

The Effectiveness of Strategies-Based Instruction on Reading Comprehension Achievement

Hindri Febri Ana Sari

febfebri08@gmail.com

Applied Business Administration, State Polytechnic of Ambon
Jl. Ir. M. Putuhena, Rumah Tiga, Tlk. Ambon, Kota Ambon, Maluku

ABSTRACTS

Reading in the EFL context in Indonesia can be generally included in the teaching of reading comprehension. Here, teaching reading aims to improve the skill of the students in comprehending the meaning of the written text. Therefore, knowledge of reading strategies is needed to help students encountering different text types, so that they become more aware of how they learn most effectively. This experimental study was conducted with a purpose to investigate the effectiveness of SBI on reading comprehension achievement in English as a foreign language. The subjects of the study were chosen from Grade X of SMK Islam Gupi Dongko. A set of reading strategies that were delivered in the SBI method trained the students. This study answered these two following research problems: 1) Do students who are taught using Strategy-Based Instruction achieve better in literal reading comprehension than those who are taught using the conventional strategy?, 2) Do students who are taught using Strategy-Based Instruction achieve better in inferential reading comprehension than those who are taught using the conventional strategy?

Keywords: *Strategies-Based Instruction, Reading Comprehension Achievement, Literal and Inferential Comprehension*

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading in the EFL context, as Cahyono and Widiati (2006:38) statement, in Indonesia it can be generally included in the teaching of reading comprehension. Here, teaching reading aims to improve the skill of the students in comprehending the meaning of the written text. Grabe and Stoller (2002) state that academic success depends on the students' ability in comprehending the language in the text. Reading comprehension relates to the students' ability in grasping the idea of reading text, which requires the readers to be an active constructor of meaning. In other words, reading comprehension deals with the capacity to perceive and understand the meanings communicated by texts.

However, dealing with reading comprehension, the students experience difficulty in comprehending English text. What tends to happen is many EFL learners have no difficulties as readers for their first language text, but they struggle to transfer their skills when it comes to English text. They often fail to work with the text; they fail to comprehend or interpret the meaning of a text even though they can explain each word and sentence. It shows that students cannot make the connection between the individual

words/sentences and the organizational structure of the text. In other words, some students might comprehend simple words and sentences but have difficulty understanding complex sentences/structures (Simanjuntak, 1988; Chawwang, 2008).

Some studies state that EFL learners encountered difficulties in reading comprehension activities. Many students have problems in identifying topic, main idea as well as limited of vocabulary as well as struggle to interpret the passage because of lacking knowledge and skills (Chawwang, 2008 cited in Samad, Jannah, & Fitriani, 2017; Nezami, 2012). Facing such problems, the learners need the strategies to encounter these problems; how to conceive a task, what textual cues they attend to, and how to make sense of what they read and what they do when they do not understand. Knowledge of strategies is important because the greater awareness language learners have of what they are doing, the learning will be more effective. Oxford (1990) defines language learner strategies as specific actions or techniques that learners use to assist their progress in developing second or foreign language skills. Research has shown that conscious use of such strategies is related to language achievement and proficiency (Thompson & Rubin, 1993). Teaching reading strategies to EFL or Second language readers will be very helpful and also an effective way to overcome language inadequacy; as well as getting a better reading achievement on language proficiency tests (Zhang, 2001).

A variety of instructional models for foreign language learning strategies training have already been developed and implemented in a variety of educational settings. Strategy-Based Instruction is one of strategies trainings that explicitly integrates strategies training into process of language teaching Strategies-Based instruction (SBI) was initiated for the first time by Andrew Cohen (Cohen 1996, 1998, 2003; Cohen & Dörnyei, 2002). It is a learner-centered approach rather than a teacher-centered approach, that combines both language learning and language use strategies in a foreign language classroom explicitly and implicitly. Cohen, Weaver, and Li (1996) state that strategies-based instruction has two major parts: 1) students are explicitly taught how, when, and why strategies can be used to help language learning and language tasks, 2) strategies are combined into every class materials and may be explicitly or implicitly present into the language tasks.

