FOSTERING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH PARTNER READING STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT

This study focused in implementing Partner Reading Strategy in improving students' reading comprehension. The genre of text was limited to the descriptive text that becoming one of curriculum target for English language skills competence for grade 8th of SMPN 4 Taliwang, West Sumbawa Regency. By generating Classroom Action Based Research, 27 students were becoming sample toward this research. According to data analysis, this research found that the implementation of Partner Reading Strategy was claimed to improve student's reading comprehension. This research was led to the Achievement Indicator by looking at the last cycle (Cycle II) achievement score as 76,86 and its categorization as Good. The implementation of Partner Reading Strategy also contributed to positive contribution into TL process as in; developed self-confident, activated in communication by sharing ideas each other, highly responded in taking feedback, developed social interaction between students and friends, and also teachers and their students. Therefore, the class situation became more fun and enjoyable for students and teacher. By meant that, the condition indirectly supported educational superiority and fostered student's learning outcomes.

Keywords: Fostering, Reading Comprehension, Partner Reading Strategy

LATAR BELAKANG

English has its own role to be influential language in the world. As its prestigious to be an international language for multifarious importance especially in the field of global communication and its derivate role of making the world closer to each other, especially for non-native speakers.

The consistency of being that global language, English seems to be compulsory required by all people around the world. The higher achievement of English is that the intention to its language skills and language elements. English language skill achievement can be reflexed by someone's competencies in scope of listening, writing, reading and speaking skills. Meanwhile, the language element will be performed by one's competencies in structure and vocabulary mastery of English. In this study, reading receives a special intention to be discussed.

Reading as one of English language skill still absorbs much attention by many linguists as well educational observers for some years. Under the coordination of UNESCO toward International Literacy Day that has commemorated practically in 8th of September in every year since 1967, one of achievements in this 'literacy' day was developmental input and output of someone comprehension's level in reading. Reading associates many cognitive processes that functioning together at the same time. It tends to the significant skill for language acquisition. As Harmer (2001) stated that the more they read, the better they will understand. By reading, there will be more positive effects that someone gets in his/her vocabulary, grammar and punctuation achievement. By doing reading regularly, ones can easier in identifying and describing the specific information through text for he/she has been read as well as topic, main idea, author purpose, etc. Then, the concept of reading comprehension is advanced to each reading activity in understanding whole reading material, analyzing and evaluating message through the text.

For general circumstances, many children like reading but not in understanding the whole context of what they have read. A reader with some intense, effective and efficient activities in reading must have the flexibility of being a good reader. In this occasion, reader notes to be able to set up their skills and memories, set up their reading speed, determine their effective techniques/methods and styles in reading. In correlation to the reading speed, three aspects must be advanced, involve; the motion of eyes, vocabulary mastery, and concentration. Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016), some factors are also determined in influencing one's ability for just low level of reading. Those factors can be derived from within or from outside readers. Factor that comes from within the reader, including the linguistic ability, interest (how big a concern of readers against reading faced), motivation (how much concern the reader toward the task of public feeling about reading or reading school), and the ability to read (how well the reader can be read). It was similar cases found that low skill level of someone in reading has been showed by their deficiency toward selecting and eliciting premises required to make inferences about a text. Moreover, they are also having less ability to suppress irrelevant information during the integration stage of comprehension building (Cain, Oakhill Barnes & Bryant 2001 in Smith, et.al: 2021).

In educational field, students need to be more practices in reading in order to help them in interpreting language. Through reading, students learn to think. It is a good way to help their selves in finding out several new ideas, facts and experiences. Thus, there will be different level of comprehension between one and others students because of different habits of reading.

According to discussion above, we are also agreed that many students from lower level until advance level still have problems in their reading activities. The similar condition comes up to 8th grade students of SMPN 4 Taliwang. As the result of pre-observation, many students have found to be uncomfortable in their reading activities. Specific identification has been noted, such as; there are some students that having good in pronounce, but lack in synthesizing as difficult as summarizing the message throughout the text they have read, some difficultness due to the process of; delivering meaning from text, making inferences, identifying and understanding vocabulary, sentence structure, and understanding the context of words in the text. In other side, English teachers have just giving some texts and answering the sequences of questions with their students, without any tricks or specific strategies to be applied. It seems to be bored for students because the conventional one for teaching and learning process. The students' needs force to the interesting, innovative and effective learning activities. This all reasons then intend teacher to have certain strategy for generating reading class more productive and fun. One of the recommended is Partner Reading Strategy.

