APPLYING SMART (SELF-MONITORING APPROACH TO READING AND THINKING) STRATEGY FOR ENHANCING STUDENTS' SKILL IN READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: Reading is essential either for students' careers or for study purposes. In the same time, it is a complex skill that involves all of higher mind in order to understand what is read. Many students find it hard to read. Among the reading problem exhibited by students at secondary school is the inability to bring out fact from the passage, poor retention and recall of what is read, and a weak vocabulary base. Therefore, the aim of this study was to find out whether or not there was a significant difference in reading achievement between the students who were taught by using Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking (SMART) Strategy and that of those who were not. Quasi-experimental method and nonrandomized pre-test post-test control group were used. The sample was chosen by using purposive sampling method. Content validity was used to check the validity and try out was applied to find out the reliability of the test. Reading comprehension test in the form of multiple-choice was used in collecting the data. In analyzing the data, t-test was used. Then SPSS Program version 16 was used to calculate the data. The result showed that the mean difference between posttest in the experimental and control group was 21.90, $t_{obtained}$ was 11.08, and the critical value of t_{table} was 1.99. Since $t_{obtained}$ (11.08) was higher than t_{table} (1.99) and p_{value} (0.00) was less than $ά_{value}$ (0.05). It meant that there was a significant difference in students' reading achievement between the students who were taught using Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking (SMART) strategy and that of those who were not.

Keywords: reading, self-monitoring approach to reading and thinking strategy

INTRODUCTION

In many ways in this world, English become an international language. Jenkins (2000, p.6) defines that English has rapidly metamorphosed in the past half-century from a foreign language into an international one. Further, Crystal (2003, p.1) clarifies that English is a global language, which is important

for communicating and interacting with other countries. For that reason, English is important to be learned. In fact, Indonesia uses English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It means that English is used only in school, workplace and the other limited formal places.

In relation to English learning, there are four main skills that should be mastered by English language learner namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Grabe and Stoller (2002, p.9), reading is indeed very important in learning a foreign language. Through reading, students are able to access information, much important knowledge and useful things widely spread in the word. In conclusion, someone can increase their knowledge by reading.

Reading can not be separated from comprehension. Snow (2002, p.11) confirms that reading comprehension is a complex activity that involves interaction between the reader and the text. It shows that reading comprehension is a necessary way to know whether the reader understands or not with the written sources. Furthermore, Richard and Renandya (2002, p.277) add that reading comprehension is the primary purpose of reading. It means that the main goal of the reading activity is to comprehend the text. Readers will comprehend word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, and finally will get a message in the text. In reading comprehension, the reader expects to understand the contents of the source to interpret the meaning.

Reading comprehension is a level of understanding written sources with concentration to hold ideas. It is not only to determine whether the readers comprehend with the text or not but also to determine how far they can connect their prior knowledge, experiences, and existing information in the text. To comprehend the text, the students have to know how to get a message from a text after reading it.

According to Utami (2018, p.20), in teaching reading at senior high school, teachers find some problems. A teacher found not all the students could success to attain the goal of learning reading. Most of the students faced problems in the process of learning reading. First, the students had limited vocabulary so that they got difficult to comprehend what they have read. Thus, they could not get the main idea of the text. Second, the students had less understanding of the generic structure and the grammar of the text that they have read. As a result, they did not get the plot and context of the story. Most of the students could not answer the question in examination and reading test correctly.

In the syllabus of 2013 curriculum for senior high school, it is found many kinds of text which are learned by students, such as narrative text, recount text, procedure text, and exposition text. Among those, exposition text is considered the most difficult to comprehend by the students. There are some reasons why it is difficult to understand. The first reason is some topics of exposition text are unfamiliar by the reader. According to Ariansyah (2013), exposition texts are difficult

to understand because the author does not give detail background information about the topic. The second reason, it contains technical vocabulary. Moreover, Duke and Kay (2000) in Iwai (2007) explain that expository texts contain more difficult vocabulary and concept than narrative text, this because they have specific text structures, contain technical vocabulary, and require readers to have background knowledge.