It helps second language learners become more conscious of how they can learn most effectively, ways in which they can increase their comprehension and production of the target language, and ways in which they can learn after leaving the classroom (Cohen & Hawras, 1996). Completing classroom language tasks takes more responsibility for managing their learning outside the classroom, and get more self-assurance in their ability to learn and use the target language (Cohen & Weaver, 1998). In an SBI classroom, teachers apply the following steps during the training: 1) Explain, model, and show how useful strategies work. 2) Elicit additional examples from students, based on students' learning experiences. 3) Lead students to discuss the strategies in a small-group and whole-class discussion . 4) Encourage students to experiment with a broad range of strategies. 5) Integrate strategies into everyday class materials, explicitly and implicitly embedding them into the language tasks to provide for contextualized strategy practice (Cohen 2003). The first four of these components have often stood alone as the approach when strategies are included in the language classroom. The terms “strategy training” “strategy instruction”, or “learner training” has been used to define this approach.

Research studies have been done relating to SBI in the area of listening, speaking, writing and reading as well (Cohen, 1996; Morley, 2001; Elham & Ali, 2014; Damanav, Kashef & Vijayi, 2012; Moghadam, 2012; Chou, 2015). The findings indicated that SBI is a promising approach in enhancing the students' skill in those strategies.

SBI does not intact to any specific strategy or teaching methodology. In fact, it can be used with a variety of strategies. SBI is not prescriptive, but rather provides a panoply of strategies and students must determine which to use, when, for what purposes, and how to use them (Cohen & Weaver, 1998). Also, in response to the criticisms about the effectiveness of the strategies training, Chamot and Rubin (1994) as cited by Cohen (1996) state that it takes various strategies that are merged into a set of strategies training, rather than only a specific strategy, to assist the performance improvement of learning outcomes.

In this research, the model of SBI training methods were modified from the procedure developed by Klinger and Vaughn (1998), which consist of four reading strategies activities: previewing, click and clunk, get the gist, and wrap up. Preview allows students to generate interest and background knowledge in order to predict what

they will learn. Click and clunk activity is considered to encourage the students to pay attention to reading for understanding. The purpose of “Get the Gist” is to teach students to identify the most critical information in the paragraph or section of text they have just read, or in other words, to determine the main idea. The intent is to assist students in providing the “gist” of a text in as few words as possible while also conveying the essential meaning and excluding unnecessary details. Wrap up is a strategy to teach students to identify the most significant ideas in the entire passage they read and then to assist them with understanding and remembering what they’ve learned. Wrap Up includes two steps: 1) generating and answering questions about the passage, and 2) reviewing what was learned.

Considering the significance of teaching reading strategies to EFL students, the objective of this study was intended to investigate the effectiveness of strategies-based instruction as an alternative technique of teaching reading comprehension to vocational high school students. It was an attempt to find Strategies-Based Instruction that has a significant effect on the students’ reading comprehension achievement. Moreover, the students’ achievement of both experimental and control groups in literal and inferential reading comprehension was investigated. The following research questions were answered by this study.

1. Do students who are taught using Strategy-Based Instruction achieve better in literal reading comprehension than those who are taught using the conventional strategy?
2. Do students who are taught using Strategy-Based Instruction achieve better in inferential reading comprehension than those who are taught using the conventional strategy?

II. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a quasi-experimental design by applying nonrandomized control group pretest-posttest design. The quasi-Experimental design was utilized since it is impossible to assign the existing subjects randomly to the group. Furthermore, the experimental group was given a pretest, treatment, and posttest. The control group, in contrast, was taught by using the conventional teaching method. After the treatment, a post-test was given to both the experimental and control groups. The research design proposed by Sukardi (2005) was briefly summarized as follows:

Table 1. Nonrandomized Control Group, Pretest – Posttest Design

Group	Pretest	Independent Variable	Posttest
E	Y1	X	Y2
C	Y1	-	Y2

Notes:

- E : Referred to the Experimental Group
- C : Referred to Control Group
- Y1 : Referred to the observation in the Pretest
- Y2 : Referred to the observation in the Posttest
- X : Referred to the Treatment

In this research, two classes of tenth-grade students of Technics of Motorcycles Department of SMK Islam Gupi Dongko, were used as the subjects of the study. Thirty students of TSM 2 were treated as the experimental group receiving a particular treatment taught using SBI reading strategies, thirty students of TSM 1 were treated as the control group taught reading comprehension in the conventional strategy.

