



TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION TO THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 12 PALEMBANG BY USING STORY PYRAMID

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Abstract: The aim of this study was to find out whether or not there is a significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement taught using story pyramid strategy than those who are taught using teachers' method strategy. The study used quasi-experimental design using nonequivalent pretest posttest design. The investigation of population of this study was all of the eighth grade student of SMPN 12 Palembang in the academic year 2013/2014, which consist of 80 students coming from two classes. The sample of this study were class VIII.2 consisting of 40 students was treated as experimental group and VIII.1 consisting of 40 students was treated as control group, which selected using convenience sampling. This study was conducted for about one month. In finding a significant difference of students' reading comprehension average score from pretest to posttest taught using Story Pyramid Strategy, the writer conducted using *Independent Sample T-Test*. The data was collected in form of pretest and posttest of students reading comprehension scores. Then, it was analyzed using independent sample t-test to meet the objective of the study. From the result analysis, it was found that there was a significant difference in posttest score on the students' reading comprehension achievement taught using story pyramid strategy since the p-output was lower than 0.05.

Keywords: *Teaching, Reading Comprehension, Story Pyramid Strategy*

Introduction

English is a language that has been spread throughout the whole world. People use English language most of the time. English being the common language of the world through which we can communicate and express our own thoughts, ideas, needs and co-operate with the rest of the world. English is also a global language that has important roles in education. English has been taught in Indonesia as a compulsory subject after the establishment of formal education. English being subject to be studied and could also be used as a tool to study other subjects (Nunan, 2012, pp. 214-215)

In learning English, there are four skills should be mastered, one of the skills which have important function for the students is reading. The reading skill became very important in the education field, students need to be exercised and trained in order to have a good reading skill. Students also need to be taught how to read well, thus, they are able master and read some reading exercises. Through reading, the students can get benefits that also give the impact to other language skills (listening, speaking and writing). By reading students can develop their creativity, critical thinking and even writing skill. Reading also can develop students' spelling and vocabulary.

Reading enables students to know how English is actually used in printed and written forms. Reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought (Khand, 2004, p. 43).

Reading consists of two related processes, word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Moreover, Reading can not stand alone without comprehension. In comprehension, the reader aims to grasp the meaning that resides in something, as it were (Philips et al, 2007, p. 2). It seems that comprehension is definitely the reading goal for every reader that can determine whether they get the points and understand what the author's idea or not. It also requires readers to think about ideas and information so they can get the purpose of reading comprehension.

The reason for teaching reading to the students because it belongs to the fundamental language skills just as important as speaking, listening, and writing in English. Beside, reading is closely related with other subject. Most of the materials given by the teacher in English or other subject are presented in written form, for example in handbook, handout, reading book, exercise book and so forth. It means that to understand the materials, the students must have a good ability to get the meaning of vocabulary and written text. Because of that, reading is very important to be taught to the students.

In writer's preliminary study on the students of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 12 Palembang, the writer found that the students had difficulties in comprehending their reading text. The teacher still used conventional method, lecturing. When the teacher taught the class, he thought that the student were ready to study. Then he directly asked student to open the book without reviewing previous material. The teacher just asked to read a certain text in the book or students' exercise book (LKS), Finally, they answered the available question related to the text. The monotonous process of learning made students discouraged to learn. The teacher sometimes called the students one by one to read aloud. They only read the texts aloud without any comprehension. Therefore, the students got difficulty in comprehending the text. Students also got bored and not interested in reading. As the result, the students' English achievement was below the minimal mastery level criterion score (KKM) 75. It is adapted from the students KKM scores at SMPN 12 Palembang. Therefore, Students need a new approach to improve their reading comprehension and encourage them to be ready and enjoy in learning process.

Based on the discussion and informal interview result with the teacher concerning students' reading test, there are some difficulties probably faced by students in reading activities such as:



First, most of students just have the ability to pronounce and recognize the individual words without conveying the message what the author extends. Second, they actually have good knowledge of words and sentence meaning but they fail to understand longer reading materials such as stories. Third, they are hardly to concentrate as they read. After students read a story, most of them are difficult to analyze the schematic structures of the story concerning orientation, complication, and resolution whereas they had read the text for several times. Consequently, they have difficulty in figuring out the plot of the story.

The writer considers that it is necessary to find out an alternative way to create suitable and interesting techniques related to students' condition. They need to be delivered any practices to assist them in developing reading comprehension. Graphic organizers are a way of organising complex relationships visually, see the key information in a text, the ways that information is structured (Grabe & Stoller, 2001, p. 195). In graphic organizers, teachers emphasize the important parts of a text and effectively communicate the information to their students which can help in improving comprehension. Actually, graphic organizers have a variety of forms, such as expository, maps, semantics maps, story maps, story pyramids and so forth. Although each of them has a different name and form, they have the same functions; as tools that help students focus on text, textual relationship, and structure while reading.

