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Developing Students' Reading Comprehension through Think-Pair-Share Strategy

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Abstract

The objective of the research was to find out whether or not Think-Pair-Share Strategy develops the students' reading comprehension. The researcher applied quasi-experimental with the form of pre-test and post-test control group design and took the second year students of senior high school as the population. The researcher employed cluster random sampling consists of 60 students. The data were collected through pre-test and post-test in form of reading test. To find out whether or not Think-Pair-Share strategy develops the students' reading comprehension, the researcher used *t*-test analysis. The result of the data analysis showed that the value of *t*-counted (5.747) was greater than the value of the *t*-table (2.002) at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) and the degree of freedom $df = 58$ which meant that the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. Based on the result of data analysis, the mean score of students' post-test (84.44) was greater than the mean score of students' pre-test (63.11). Based on the finding and discussion, the researcher concludes that Think-Pair-Share strategy is effective and gives positive effect to the students' reading comprehension achievement.

Keywords: Reading, Reading Comprehension, Think-Pair-Share Strategy

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1. Introduction

In the context of learning English both as a foreign and a second language; students are to concern with the language skills. Language skills consist of four skills; namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are divided into two parts, productive skills and receptive skills. Productive skills include speaking and writing, while receptive skills include listening and reading (Harmer, 1991).

Nowadays, global discrimination of information is very dominant and to solve that problem, we need to read. By reading, people can improve their own knowledge and experience and know what they do not know before. Reading ability is believed as one effective tool to acquire various information including science and technology. Harper in Buharsa (2011:1) said that "the purpose of

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reading in any language is to inform ourselves about something we are interested in or to challenge our knowledge on certain method. In other word, to extent our experience about the world in which we live.”

Reading is not interaction to a text but interaction between the writer and the reader that mediated through a text. Reading is an active process in which the reader must make an active contribution by drawing upon and using concurrently use abilities that he has acquired (Widdoson, 1982:19). According to Alyousef (2005) reading is an interactive process between readers and a text which leads to automatically or making fluency. Furthermore, McWhorther (1994:4) stated that reading is a process of thinking. It is an active process of identifying the important ideas and comparing, evaluating, and applying them. So, it can be said that reading is an interaction between the reader and the writer that mediated through a text to identify the important ideas or attaining the meaning of the text. The reader tries to understand what the writer means in the text.

Comprehending a text message while read is not as easy as we think. Reading comprehension is a complex process, which involves not only the readers’ ability to read the text but also their ability to comprehend it. Because of this reason, many teachers of English at junior high school and senior high school find difficulties when teaching reading. Most of Indonesian students cannot understand what they have read, even though they have been learning for many years. As confirmed by Rahman (2018) that many EFL learners admit not enjoy reading in English it is because of they still don't know what they're reading, even though they understand the words.

Based on the researcher’s observations during doing teaching practice, the students’ reading comprehension was still far from what is being expected. It can be seen by their low score in English mid test and daily exam or task, especially in reading skill. The average of students’ reading score is ranging from 65 until 71. The teacher said that it was low score if we see the students’ passing grade in English is 70. Most of the students still find difficulty dealing with English reading texts.

The unsatisfactory result of students’ reading comprehension regarding English texts is caused by some problems. First, the strategy that the teachers employ is still conventional in which the students sometimes read text silently or aloud, and after that the teacher translates the text for students. In other time, the teacher reads the text, and afterwards, one or two students read the text again prior to answering the questions provided. Second, the reading teaching and learning activities is more teacher-centered in a way that the reading instruction is based on what the teachers tell, and students are only required to answer questions, without any sharing ideas or discussions with their pairs or groups.

Third, students are seldom engaged in cooperative and interesting work. Students work competitively and individually which triggers them to give up when dealing with difficult tasks. Fourth, the reading teaching and learning process is sometimes boring, students are not motivated and uninterested to do it. Sometimes, the students just keep silent in listening to what the teacher is

reading. The last, students' vocabulary is less. Students are not able to understand texts when they find words that have not actually been taught or told to them. As a result, they end up feeling bored and unmotivated.

Referring to the problems above, it is essential to apply a method or strategy that can solve the problem. We need a method that can bring students out of boredom, competitive and individual class atmosphere. We need a new method that is more student-centered and can improve students' reading comprehension. There are some varieties of strategies to involve and engage students in reading activities. The important thing is that method includes the student's interest and background knowledge, as well as their environment and learning abilities. Cooperative learning is one of teaching method that can be used.