To collect the data, a reading comprehension test was used as the instrument of the research. The data from the Midterm test were used to control if any differences between the two groups since there was no opportunity to select the subjects. While post-test was administered to know the students' improvement after the treatment. Besides, the total number of test items was 50, consisting of 30 items of literal comprehension and 20 items of inferential comprehension. The test was tried out and then analyzed, to measure its quality in term of difficulty level, discrimination power, and effectiveness of distracters. Its internal consistency measure of reliability was analyzed by using Kuder-Richardson 21 formula and the index was 0.73 and indicated highly reliable.

This study was carried out in 11 meetings. The first meeting was used for introduction and informing the teaching-learning process and the rest of the meetings were the training sessions. There were 10 reading texts used for the instructional material. The text types being used were recount, report, and procedure texts.

Before the training, both the teacher and the students had discussion about reading strategies. The teacher explained the importance of learning and practicing effective strategies. Discussion sessions gave the students information on the following things: first, strategies enhance their reading comprehension; second, strategies also help them to be more effective and efficient in reading; last, it makes them act as the expert readers do.

Then, the teacher presented the strategies-based instruction using explicit instruction. She explained and gave model how to apply the four reading strategies: previewing, click and clunk, get the gist, and wrap up. Those strategies were applied in three phases of teaching-learning activities: pre-reading activities, whilst reading activities, and post-reading activities. Meanwhile, the control group did not receive any specific training in reading strategies.

In this research, ANCOVA (analysis of covariance) was used to test the research hypothesis, since the research design was quasi-experimental nonrandomization. ANCOVA is a combination of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Correlation. ANCOVA places the condition after treatment as a dependent variable (post-test score) meanwhile midterm score acts as a covariate. SBI and conventional teaching reading were the independent variable. To get more precise analysis, the researcher decided to use SPSS 17 program to analyze the data.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

a. Findings

It is important to have a good understanding of dealing with the variables that the study was conducted before moving onto the calculation of the data using inferential statistics. Therefore, it was required to report descriptive statistics on the major variables under study, so the nature of any effect can be understood by the reader. In this research study, the researcher reported the mean and standard deviation for all variables under study. The mean is indispensable, to sum up, the variable across all participants; the standard deviation is necessary to understand how much each participant varies around the mean.

Table 2. Pretest Scores of Experimental and Control Group

Descriptive Statistics					
Group	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Midterm_experimental	30	58	72	65.00	4.601
midterm_control	30	58	70	63.53	3.739
Valid N (listwise)	30				

Table 3. Post-test Scores of Experimental and Control Group
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	30	70	90	78.47	5.296
Control	30	58	80	71.67	5.585
Valid N (listwise)	30				

The data above appear to show that the experimental group make greater gains than the control group. According to the table 2, the experimental group has a mean score of 65.00, while the control group had a mean score of 63.53 in the English language subject as indicated by the school transcript of the midterm test result. In other words, the mean score of the experimental group is higher than the control group.

Furthermore, table 3 shows the post-test mean scores of both the experimental group and the control group, which experimental group mean score is 78.47 and the control group is 71.67. The mean scores of both groups increased, however, the experimental group increased slightly greater mean score than the control group. The increase of mean score from the pre-test of the experimental group is 13.47; meanwhile, the increase of mean score of the control group is 8.14. In other words, the mean score of the SBI teaching technique outperformed the conventional teaching technique.

At this point, the researcher could not conclude that there was a significant difference between the SBI method and the conventional method based on the difference of the mean scores of both groups in the pre-test and post-test. As the result, the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to determine the significant differences between both groups' scores on the level of comprehension of the post test, using midterm test results as the covariate.

The post-test was conducted after students had been treated in 10 meetings. The data that has been analysed was obtained from the post-test scores of both experimental and control groups. As mentioned before, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was employed as the main statistical procedure in this study for analysing the data. It was used to test the students' scores for both groups on the level of reading comprehension of the post-test, which used the pre-scores as the covariate. This procedure was conducted using the SPSS program to examine the impact of SBI on tenth-grade students in literal and inferential reading comprehension achievement. Moreover, this section provides the results of this present study which is divided into two steps: 1) The

result of analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) is used to reveal the significant difference of literal comprehension between experimental and control groups, 2) The result of analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) is used to know the significant difference of inferential comprehension between experimental and control groups, which is followed by a description of the study results according to the following research hypotheses:

1) The null hypothesis (H_0) is formulated as follows:

“The students who are taught Strategy-Based Instruction do not perform significantly better achievement of literal and inferential reading comprehension than the students who are taught conventional strategy”.

