

FOSTERING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF NARRATIVE TEXT THROUGH GROUP WORK TECHNIQUE

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ABSTRACT

Investigation related to reading comprehension has been conducted by a number of researchers and even some of them focussing their research on reading comprehension of narrative text. However, research on this respect needs pay more attention to be scrutinied. The aims of this research are to know and to describe the implementation of group work technique that improve students reading comprehension of narrative text. The problem raised in the research is about low scores of reading comprehension of narrative text gotten by eighth grade students of SMPN 13 Tangerang Selatan. The number of students is 40. Instrument used in this research is observation, questionnaire, and test. The technique is used in collecting data in the research is qualitative data. The qualitative data consisted of observation within the physical activity in the classroom. Moreover, the questionnaire for student is made to support in collecting the data. In analyzing qualitative data, rating scale table is used to measure the observation of students' activities during teaching learning process. Meanwhile, some statistical formula is used in analyzing the numerical data. The findings of this study are: 1. Related to the test result, there are 20% or 8 students passing KKM in pre action test, 47.5% or 21 students passing KKM in cycle 1 test and 80% or 32 students passing KKM in cycle 2. 2. Related to the observation result, the students were more active and interested in learning reading activity in the classroom through group work technique. Furthermore, they could cooperative well with their group. It could be known that the students' reading comprehension in term of narrative text has been improved and teacher was helped in finding the appropriate strategy in teaching reading narrative text.

Keywords: *Reading Comprehension, Narrative Text, Group Work Technique.*

INTRODUCTION

English has an important role in educational in the world, especially in Indonesia. It could be seen that English has been learnt in some level of education. In Indonesia, this language has been taught from kindergarten level to university level. It says that English is taught for all level of education in Indonesia. Relating to this focus, Mengyi Li, P. Karen Murphy, Jianan Wang, Linda H. Mason, Carla M. Firetto, Liwei Wei, Kyung Sun Chung 2016, Pages 101-115) stated that ccomprehending and critically analyzing complex, content-rich text is an essential requirement of academic excellence as well as a life-long skill for students.

Learning a new language is usually divided by the language-teaching field into four large domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening and reading are characterized as receptive, while speaking and writing are productive (Lems, Miller, and Soro, 2010, p. 5). Reading is one of language skills that have a very important role, the students should comprehend the reading for certain purpose; however, it needs a practical and suitable method. In other words, by reading, reader can communicate with the writer by using printed or written text in order to get information, ideas to understand the writer's message. Reading also has the value of helping children learn to express their own thoughts and making them familiar with language patterns and ways of using language effectively.

Reading is useful for a language acquisition because reading as a respective and basic skill in learning a language. Reading is dominated by the eyes and the brain that cooperatively work together. The eyes receive the messages from the text and the brain interprets the significance of the messages contained in a text. Reading is also seen as a complex skill as readers should interact with the text and create it to a meaningful discourse.

There is always a suitable method or technique to teach each English skill. The method or technique is chosen based on the students' need and the objectives as well. The method also can help both the teacher and the students to reach the objectives. Group work technique is one of the techniques that is included in cooperative learning method. Group work technique is seen to be effective to provide an opportunity for the students to work effectively and independently, because the students have opportunities to share their idea and interpret the text with their friends in a group. In this technique, students are assigned into groups that consist of four or five member in each group. It gives students an opportunity to work in group with other students and helps each other in teaching learning process in order to master the subject material

Group work technique requires the students to have a more active role in the learning process. Group work technique is seen to be effective in learning reading because each student has different chapters, lessons, materials, or texts given by the teacher and they have responsibility to make their friends in their group to comprehend it well. The learning process in group work technique is not simple because a group may be said to exist when two or more persons have as one quality of their relationship some interdependence and process some recognizable unity. The members meet in face-to-face situations and form distinct impressions of each other. There is an interaction that is, each member reacts to the behavior of each other member. The individuals comprising the group not only interact, but they often act together in a unitary manner toward their environment.

Reading is a constant process of guessing, and what one brings to the text is often more important than what one finds in it (Grellet, 1981, p. 7). Based on the statement from Grellet, reading activity requires the readers to guess and predict about the text is going to be about and the background knowledge had by the reader about mutual thing contained in a text is important. In addition, Reading means reading and understanding a foreign language learner who says, 'I can read the words but I do not know what they mean' is not, therefore, reading, in this sense. He or she is merely decoding-translating written symbols into corresponding sounds (Ur, 1991, p. 138).