Flowers and Ritz in Putra (2011) define cooperative learning as teaching strategy where teams of two or more work together on learning tasks. Each member of the team brings special talents to the group. Also, other team members cooperate on the achievement of the tasks and learn from each other. As a result, students learn both academic and social skills from a cooperative learning environment. In other words, cooperative learning aims to increasing students' academic achievement through a good social relationship with one another in a classroom.

David in Nurhaeni (2010:2) stated that the core idea of cooperative learning is indicating the students' interest and provoke serious thinking as the students acquired. Engaging students in a small group and cooperative working give a chance for the students to explore their ideas and makes them interested to focus and active on the teaching and learning process.

Among the number of cooperative learning strategies, Think-Pair-Share is chosen to be applied in the classroom to improve students' reading comprehension. Think-Pair-Share is a strategy developed by Lyman and his associates (1981) that enable student to formulate individual ideas and share their ideas with other students. It is a cooperative learning technique that encourages individual participation and applicable across all grade levels and class sizes.

Think-Pair-Share strategy includes three steps, namely; thinking, pairing, and sharing. With Think-Pair-Share strategy, the students are given time to think through their own answers to the questions before the questions are answered by other peers and the discussion moves on. Students also have the opportunity to think aloud with another student about their responses before being asked to share their ideas. This strategy provides an opportunity for all students to share their thinking with at least one other student. As a Cooperative Learning strategy, Think-Pair-Share also benefits students in areas of peer acceptance, peer support, academic achievement, self-esteem, and increased interest in other students and school.

Based on the background, the research question examined in this research was:

Does the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy develop students' reading comprehension?

2. Method

This research employed quasi-experimental designs with the form of pre-test and post-test control group design. The design of the research involved two groups namely Experimental and Control Group. The experimental group is the group who was given the treatment by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy, while the control group is the group who was given treatment by applying conventional way as the teacher usually use. The effectiveness of the treatment was determined by comparing the post-test scores of both groups. The design can be illustrated as follows:

| | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| E | O ₁ | X ₁ | O ₂ |
| C | O ₁ | X ₂ | O ₂ |

Where:

- E = Experimental Group
- C = Control Group
- O₁ = Pretest
- O₂ = Posttest
- X₁ = Teach by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy
- X₂ = Teach without applying Think-Pair-Share strategy

(Gay, 2006)

There were two variables in this research; they were independent variable and dependent variable. Independent variable is variable which influence the object, while dependent variable is variable which influenced by the object. The independent variable in this research was Think-Pair-Share as a strategy in learning reading skill and the dependent variable was the students' reading comprehension.

The population of this research was the second year students of senior high school. The number of population was 270 students that consisted of nine classes; they were, XI IPA1, XI IPA2, XI IPA3, XI IPA4, XI IPA5, XI IPA6, XI IPS1, XI IPS2, and XI IPS3. Each class consists of 30 students. Considering to the large number of population, the researcher used cluster random sampling technique to determine the sample. Two classes were taken as sample. XI IPA 5 as the experimental group and XI IPA 2 as the control group.

This research applied pre-test and post-test using reading test as its instruments. The pre-test was given before Think-Pair-Share strategy was applied. It was intended to find out the students' reading comprehension before giving the treatment, while the post-test was given after treatments by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy. It aimed to find out the students' reading comprehension after the treatment was given. The test was formulated in multiple choice forms with four options.

3. Findings

The findings of the research consist of the description of the result from the data collected from pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was administered before giving the treatment and post-test was administered after giving treatment. The content of both was the same.

3.1 The Rate Percentage and Frequency of Pre-test

The rate percentage and frequency of pre-test were presented in the following tables.

Table 1. The Rate Percentage and Frequency of Pre-test

| No. | Classification | Score | Experimental Group | | Control Group | |
|-----|----------------|--------|--------------------|------|---------------|------|
| | | | F | % | F | % |
| 1. | Very Good | 91-100 | - | - | - | - |
| 2. | Good | 75-90 | 2 | 6.7 | 3 | 10 |
| 3. | Fair | 61-74 | 19 | 63.3 | 13 | 43.3 |
| 4. | Poor | 51-60 | 8 | 26.7 | 11 | 36.7 |
| 5. | Very Poor | < 50 | 1 | 3.3 | 3 | 10 |
| | | | 30 | 100 | 30 | 100 |

Table 1 indicated that before giving the treatment, none of the two groups of students got very good score. Where in the experimental group, 2 (6.7 %) out of the 30 students could be categorized as well, 19 (63.3 %) students as fair, 8 (26.7 %) as poor, and 1 (3.3 %) as very poor. While, in the control group, 3 (10%) students could be categorized as good, 13 (43.33%) as fair, 11(36.7%) as poor, and 3(10%) students categorized as very poor.