2) The alternative hypothesis (H_a) is formulated as follows:

“The students who are taught by using Strategy-Based Instruction perform significantly better achievement in literal and inferential reading comprehension than the students who are taught conventional technique”.

This section restated the result of the data that has been analyzed by using ANCOVA to answer the research question. The purpose of the research was to find out the effectiveness of using SBI in literal and inferential comprehension of reading achievement at the tenth-grade students of SMK Islam Gupi Dongko. Additionally, there was a significant difference between the experimental group's reading achievement in the post-test (covered literal and inferential comprehension after taught SBI reading strategies) and the control group's reading achievement in the post-test (covered literal and inferential comprehension after taught conventional strategies).

The detail explanation of the computation of the ANCOVA of literal and inferential comprehensions of both experimental and control groups is presented as follows:

As stated in the previous discussion, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was employed to reveal the effectiveness of using SBI reading strategy instruction on literal and inferential reading comprehension achievement. The dependent measure in ANCOVA was the number of scores of literal comprehension questions answered correctly (post-test score). While the SBI reading strategies and conventional strategies were the independent variables and midterm scores were used as the covariate.

Before analyzing using ANCOVA, the post-test scores of both groups were separated into literal comprehension scores and inferential comprehension scores. The

results of the computation scores that related to the finding were presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects
 Dependent Variable: posttest_literal comprehension

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	175.051 ^a	2	87.525	36.987	.000
Intercept	2.726	1	2.726	1.152	.288
midterm	122.784	1	122.784	51.887	.000
Group	26.801	1	26.801	11.326	.001
Error	134.882	57	2.366		
Total	39734.000	60			
Corrected Total	309.933	59			

a. R Squared = .565 (Adjusted R Squared = .550)

Table 4. indicates that the literal reading comprehension scores across the experimental and control groups were significantly different from each other. The F value of 11.326 is significant at $\alpha < 0.05$ ($F=11.326$, $p = .001$). It means that the students' performance who have been taught by using SBI reading strategies achieve better than the students' performance who taught by using conventional strategies at a literal level of comprehension. Thus, the null hypothesis, which was stated that "the students who are taught Strategy-Based Instruction do not perform significantly better achievement of literal reading comprehension than the students who are taught conventional strategy", was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Similar procedures were employed to analyze the students' inferential comprehension scores of both experimental and control groups.

Table 5. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects
 Dependent Variable:posttest_inferential comprehension

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	69.519 ^a	2	34.760	15.255	.000
Intercept	.004	1	.004	.002	.969
midterm	34.252	1	34.252	15.032	.000
group	23.248	1	23.248	10.203	.002
Error	129.881	57	2.279		
Total	8696.000	60			
Corrected Total	199.400	59			

a. R Squared = .349 (Adjusted R Squared = .326)

Further, as can be seen in Table 5., the analysis of covariance indicates that the inferential reading comprehension scores across the experimental and control groups were also significantly different from each other. The F value of 10.203 is significant at $\alpha < 0.05$ ($F = 10.227$, $p = .002$). In sum, the students' performance who have been taught by using SBI reading strategies achieve better than the students' performance who taught by using conventional strategies in the inferential level of comprehension. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which was stated that "the students who are taught Strategy-Based Instruction do not perform significantly better achievement of inferential reading comprehension than the students who are taught conventional strategy", was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

In other words, it could be stated that the students' performance on the literal and inferential level of comprehension has improved by the treatment in favor of the experimental group, which was taught by using strategies-based instruction method.

b. Discussion

To recall, the main purpose of this study was to examine the effect of SBI which consists of preview, click and cluck, get the gist, and wrap up on literal and inferential levels of reading comprehension of tenth-grade students. The result of analysis of covariance indicated that there was a significant difference in the literal and inferential reading comprehension between the students who were taught using SBI-reading strategies and students who were taught by using the conventional technique.

This result rejected the null hypothesis (H_0) under the investigations. On the other hand, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) which states "The students who are taught by using Strategy-Based Instruction perform better achievement in literal and inferential reading comprehension than the students who are taught conventional technique" was accepted. In short, the use of SBI reading strategies in teaching reading comprehension was significantly more effective than using conventional technique, especially in this study which focused on improving student reading comprehension in literal and inferential levels.