Based on the problems above the teacher should have an appropriate strategy or ways in teaching reading, especially in teaching analytical exposition. Related to reading strategy, the reader should have effective reading strategies to gain better reading comprehension. Reading strategies can be defined as plans and solving

problems encountered in constructing meaning (Duffy in Richard and Renandya, 2002). It means that the strategy is a tool to achieve the reading goal. In other words, the goal of teaching reading strategies is to create students to become strategic readers.

SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) is offered in this study. It is a strategy in reading that provides students with a system for monitoring their reading success by understanding rather than memorizing the text (Suryaningsih, 2014, p.763). It means that SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) is a strategy for monitoring the text which they read from understanding the meaning of the word rather than memorizing the content of the text. SMART

(Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) is a strategy for instructors to ask the students to stop at the end of each paragraph to ask themselves whether they understand the main points of what they read or not (Okanlawon and Ejiwale, 2011, p.221). Moreover, SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) is the instructor or procedure to manage the students where they must stop and understand or not the main point of the text. SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) is based on the idea that effective reading starts with recognizing what is understood and not understood in a particular text. Syafi'i (2015, p.113) states that SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) strategy is a teaching strategy that can help our students to develop the

tactical ways to comprehend reading texts with the use of the checkmark and question mark system to recognize what is understood and not understood in a passage. Fitriyah (2014, p.4) adds that SMART (Self Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) is based on the idea that effective reading starts with recognizing what is understood and not understood in a particular text. Based on that opinion, SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) is based on the idea that effective reading starts with recognizing what is understood and not understood in a particular text.

According to Buehl (2001) on Rambe, Supardi, and Husin (2014, p.4) explain that SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) strategy has some steps,

such as read, self translate, troubleshoot, and fix up strategy. The explanation of each steps was as follows.

a. Read

Read a section of the text. Using a pencil, place a checkmark (√) in the margin of each paragraph that you understand. Place a questions mark (?) in the margin of each paragraph that contains something that you do not understand.

b. Self translate

At the end of each section, stop and explain to yourself what you read, in your own words. Some students find it helpful to write down their translations in their notes or on sticky notes. Look back at the text as you go over the material.

c. Troubleshoot

Go back to each questions mark (?) and see the paragraph again by re-reading the trouble spot to see if it makes sense. If it still does not make sense and then do pinpoint a problem by figuring out why you are having trouble, such as (a) Is it a difficult word or unfamiliar vocabulary?, (b) Is it a difficult sentence or confusing language?, (c) Is it a subject about which you know very little?

d. Fix-up strategies

In this steps, use a glossary or some other vocabulary aid, look at the pictures or other graphics, examine other parts of the text, explain to yourself exactly what you do not understand or what confuses you, and get help by asking the teacher or a class.

There are some strong points of SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) strategy. Buehl (2009) on Malinda and Elmiati (2014, p.3) clarifies five strong

points of this strategy. First, text coding while reading is a powerful strategy that helps students retain their thinking and create a personal understanding of an author message. Second, the students come to realize that comprehension is the result of the in replay between an author words and reader thinking. Third, the students become accustomed to listening to their inner dialogue about a text as they read. Fourth, the students are provided a system to verbalize their problem solving through difficult it. Fifth, the students become involves in summarizing the material in their words. Thus helping them to remember as well as understand. It means that reading comprehension using SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) strategy can make the students understand what author said, comprehend what author words and thinking, accustomed to reading the text, verbalize difficult in reading, and can summarize what they read.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting this study, quasi-experimental was used. Quasi-experimental designs identify a comparison group that is as similar as possible to the treatment group in terms of baseline (pre-intervention) characteristics (White and Sabarwal 2014, p.1). Further, Creswell (2005, p.297) states that quasi-experimental research includes assignment, but no random assignment of participants to groups. In this design, a popular approach to quasi-experiments, the experimental group A and the control group B was selected without random assignment. Both groups were given pretest and posttest. Only

the experimental group received the treatment. The population in this study was all of the eleventh graders of SMAN 1 Teluk Gelam. The total number of students was 168 students from five classes. From the population, there were only two classes to be taken as the research sample. They were 66 students of class XI IPS 3 and XI IPS 1. The sample was chosen by using purposive sampling technique. According to Sugiyono (2016, p.85), purposive sampling is a sampling technique with a certain consideration. Therefore, the classes were taken as the sample had some characteristics. In this case, the criteria were as follows; taught by the same teacher of English, had the same total number of students and had the same score for English that was 70-80. Consequently, there were

two classes which fulfilled the criteria. In addition, to determine the experimental group and control group a lottery was used. A piece of paper was divided into two-part and written number 1 and number 2. Then, the two parts of the papers were folded and taken by each class. The class which got paper number 1 as the experimental group and the class which got paper number 2 as a control group. As a result, class XI IPS 3 was the experimental group and class XI IPS 1 was the control group.