In specific concept, Partner Reading Strategy generates some fun and effectives

pedagogical strategy in supporting the developmental of reading fluency (Melanie: 2008). This strategy also contributes reading of associated text by significant amount of time reading aloud or following along with their partner. Partner reading is a receptive learning strategy that involves two students in reading texts. According to Jennings, Caldwell, and Lerner (2014), partner reading can be an effective way to help students with reading problems develop reading skill. Partner reading strategy leads students to read the text independent before reading the text with a partner as a practice opportunity to convey new things or words that are not known. In addition, reading by partnerships provides learners with opportunities to read text repeatedly that supports development of automatic word reading. In other words, students have direct feedback from their partner during their reading activities. Zulmaidah, et. al. (2020) stated that the Partner Reading Strategy is experiencing significant development as a technique that educators apply to aid students improves their reading skills. This strategy can be applied into classroom activity and in spare time to offer students exclusive teaching and learning activities opportunities.

By those benefits of partner reading strategy, the teacher is interested in implementing this kind of strategy in order to discover any positive contribution for developing students' reading comprehension by generating student's positive result after implementing the strategy, particularly for 8th grade students at SMPN 4 Taliwang, West Sumbawa Regency.

METODE PENELITIAN

This study has generated as Classroom Action Based Research. Observations,

interviews, surveys and journals were typical data methods that participants used to investigate their questions.

The population of this study was all students of 8th grade in SMPN 4 Taliwang. There are 110 students in 8th grade. Purposive Sampling technique implemented due to determination of the sample in this study. Purposive sampling was used to select respondents that are most likely to produce appropriate and useful information (Kelly, 2010) and a way of identifying and selecting issues that will apply limited research resources effectively (Palinkas, et.al, 2015).

The reasons for adopting a purposive strategy were based on the assumption that, given the aims and objectives of the study, specific kinds of people might hold different and important views about the ideas and issues at question and therefore need to be included in the sample (Robinson, 2014). For this concept, then supporting reasons are generated toward issue that students of 8th grade particularly Class VIII B of SMPN 4 Taliwang still having low motivation and reading score. Then all of students in this class were being the sample of this study that contained of 27 students.

By applying the procedures of CAR which was adopted from Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), the stages has been generated that involved; *Planning, Action, Observation,* and *Reflection.*

Some techniques of collecting data were focused on these following steps:
1) Tests

The tests applied in order to find out student's competences in reading comprehension. The test concerned to the 20 questions for about 60 minutes. The test has given after treatment of Partner reading strategy in every cycle. Indicator in reading comprehension test involved this categorization below:

Table 1.
Indicator in Reading Comprehension

No.	Test Specification of Reading Comprehension	
1	General Information	• Topic • Main Idea
2	Meaning of words	• Reference • Synonym • Antonym
3	Language Features	• Tenses • Verbs • Linking words

(Wegman, 1985 and Blass, 2007)

2) Observations

The observation has conducted to identify the problems during the reading teaching and learning processes in seventh grade of SMPN 4 Taliwang. In the observation some notes were input due to student's and teacher's attitudes, opinions, feelings, hopes, obstacles and suggestions during this study as the impact of implementing the Partner Reading Strategy.
3) Photographs

The photographs used to enhance classroom analysis and to provide visual stimuli which were integrated into the research report.

Several instruments have been applied during this study, as follows:
1) Test has functioned to measure students' comprehension and to ensure whether the students have gained the target of minimum mastery criteria or not.
2) Observation sheets were separated between student and teacher.

The technique and data analysis of this research were analyzed quantitatively employing statistical calculation. The steps

and analyzing the data would be chronologically conveyed as follows:

1) Analyzing the students answer sheet by using this following formula:

$$Score = \frac{Student\ answer}{Maximum\ Score} \times 10$$
(Depdikbud, 2022)

Analyzing the mean score of the students', the researcher applied this following formula:

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

Notation:

$\overline{X}$　= The Mean

$\sum X$　= The Sum of Scores

N　= The Number of Subjects (Gay, 1981:298).

2) After the data of the students has been analyzed, the researcher classified the score of the students. To classify the students' score, there were seven classifications as follows:
   a. 96 to 10 classified as excellent
   b. 86 to 95 classified as very good
   c. 76 to 85 classified as good
   d. 66 to 75 classified as fairly good
   e. 56 to 65 classified as fairly
   f. 36 to 55 classified as poor
   g. 0 to 35 classified as very poor.

In order to claim that this research was completely finish to be conducted, then the Achievement Indicator must be formulated. Therefore, the Achievement Indicator for this research was "The Students gained mean score ≤ 75 and in **Good** category".

HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

As the main aimed in conducting this research, there were two points to be presented during this chapter; 1) the implementation of Paired Reading Strategy into student's reading activities, and 2) the students' reading achievement after implementing the Partner Reading Strategy.

1. The implementation of Paired Reading Strategy into Student's Reading Activities

According to the test, the mean score of students was **51.67**. The categorization was in "**Poor**" category. While, the interviewed and observation could be reported in detailed by this following table.