The writer found out a strategy to solve the problem by using a story pyramid strategy. Story pyramid is a visual and a graphic representation or organizer of information that allow to summarize and make connection. The story pyramid strategy assists student to comprehend the texts in reading activities. According to Macon et al (1991) as cited in (Wardiningsih, 2012, p. 2), a story pyramid helps students pinpoint highlight of a story and describe the important parts of using a limited number of words. This strategy is expected to help the students identify the story elements in the text in order to comprehend the text easily. This strategy is more often used in narrative text. In the other word, this strategy can be said is able to help the students to improve their reading comprehension especially in narrative text.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested in conducting a research entitled "*Teaching Reading Comprehension to the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 12 Palembang by Using Story Pyramid*".

Concept of Teaching

Teaching is a social process on which the political system, social philosophy, values and culture of every nation leave their impression. The word 'teaching' is derived from 'to teach' which

means to instruct. It means a process in which one individual makes something known to another individual. According to Brown (2007, p. 8), showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instruction, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand. In addition, according to Moore (2001, p. 4), teaching as the actions of someone who is trying to assist other to reach their fullest potential in all aspects of development. Reading is an active process and readers are not the passive receivers of text information, (Zhao and Zhu, 2012, p. 115).

Based on explanation above, the writer assumes that teaching is how the teacher gives students knowledge or to train someone to instruct, teaching also giving some information of a subject matter to the students in the classroom. Teaching can be defined as giving instruction and knowledge skill to students or make students understand or be able to do something by the teacher. Teaching English is how the teacher transfers the language and skill to the students in the classroom. The objective of teaching English to improve the ability in learning English.

Concept of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of a text or message. This understanding comes from the interaction between the words that are written and how they trigger knowledge outside the text or message. Reading comprehension was informed by a vision of proficient readers who are capable of acquiring new knowledge and understanding new concepts, applying textual information appropriately, and being engaged in the reading process and reflecting on what is being read (Snow, 2004, pp. 1-3). From the statements, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is the process in which the reader interacts with the text, relates ideas from the text to prior experiences to construct meaning and require the reader understands how the author has organized his ideas.

Moreover, in reading comprehension, the readers have to use their linguistic skill which can support and influence their reading comprehension. According to Alanis (2003, p. 94), reading comprehension is influenced by a broad range of factors, such as vocabulary knowledge, appreciation for text structure, thinking and reasoning skills, ability to apply reading comprehension strategies, and word reading ability. Therefore, if the readers have a good quality to each of these factors, they can get the primary goal of reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension is the ultimate goal of any reading activity. Reading comprehension is a collective term that describes the result of grasping the meaning from a text with one's intellect

a task that involves many skills (Hock and Daryl, 2005, pp. 4-6). To achieve reading comprehension the reader employs skills such as identifying the main idea of a passage, summarizing the content of the text, generating questions about the information in the text and looking for clues that answer those questions. Based on the explanation above, the writer concludes that reading comprehension is the process of comprehending and constructing the meaning of the text that we read.

Concept of Narrative Text

A narrative is a kind of text types composed both in written and spoken forms, which describes a sequence of real or unreal events. Narrative is one of the commonest text types that the students are expected to use early on in their school life. The general concept of narrative can be derived from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, that is a description of events in a story, while Michigan Genre Project (2004, p. 3) cited in (Wardiningsih, 2013, p. 3) stated that “narration is the act of telling a sequence of events, often but not always, in chronological order”. Then, narrative is defined as the act, process or skill of telling a story. Moreover, narrative text is an imaginative story to entertain and engage the reader in an imaginative experience. Narrative deals with problematic events which lead to a crisis or turning point of some kind, which in turn finds a resolution. Furthermore, Kenan (2006, p. 10) states that

“The narration of succession of fictional events. These definitions, as well as many others, attribute two main characteristics to narrative: 1) events, governed by temporality, or more precisely a double temporality (the chronology of the events and their presentation in the text); 2) telling or narration, as an act of mediation or transmission which, in literature, is verbal.”

The characteristics of narrative text are tells a story, contains well-developed characters, contains a setting describing where or when the story takes places, contains a carefully fashioned plot with a problem and resolution, contains a theme that explains the meaning of the story, contains vocabulary used to enrich understanding of the story, may be written in first, second, or third person.

Based on the definition above, narrative text can be regarded as a kind of text that purposes to tell a story which contains a series of events or actions chronologically. The purpose of this text is to entertain or to amuse the readers or listeners about the story. Narrative text is a text which contains about story (fiction, nonfiction, tales, folktales, fables, myths, epic) and its plot consists of climax of the story (complication) then followed by the resolution.