Some experts believe that effective language learners combine multiple strategies instead of a specific strategy to learn a language. Also, to response, the criticisms about the effectiveness of the strategies training, Chamot and Rubin (1994) as cited in Cohen (1996) emphasize that it is not merely a single strategy that improves performance, but

it takes effective management which makes the different strategies into a harmonize strategies training (Oxford, 1990; Chamot and O' Malley, 1994; Chamot and Rubin, 1994; Victori and Lockhart 1995; Cohen, 1996). Therefore, in the study of SBI training, four reading strategies were combined in teaching reading of literal and inferential comprehension. It showed that the reading strategies training was very helpful in making the students be more effective and active learners. They were given opportunities to apply the strategies to the learning and use of the language that they were studying individually or within a small group discussion. They used a set of strategies, matching those strategies to their learning style and personality and the demands of the task in the context of cultural influences. They experienced to explore their ability to comprehend the different text type by using the selected strategies taught in reading strategies training. In this stage, the students became more responsible for learning and using the target language. This result is in line with Cohen and Hawras' statement. They state that strategy-based instruction helps second language learners become more conscious of how they can learn most effectively, ways in which they can increase their comprehension and production of the target language, and ways in which they can learn after leaving the classroom (Cohen & Hawras, 1996).

In term of academic achievement, the use of reading strategies produced positive results. The result of this study showed that the scores of experimental group students have significantly improved compared to the scores of the control group. The finding aligned with the idea proposed by some studies that reading strategies are teachable and proven could improve student's performance on the test of comprehension and recall (Carrel, 1985; Hamp-Lyons, 1985; Carrel, Pharis, and Liberto, 1989; Brown and Palinscar, 1989).

Moreover, lots of studies on SBI method have been done in EFL and ESL context (Irawati, 2010; Damanav, Kashef & Vijayi, 2012; Moghadam, 2012) which the results showed having a positive effect in the EFL/ESL students' reading comprehension. It improved the students' comprehension ability. The results of those studies confirmed with the finding of this present study.

The implication of the result of the current study toward the teaching reading strategies is that the reading strategies, such as previewing, click and clunk, get the gist, and wrap up are a worth implementing for EFL students. When the students are

exposed to reading strategies training, they become aware of strategies that can be used in understanding the reading text much better. Having achieved an awareness of reading strategies, they can have a better command of a variety of strategies they can use for successful and full reading comprehension by practice. Successful second language reading comprehender is not merely about how and when to use the strategy effectively, but also know how to combine with other strategies while using it. Knowing the strategies is not enough; it is a must for a reader to be able to apply them strategically (Anderson, 1991).

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

a. Conclusion

According to previous studies, most researchers pointed out the necessity of teaching effective reading strategies to students so that they are able to enhance their reading achievement. By getting explicit instruction in effective strategies and learning to monitor and check their comprehension while reading, readers can become better readers. The explicit instruction helped the students to enhance both awareness in engaging with the strategies and comprehension skills. In other words, the development of reading comprehension for EFL students is highly dependent on learning what strategies are, how, when, and where to use particular strategies, as well as how to evaluate their use.

Those studies were confirmed with the result of this current study, which revealed the effectiveness of strategies-based instruction on reading achievement in literal and inferential comprehension of the tenth-grade students of vocational high school. It was proven by analyzing the data quantitatively; it showed that strategies-based instruction gave a positive effect on reading achievement in literal and inferential comprehension in the tenth-grade students of SMK Islam Guppi Dongko. The experimental group' outperformed the control group in both inferential and literal comprehension.

Additionally, this result can be interpreted that reading strategies are to act as good signals of how learners approach reading tasks or solve problems encountered during the reading process. They serve as pointers giving learners valuable clues about how to plan their work, tackle reading problems, assess the situation in reading to comprehend the text and learn something from it. By being trained to use a variety of strategies make the readers becoming strategic readers, as the result, their

comprehension is improved. This led to the conclusion that instruction of reading strategies increased greatly comprehension and improved the process of reading and also the process of learning.

b. Recommendation

Some recommendations were made to the teacher based on the findings of the study. First, reading strategies training should be integrated into daily reading instruction to make the students having good comprehension in reading and achieve independence in exploring various text types. In other words, it is important to teach the students reading strategies to enable them to use them consciously as well as to differentiate between the uses of specific strategies in a particular reading context. Next, the teaching of strategies should be done by explaining and modelling explicitly to get the effective result in making the students as strategic readers. Last, as stated before, that SBI doesn't intact to any particular strategy, therefore, the use of variety strategies which are different from this study or previous study are needed.

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