From the table above, the researcher concluded that the majority of the two groups of students were categorized as fair. It means that they were considered to be equal treatment.

3.2 The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of the Students' Pre-test

After calculating the data of both classes, the mean score and standard deviation of the students' pre-test were presented the following table.

Table 2. The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of the Students' Pre-test

| Class | Mean score | Standard Deviation |
|--------------|------------|--------------------|
| Experimental | 66.00 | 7.34 |
| Control | 62.77 | 8.8 |

The table above showed the mean score and standard deviation of both groups. In experimental group the students gained mean score (66.00) and standard deviation (7.34). While in the control group the students gained mean score (62.77) and standard deviation (8.8).

Based on the scores above the researcher concluded that the result of pre-test for both, experimental and control group, were categorized as poor, which is proved by the mean score (66.00) for experimental group and (62.77) for control group.

3.3 The Rate Percentage and Frequency of Post-test

The rate percentage and frequency of post-test were presented in the following tables.

Table 3. The Rate Percentage and Frequency of Post-test

| No. | Classification | Score | Experimental Group | | Control Group | |
|-----|----------------|--------|--------------------|------|---------------|------|
| | | | F | % | F | % |
| 1. | Very Good | 91-100 | 4 | 13.3 | - | - |
| 2. | Good | 75-90 | 24 | 80 | 3 | 10 |
| 3. | Fair | 61-74 | 2 | 6.7 | 16 | 53.3 |
| 4. | Poor | 51-60 | - | - | 2 | 6.7 |
| 5. | Very Poor | < 50 | - | - | 9 | 30 |
| | | | 30 | 100 | 30 | 100 |

Table 3 indicated that after giving the treatment, there was a significant difference of score rate percentage between experimental and control group's students. 4 of experimental group's students (13.3 %) reached very good score, 24 (80 %) students reached good score, 2 (6.7 %) students as fair, and neither of them got poor and very poor score. While none of control group students reached very good score. There are 3 (10 %) students as good, 16 (53.3 %) as fair, 2 (6.7 %) as poor, and 9 (30 %) students as very poor.

From the table above, the researcher concluded that the score of experimental group's students was developed significantly after the treatment.

3.4 The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of the Students' Post-test

After calculating the data of both classes, the mean score and standard deviation were presented the following table.

Table 4. The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of the Students' Post-test

| Class | Mean score | Standard Deviation |
|--------------|------------|--------------------|
| Experimental | 84.44 | 6.39 |
| Control | 63.11 | 1.18 |

In the table above showed the mean score (84.44) with standard deviation (6.39) were gained to the experimental group while the mean score (63.11) with standard deviation (1.18) gained by the students in the control group. It means that the students' ability in both groups is different.

Based on the scores, the researcher concluded that the post-test of the experimental group was changed, and can be categorized good (84.44). Then the post-test of control group categorized as fair, by lower mean score (63.11).

3.5 The T-test of Students' Pre-test and Post-test

In order to know whether or not the mean scores of both classes are significantly different at the level of significance 0.05 with the degrees of

freedom (df)=(n1+n2-2), t-test analysis for independent sample was employed. The following tables show the result of the calculation.

Table 5. The T-test of Students' Pre-test and Post-test

| Variable | T-test value | T-table value |
|------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Experimental & Control Group | 5.747 | 2.002 |

In the table 5 above the t-test value (5.747) was greater than the t-table value (2.002). The t-test value was greater than t-table value at the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ and degree of freedom (df) = 58(n1+n2-2). So, the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected while alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted.

3.1. Difference of Experimental and Control Group Mean Score

Table 6. Difference of Experimental and Control Group Mean Score

| | Experimental Group | Control Group | Difference |
|----------|--------------------|---------------|------------|
| Pretest | 66.00 | 62.78 | 3.22 |
| Posttest | 84.44 | 63.11 | 21.33 |

Table 6 above indicated that the mean score of pre-test of both groups were nearly the same. The difference of both groups was (3.32). Besides, this table also showed that the achievement of both groups in reading test after treatment. The experimental group got (84.44) while the control group got (63.11), in which the experimental group was higher than the control group.