The written test was used to collect data. The test was in the form of multiple-choice questions consisting of 50 items. Before giving the test, the test was tried out to find its validity and reliability. It was tried out to the non-sample students, that was class XI IPS 2. Content

validity was used in this study. Yaghmale (2003, p.25) clarifies that content validity refers to the degree that the instrument covers the content that it is supposed to measure. Therefore, English syllabus and table of the specification were used to check the content validity. Index of Difficulty (IDIF) was also used to check whether the questions were desirable for the students or not. Internal consistency was used in order to measure the reliability of the test, that was Kuder Richardson or KR 21. To measure the readability of text and to check the level of the text, Flesch-Kincaid was used. The texts which were suitable for the eleventh grade of senior high school and its score should be between 10-12.

In scoring the data obtained from the reading test, percentage analysis formula was used. Then to analyze the data, t-test analysis was applied. The calculation was done using (SPPS) version 16.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the result of the study, it was found that the mean difference between pretest and posttest in the experimental group was 16.56, $t_{obtained}$ was 11.03 at significant level of $p<0.05$ in two-tailed testing with df=31. Since the value of $t_{obtained}$ (11.03) was higher than the critical value of t_{table} (2.03) and p_{value} (0.000) was lower than $α_{value}$ (0.05). It meant that the students' reading skill was increased after giving treatment using SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) strategy.

While in the control group, the result showed that the mean difference between pretest and

posttest was 7.43, $t_{obtained}$ was 9.81 at significant level of $p<0.05$ in two-tailed testing with df=31. Since the value of $t_{obtained}$ (9.81) was higher than a critical value of t_{table} (2.03) and p_{value} (0.00) was lower than α_{value} (0.05), it meant that there was also progress on students' reading achievement by using lecturing.

Based on the result of the study, it was found that the mean difference between the posttest in the experimental and control groups was 21.90, $t_{obtained}$ was 11.08 at the significant level of $p<0.05$ in two-tailed testing with df=62, and the critical value of t_{table} was 1.99. Since the value of $t_{obtained}$ was higher than a critical value of t_{table} and p_{value} (0.00) were lower than α_{value} (0.05), it meant that there was progress on students' reading achievement after studying reading by using SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) strategy.

From the explanation of the result above, it can be seen that there was a significant difference in reading achievement between experimental and control groups. Even though both groups had progressed in reading achievement, the improvement of the control group was still below the experimental group. In other words, the use of SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) strategy was still much better than lecturing in improving students' achievement in reading comprehension.

The students' reading skill got increase since they not only read the text but also checked their understanding by using checkmark and question mark to monitor their understanding of the text at the same

time. These experiences gave the students awareness toward the information in the text. This activity also made them fully interact with the text. Finally, they truly got the detail information of the text. This result was in line with the results conducted by Syafi'i (2015, p.113) and Fitriyah (2014, p.4). They describe that SMART (Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading and Thinking) strategy can help students to develop the tactical ways to comprehend reading texts with the use of the checkmark and question mark system to recognize what is understood and not understood in a passage. It is based on the idea that effective reading starts with recognizing what is understood and not understood in a particular text. It is also the way to know how far students know their ability in reading

comprehension, and manage the students to have enthusiasm in reading. This activity made students easier to comprehend the content of analytical exposition text, and actually made the students increase their ability in reading achievement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the study, it can be concluded that SMART strategy could increase the students' reading skill especially in reading analytical exposition text. Since many students found it hard to comprehend this text, this strategy offers an effective way of reading. Some steps that are read, self translate, troubleshoot, and fix up strategy in this strategy made students not only fully engaged in reading activity but also got detail information about text. As the final

result, the students' ability in reading

analytical exposition text increased.

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