Table 1.
Student's Condition before Implementing Partner Reading Strategy

		Condition	
1	Students' Reading Skill	a.	The students had difficulty in obtaining the main idea of text given
		b.	The students had difficulty in obtaining the implicit and explicit idea
		c.	The students had difficulty in guessing the meaning of word
		d.	The students had difficulty in determining the generic structure of text
2	Reading Classroom Situation	a.	Many students made noises in class
		b.	Some students did not pay attention to the teachers' explanation
		c.	Almost students were passive
		d.	The students seemed to be not interested in doing the lesson and discussion of text given
		e.	Many students could not answer the question from text
		f.	When they did not understand of the text, they just kept silent and did not care

3	The Obstacle of Students' Reading Skill	a. Lack of vocabularies b. Many of students were not confident enough to read and answer the question c. They lost the focused to comprehend text given d. They were not enthusiastic during the classrooms' reading activities e. Teacher often neglected using an appropriate teaching technique to enhance the students reading skill f. The teacher did not apply the enough monitoring to whole class

The research was assumed to be succeeding for this research if the student's categorization established as "Good". It means that the researcher must conduct the next Cycle II for students. Then some notes had reported to be the revising plan for next cycle as in this following table:

Table 3.
Unsolved Problems in Cycle I and Proposed Solutions

No.	Problems	Solutions
1	They had difficult in guessing new word and identifying the implicit idea of text given.	Teacher designed more practices, different method (open ended questions) for students in strengthen their vocabulary mastery and implicit information competency for optimally their reading comprehension.
2	When teacher introduced the strategy they seemed strange, confused to practice with friends. Almost students also still seemed calm, kept silent but there were some paid for	Giving more feedback after doing exercise, additional score and reward for students who could answer the questions was effective way for

	teacher explanation. Many students were busy with pairs. Because of noises the teacher did not optimally in giving review or feedback for class.	students' development motivation.

Table 4.
Student's Condition in Cycle II

	Condition	
1	Students' Reading Skill	a. They had better understanding in identifying generic structure of descriptive text b. They have more new vocabularies to be mastered c. They had more progress in identifying implicit/ explicit idea from text given.
2	Reading Classroom Situation	a. Almost all students paid attention to teacher's explanation b. Almost all students had familiar with Partner Reading Strategy and could practice it very well with their pairs. c. Almost students seemed to be active in class discussion by answering and sharing with other students during treatment.
3	The Obstacle	a. Some Students still make some noises during treatment.

After implementing the Partner Reading Strategy in Cycle II, and revised some points as the reflection notes in Cycle I, there was claimed to be better progress for students' reading comprehension. It was proved by the students' mean score for Cycle II as **76,86** in categorization as "**Good**". Therefore, this research had finally succeeded to gain the indicator of research and completely finished in Cycle II.

2. Discussion

These following tables have been compared to clearly define of observation and student's score during this research.

Table 4.
Student's Achievement for Reading Comprehension

No.	Student's Achievement	Pre-Test	Cycle I	Cycle II
1	Student's Mean Score	51.67	61.48	76.85
2	Categorization	Poor	Fairly	Good

According to the table above, the student's achievement seemed to have better progress from Pre-Test to Cycle I and Cycle II. The progress was claimed to be succeed especially in obtaining "The Achievement Indicators" as stated above, had also influenced by implementing Partner Reading Strategy for student's reading activities in Cycle I and Cycle II. In addition, positive contribution of students' progress for their reading comprehension also has shown by difference between Students' mean score in Cycle I and Cycle II.

By looking at the table above, Partner Reading Strategy was proved to be effective strategy for developing students' reading comprehension. Partner reading strategy gave great impact in pumping up students' reading comprehension. By implementing this strategy, students were led to interact, share answers, receive feedback and practice social skills (Sumarsono, et.al: 2020). They also could express their background knowledge freely without being afraid of making mistake/s as the students felt enjoyment during the teaching and learning process. That conditions indirectly showed positive contribution to the academic of students because sharing, response in taking feedback also the developmental process of

social interaction between students and friends, and also teachers and their students were being the important factor to see whether the academic of a school has been in good or bad situation to support TL processes and educational quality as their learning outcome that they have made. This was in line with Ekowijayanto (2022) toward their research entitled Partner Reading Strategy to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension, in which claimed that students were involved in the educational activity and have a high-level engagement to earn high learning outcomes.

KESIMPULAN

The implementation of Partner Reading Strategy in students' reading activities during this research finally derived into several conclusions, those were:

1) Partner Reading Strategy was claimed to foster student's reading comprehension.
2) This research was led to the Achievement Indicator by looking at the last cycle (Cycle II) achievement score as 76,86 and its categorization as Good.
3) The implementation of Partner Reading Strategy was led to the positive contribution into their academics as in; developed self-confident, activated in communication by sharing ideas each other, highly responded in taking feedback, developed social interaction between students and friends, and also teachers and their students. Therefore, the class situation more fun and enjoyable for students and teacher.

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