4. Discussion

The description of the data collected through pre-test and post-test as explained in the previous section shows that Think-Pair-Share strategy gave positive effect to the students' reading comprehension. In this case the students' reading comprehension was developed. It is supported by the frequency and rate percentage of the result of students' pre-test and post-test. The students' score after presenting material by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy is better than before the treatment was given to the students.

Before giving treatment, the researcher conducted pre-test. The description of the data collecting pre-test shows that the students' reading comprehension was fair (see table 1). It can be interpreted that the students' ability was still low in comprehending the text and they were not interested to the reading activities that could give negative effect to their achievement.

Based on the result of students' pre-test, the researcher conducted treatment for four times. Further both of the groups were given two treatments, Think-Pair-Share strategy for the experimental group and conventional way for the control group. In this case, conventional way means that the teacher used skimming as reading strategy.

In experimental group, on the first treatment, the researcher explained about Think-Pair-Share strategy and how it is applied by the students. The researcher showed and explained some examples about the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy. On the second until forth treatment, the researcher

applied the steps of Think-Pair Share strategy in reading activities. In which, the first step, the students were asked to read the text and think individually. In this step, the students tried to understand and comprehended the text. After that, the students asked to discuss in pair about their opinion. In this step, the students' pair share their opinion each other to compare it.

The last, the students' pair asked to share their discussion pair result in whole class. In this step, the students' pair will share their own idea. There will be discussion in a whole class. They were required to think more creative and be responsible with their opinion. The students were seen share enthusiastically and finally they made a conclusion. During those steps, the cooperative work of them can be seen. All the students had opportunities to share their opinion. After all the students understand the text well, in the last session of teaching and learning process, the students asked to answer some questions in different form for every treatment.

In control group treatment, the researcher also divided reading activities in some steps. At the first, the students asked to read the text individually, either with loud or silent. After that, the researcher translated and explained more about the text for them. The last, the researcher asked the students to answer the question.

After applying Think-Pair-Share strategy in classroom process, the researcher conducted post-test. The result shows that the students' reading comprehension has developed. It is categorized as good level (see table 3).

In addition, the mean score of students' pre-test (66.00) was categorized as fair and post-test's mean score (84.44) was categorized as good. It shows that the mean score of the students' post-test was greater than the mean score of pre-test. The difference between the mean score of pre-test and post-test was caused by the treatment. It indicates that the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy in teaching reading give positive effect to the students' reading comprehension. This result support the previous research conducted by Ghaith (2003) who stated that learning together can improve students' reading achievement, academic self-esteem and feelings of school alienation.

Based on the calculation of the students' pre-test and post-test before, it was obtained that t-test value was greater that t-table (see table 5). From that result, the researcher found that there was significance difference between the result of pre-test and post-test. This means that the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted. It was proven by the development of students' reading comprehension after giving treatment by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy.

The supporting finding was shown in the difference between the post-test of the two groups where their difference was 21.33 (84.44-63.33), in which the experimental group was greater than the control group. In other words, the post-test of experimental group was greater than control group.

The treatments for the students in applying Think-Pair-Share strategy allowed students to interact more frequently to other students and more active. In other words, they work cooperatively, pay attention, interested, and try to

comprehend the text that they have been read. The teaching and learning process in this group was student-centred. This fact relates to the previous research finding by Hollingsworth (2007) which stated that instead of help students to learn comprehension strategies, cooperative learning also can encourage positive interactive among peers. While, the treatment for control group by applying conventional way allowed the students to work more individually and competitively. They are not interested to comprehend the text well because they have known that the teacher usually translates it for them and explain more the text later. Different with experimental group, the teaching and learning process in this group was more teacher-centred.

Thus, it is clear to say that the acceptance of the hypothesis reveals that the treatment at the experimental group was better than the treatment at the control group. In other words, there is significance difference of the students' reading comprehension achievement after teaching reading by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy. The results are supported by the research of Buharsa (2011) that Think-Pair-Share strategy was effective in enhancing the students' participation, especially in terms of sharing ideas, asking and answering questions.

5. Conclusions

Based on the result of data analysis, research findings and discussion in the previous section, it can be concluded that the teaching of reading by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy is effective in developing students' reading comprehension of the second year students of senior high school. It can be seen from the significant difference between the students score in post-test for both groups after giving the treatment (applying Think-Pair-Share). The result of the data analysis shows that the mean score of the experimental group's post-test (84.44) was greater than the control group's post-test (63.11) and the value of t-test was greater than the t-table ($5.747 > 2.002$).

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