Based on the definitions about reading above, reading can be defined as a process that requires people to read and to understand what they read. Reading is also a complex skill that people should do an interaction with text in order to recreate or create a meaningful discourse.

Reading may have some different purposes to obtain after reading the text. For instance, when people want to get information or knowledge, they read a textbook, a newspaper, a journal, an article. When people read to get pleasure or to get entertained, they may read some kinds of magazine, comic, or novel. Here are several purposes that may include when people read according to William Grabe and Fredricka L. Stoller:

1. Reading to search for simple information

Reading to search for simple information is a common reading ability, it is used so often in reading tasks that it is probably best seen as type of reading ability. In reading to search, we typically scan the text for a specific piece of information or a specific word. Skimming

is also including in this type of aim. It is a common part of many reading tasks and a useful skill. A combination of strategies for guessing where important information might be in the text, and then using basic reading comprehension skill on those segments of a text until a general idea is formed is involved in this skill.

2. Reading to learn from texts

It usually occurs in academic and professional contexts when people need to learn a considerable amount of information from a text. This purpose usually carried out a reading rate somewhat slower than general reading comprehension.

3. Reading to integrate information, write and critique texts

This purpose requires additional decision about the relative importance of complementary, mutually supporting, or conflicting information and the likely restructuring of a rhetorical frame to accommodate information from multiple sources. These skills definitely require critical evaluation of the information being read so that the reader determines what information to integrate and how to integrate it for the reader's goal.

4. Reading for general comprehension

General reading comprehension is the most basic purpose for reading, underlying, and supporting most other purposes for reading. It is actually more complex than commonly assumed. The term general does not mean 'simple' or 'easy.' It requires very rapid and automatic processing of words, strong skills in forming a general meaning representation of main ideas, and efficient coordination of many processes under very limited time constraints. These abilities are often taken for granted by fluent reader because they are usually occurring automatically.

Group work is one of the techniques that used in teaching especially teaching reading. By using group work technique, the students have opportunities to share their idea and interpret the text with their friends in a group. It is line with Nuttal, she said that "In group work mode of organization, much of guidance comes from fellow students. Working together can produce excellent motivation, and a slight sense of competition between groups does no harm if it is not allowed to get out of hand (Nuttal, 1982, p. 160). Thus, group work as a technique to make the students can learn and solve the problem together.

There are some purposes of group work. According to Bormann, "the primary purpose of much of the talk in a group discussion must be to communicate (Bormann, 1969, p. 4). It means that communication is the main purpose of group work. Group work is a team covering a multiplicity of techniques in which two or more students are assigned a task that involves collaboration and self-initiated language.

Based on the statements above, group work is useful for student because the students are given more opportunity to be active in the classroom and they can share the ideas to each other. Beside that in teaching learning process, group work can create enjoyable atmosphere for the student especially in learning reading text. They can together decide types of English text, schematics structure, and language feature. In addition, group work can give the students' attention and it can raise the students' motivation and interest in learning English.

The advantages of group work it is can encourage student's skill of cooperation and sharing the idea. It is help student to feel comfortable to share their idea and involved in participation with their friend. Using group work as techniques in promoting interactive learning have many advantages, they are as follows (Ur, 81, p. 7—8):

1. The increased participant

If there are five or six groups then there will be five or six times the amount of talking. Class discussions, as has been pointed out, are very wasteful in terms of the ratio of teacher or student-effort and time to actual language practice taking place; group discussions are relatively efficient. Moreover, this heightened participation is not limited to those who are usually articulate anyway; students, who are shy of saying something in front of the whole class, or to the teacher, often find it much easier to express themselves in front of a small group of their peers.

2. Improve the participants' motivation

The physical focus of the discussion is close and directed towards the individual student; that is to say, whoever is speaking is only a small distance away, clearly audible, facing the others and addressing them personally. Any visual or other materials are likewise close by; the whole activity is immediate and 'involving'. More important, group-work lends itself to game-like activities. Where this is not supplied by the task itself, the simple institution of an arbitrary time limit or inter-group competition can easily do so.

3. Change the teacher's task

Group-work frees the teacher from the usual role of instructor-corrector-controller, and allows teacher to wander freely round the class, giving help where needed, assessing the performance of individual students, noting language mistakes for future remedial work, devoting a little more time to slower learners. Teacher also has an important role to play in leading and encouraging discussions.