Concept of Story Pyramid

Story pyramid is one of the strategies to help the students comprehend the text. Story pyramid is an adaptation of story mapping that also uses a visual framework for understanding, identifying, and remembering elements in narrative text. According to Macon et al (1991) as cited in Wardiningsih (2013, p. 2), a story pyramid helps students pinpoint highlight of a story and describe the important parts of using a limited number of words. The requirement of brief responses stretches students' thinking and is fun. By using story pyramid the description of important information from a story can be comprehended.

A story pyramid may be used during or after activities that can improve their comprehension in reading. Story pyramid help students visually organize a story's elements, increasing their ability to retell, summarize and comprehend the story (Beverly et al, 2010, p. 154). Based on explanation above, the writer assumes that story pyramid is one of comprehension strategies that focus on elements of the text and students will understand easily by using this strategy.

Procedure of Story Pyramid Strategy

There are some procedures before starting story pyramid strategy. Sadler (2011, p. 20) states the procedures of story pyramid strategy are explained:

- 1) Teacher asks students to read the selection of the text
- 2) Teacher shows the students the format for writing story/narrative pyramid
- 3) Teacher asks students to fill each line according to the format and questions
- 4) Teacher asks students to create the pyramid graphic organizer, and use it as the basis for discussion involving whole class

In addition, Education Department of Western Australia (1994) as cited in Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2014, p.7) states the procedures of Story Pyramid are:

- 1) Teacher selects a text to match the students' needs and interests.
- 2) Teacher asks students to read a story or have the story read to them.
- 3) Then, The students retell the facts and features of the story within the framework of the pyramid.



Story Pyramid	
1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____

Meanwhile, according to McLaughlin (2009, p. 118) the procedures are as follows:

- 1) Teacher explains to the students summarizing as extracting the important ideas from what we are reading
- 2) Teacher describes how we can use the Narrative Pyramid to summarize stories
- 3) Teacher asks the students to focus on story elements (characters, setting, problem, attempts to resolve the problem, and solution)
- 4) Teacher asks the students to use only the number of words indicated in each line

Method of The Study

In doing this study, quasi experimental method was used. The experimental study of the teaching involves procedures in which the researcher, instead of describing or studying variables as they exist naturally in the world, sets up conditions so specified variables can be manipulated (Arends, 2007, p. 512). In this study, the writer used the quasi-experimental design with *non-equivalent pretest-posttest groups design*. According to Best and Khan (1995, p. 151), the design of this study is as follows:

Experimental	O₁	X	O₂
Control	O₃	C	O₄

Where:

- O₁ : pre-test of experimental group
- O₂ : post-test of experimental group
- X : treatment (Story Pyramid)
- C : strategy that used by teacher at school
- O₃ : pre-test of control group
- O₄ : post-test of control group

Pretest-posttest a non-equivalent group design was used to investigate a significant difference in reading comprehension achievement between the students who were taught using story pyramid strategy and teachers' method strategy to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 12 Palembang. The study was conducted through experimental and control group. In the experimental group, the students were given pre-test, treatment of story pyramid strategy and post-test, while in the control group, the students were given only pre-test and post-test without having treatment of story pyramid strategy at all.

Population and Sample

Fraenkle and Wallen (2012, p. 92) state that Population is a group of interest to the research, the group whom the research would like to generalize results of the study. The population of this study consists of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 12 Palembang in academic year 2013/2014 with the total number 320 of students.

To assign this sample, the writer used the convenience sampling. A convenience sample is a group of individual who (conveniently) are available for study (Fraenkel et al, 2012, p. 99). Class VIII.1 and VIII.2 were selected as sample by the teacher of English at SMPN 12 Palembang. Then, the writer took two classes and the number of the students were 80. There are 40 students as experimental group and 40 students as control group.

Validity Test

Validity has been defined as referring to the appropriateness, correctness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the specific inferences researchers make based on the data collected (Creswell, 2012, p. 148). Furthermore, a test, part of a test, or a testing technique is said to have construct validity if it can be demonstrated that it measures just the ability which it supposed to measure (Hughes, 1989, p. 26). There are two ways to check validity of the test, by validity test of each question item and content validity.

