) might best represent it. Students then read the text with that graphic representation in mind and so approach their reading with specific purposes. After reading the text, students complete the graphic representation, using the questions or categories provided by the instructor in the appropriate frame as a guide.

CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses about the conclusion of the research; the implication; and also suggestion for English teacher, students and also school. The discussion of each section will be delivered as such.

A. Conclusion

1. The Improvement on Students' Reading Comprehension

The implementations of graphic organizers in teaching reading improve students' reading comprehension. The improvements of students' reading comprehension are as follows:

- a. Students are able to find explicit information of the text. Here, the students are trained to identify characters and setting in a text. By doing that, the students are able to find

information which is explicitly stated in a text.

The improvement can also be concluded from their scores. Before the use of graphic organizers their reading score was low but after the implementation of graphic organizers, the score was much higher. The mean score increased from 57.56 in the pre-test, 63.34 in the formative test of cycle 1, and 69.56 in the post test of cycle 2. It can be concluded that there is improvement on the students reading comprehension skills as the mean scores are gradually up from pre-research to research cycle 1 and from the research cycle 1 to research cycle 2.

2. The Changes of Classroom Situation

- a. The students don't come late any longer as they are interested in the new teaching method used by the teacher.
- b. The students are more enthusiastic to join the class, since they are motivated with the new teaching method applied by the teacher. Besides, the teacher always gives motivation to the students during the instructional process.
- c. The process of teaching learning is inspiring as the teacher mixed English and Bahasa Indonesia in the instructional process. By so doing, the students pay more attention during the class.

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