4. There is scope for peer-teaching

In the course of group discussion, students will learn from each other, whether consciously or unconsciously. They may correct each other's mistakes, help with a needed word; and of course, they will teach each other some non-linguistic material as well, through the content of the discussion.

Disadvantages of Group Work

There are also some disadvantages of using group work as a technique in teaching a foreign language, they are as follows:

1. It is likely to be noisy

Some teachers feel that they lose control, and the whole-class feeling that has been painstakingly built up may dissipate when the class is split into smaller entities.

2. Not all students enjoy

Not all students enjoy it since they would prefer to be focus of the teacher's attention rather than working with their peers. Sometimes students find themselves in uncongenial groups and wish they could be somewhere else.

3. Individuals may fall into group roles that become fossilized, so that some are passive whereas others may dominate.

4. Groups can take longer to organize than pairs; beginning and ending group work activities especially where people move around the class can take time and be chaotic.

Finding and Discussion

Based on the theory that used in this research, Group Work was a technique that can help students to improve students' reading comprehension. In addition, group work is useful for student because the students are given more opportunity to be active in the classroom and they can share the ideas to each other. Beside that in teaching learning process, group work can create enjoyable atmosphere for the student especially in learning reading text. They can together decide types of English text, schematics structure, and language feature. In addition, group work can give the students' attention and it can raise the students' motivation and interest in learning English.

In this investigation, it conducted in two cycles which every cycle has a different result. It improves 11 students from 8 student to 19 students who pass the KKM in cycle 1. In cycle 2 there are 32 students who pass the KKM and there are only 8 students are below the KKM. The cycle 2 has fulfilled the target of Classroom Action research (CAR) success, that 80% students could pass the KKM. Automatically, it can be said that the Classroom Action Research (CAR) is success and the cycle can be stopped.

There was the difficulty for the researcher in implementing group work technique during Classroom Action Research (CAR). The students could not work together well because some of them did not know to manage their group could work well in learning narrative text. They only knew that group work was enjoyable. Therefore, they did not work together optimally. The students have difficulty in learning to listen other while doing discussion. Moreover, students still needed to know some unfamiliar vocabulary, because they gave up when they found it. Another difficulty, the classroom was so crowded that made student hardly to focus.

However, in this sense, the researcher helps the student to solve the problems such as getting students to bring dictionary in order the students did not give up when found unfamiliar words. Next, the teacher gave them warning and punishment if they were too noisy and the writer had to control students by walking around the class. The researcher helps out the student to choose their friends in each group. The teacher gives explanation about Narrative text clearly so the student could analyze the schematic structures easily concerning identification and description of the Narrative text. The students seemed more enthusiastic during the teaching learning process.

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CONCLUSION

Based on the research finding and analyzing the data in the process of teaching reading comprehension through group work technique at the eighth grade of SMPN 13 Tangerang Selatan, the writer concludes that using group work in teaching reading comprehension is one way of improving students' reading comprehension. It could make the students motivated to improve knowledge and information each other during reading activity. It gives much time to get the point of the text or passage and the students can express their analysis freely.

The students make significant score improvement in reading narrative through using group work technique. The 79.5% of the students in the eighth grade pass the KKM (75). It could be seen from students score in cycle 1 test there are 19 students (47.5%) who passed the KKM, while in cycle 2 tests there are 32 students (79.5%) who have achieved the target score of KKM. It means that they are able to get better achievement on reading narrative text. As a whole, the interpretation of the data results among the pre action, the test of cycle 1 and the test of cycle 2 are as follows:

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Based on conclusion above, it can be delivered some suggestions, go to: Student, the student may use the group work technique to help themselves to share information, learn to listen, respect other opinion. Teacher, the teacher can consider using group work technique in teaching narrative text and also in teaching learning process in reading another types of text; Other Researcher, the researcher needed a longer time during implementing group work technique in teaching narrative text. She realized it as a shortcoming in this study. Hopefully, there will be further research to minimize the shortcoming.

In addition, learning to read English emphasize on understanding key information from readings encountered, and no longer focused on attempts to shift the whole meaning of a foreign word in the reading. That means, the teacher should be able to organize learning activities properly, so as to lead their students toward a deeper understanding optimally appropriate as in the learning objectives.

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