In this study, the writer analyzed the validity of each question item with multiple choice questions. There were 60 multiple choice questions with N (sample) was 40 students

a. Construct Validity

According to Hughes (1989, p. 26), a test, part of a test or a testing technique is said to have construct validity if it can be demonstrated that it measures just the ability which it is supposed to measure. After constructing the instruments related to some aspects measured, then it is



consulted to achieve some judgements from at least three validators to evaluate whether the components of the instrument are valid or not to be applied for students' pretest and posttest activities (Sugiyono, 2013 p. 125).

b. Validity Test of Each Question Item

In this study, to know the validity of the test the writer did try out of 60 multiple choice questions to the students of SMP Negeri 25 Palembang. The instruments of the test were tested to 34 students (VIII 3) of the eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 25 Palembang. From the result analysis of validity of each question item, it was found that there were 20 question items considered invalid. They were question item number 1, 12, 15, 18, 19, 21, 24, 28, 30, 35, 37, 39, 42, 43, 44, 53, 54, 55, 58, and number 60. Then, there 40 question items considered valid since the scores of significance are higher than 0,3388. They are questions item number 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 38, 40, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 56, 57, and number 59. Then, the writer only took 40 questions that could be used as the instruments since the scores of significance were higher than 0.3388. 20 items were not valid since the scores of significance were lower than 0.3388.

c. Content Validity

Hughes (1989, p. 22) states that a test is said to have content validity if its content constitutes a representative sample of the language skills, structures, etc with which it is meant to be concerned. A content validity is very important since it is an accurate measure of what it is suppose to measure.

In order to know if the contents of the test items given were appropriate, the researchers suited them to content of the syllabus. Here, the writer used syllabus of Elementary School and the table specification which contained the items which were necessary to test in vocabulary selecting the appropriate text and items were used based on the syllabus that used in the school.

Reliability Test

Fraenkel and Wallen (2012, p. 154) state that reliability refers to the consistency of the scores obtained, how consistent they are for each individual from one administration of an instrument to another and from one set of items to another. Furthermore, Fraenkel and Wallen (2012, p. 157)

state that the score is considered reliable if the score of significance is at least or preferably higher than 0,70. In this study, the writer found out the reliability of the test analyze by using test-retest method. Test-retest method involves administering the same group after a certain time interval has elapsed (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2012, p. 155). The result analysis of reliability test shows that the score of Person Correlation is 0.854. From the p-output, it can be stated that the test instrumen is reliable since it is higher than 0.70.

Normality Test

According to Basrowi (2007, p. 85), the scores were considering normal if the significance of normality test (p-output) is higher than 0.025. The result showed that the significance value of the students' pretest in control group was 0.172, while the experimental group was 0.145. Since the significance values of control and experimental group were higher than 0.025, the distribution of scores in control and experimental pretest were simply assumed normal.

The result showed that the significance value of the students' posttest in experimental group was 0.189, while the control group was 0.095. Since the significance values of control and experimental group were higher than 0.025, the distribution of scores in control and experimental posttest were simply assumed normal.

Homogeneity Test

To compute homogeneity test, Levene statistics in SPSS 16 was applied. The result of computation would indicate whether the pretest and posttest variance of the experimental and control groups were homogenous. The test is considered homogenous whenever the significance value (p-output) is higher than 0.05 Basrowi (2007, p. 106).

From the result table in the above table, it was found that the significant score is 1.000. From the p-output, it can be stated that the obtained score from pretest scores in control and experimental groups was higher than 0.05, it could be stated that the obtained score from students' pretest in control and experimental groups were homogenous.

Based on measuring homogeneity test for posttest in both groups, the writer also used Lavene Statistics. The writer found that the significant score was 0.239. From the p-output, it can be stated that the obtained score from students' posttest scores in control and experimental groups is homogeny since the p-output was higher than 0.05.



Results of Hypothesis Testing

In this study, *independent t-test* was conducted to find out whether there was a significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement between the experimental and control class scores on posttest at SMP Negeri 12 Palembang.

There are two hypotheses in this study, null hypothesis (H_0) in which there is no statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest means of the experimental and control groups, and alternative hypothesis (H_a) in which there is statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest means of the experimental and control groups.

If the t -obtained was lower than t -critical value at the 0.05 significance level and the p -output higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is rejected. But, if the t -obtained was higher than t -critical value at the 0.05 significance level and the p -output less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted (Fraenkel et al, 2012, pp. 228-233).

From the result analysis in measuring significant difference using independent t -test, it was found that p -output was 0.000. It means that there was a significant difference between students' who taught by using Story Pyramid.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and interpretation, it can be concluded the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. It can be concluded that teaching reading comprehension to the eighth grade students by using Story Pyramid more effective than by using teachers' method. It can be stated that there was significant difference on students' reading comprehension achievement taught using Story Pyramid strategy and using teachers' method. Students more interesting in teaching and learning process when Story Pyramid strategy was applied. It could be concluded that story pyramid strategy was significantly improved than conventional strategy. It means that the used of story pyramid strategy was effective to improve students' reading achievement. The strategy made students fun and enjoyable, and at the same time achieve academic goals. So, it can be stated that the use of story pyramid strategy is very helpful for the students, because of some reasons; first, story pyramid as media can help the students' creativities to find some ideas and problem solving. Second, the students found new way that made them easier to learn narrative reading text because it is focus on story elements.

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