

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COGNITIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES IN IMPROVING
STUDENTS' READING ABILITY AT THE ELEVENTH GRADE OF SMP NEGERI 35
BANJARMASIN SCHOOL YEAR 2019/2020**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis exposed the teacher strategies in encouraging young learners's participation at the Eleventh grade of SMP Negeri 1 Muara Teweh. The objectives of the study are: to find out whether the strategy used by the teacher will improve the students' participation and whether it is effective to use in English teaching.

Subject of the research is the Eleventh grade of SMP Negeri 1 Muara Teweh school year 2019/2020. There are 18 boys and 20 girls. There are two variables; they are independent variable and dependent variable. The procedure of the study was, firstly a pre-test continued by the four teaching English activities and the last was a post test.

The result of the test shows that the average of the pre-test was 50. The averages of the four activities by using cognitive learning strategies were 59, 67, 73 and 78. And the average of the post test was 82. The range of average between the pre test and the post test is 32. So the use of cognitive learning strategies is quite significant to apply in the teaching and learning process

Keyword: Cognitive Learning, Improving Student and Reading Ability

ABSTRAK

Skripsi ini memaparkan strategi guru dalam mendorong partisipasi siswa di kelas XI SMP Negeri 1 Muara Teweh. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah: untuk mengetahui apakah strategi yang digunakan guru akan meningkatkan partisipasi siswa dan apakah efektif untuk digunakan dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris.

Subjek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas XI SMP Negeri 1 Muara Teweh tahun pelajaran 2019/2020. Ada 18 laki-laki dan 20 perempuan. Ada dua variabel; mereka adalah variabel bebas dan variabel terikat. Prosedur penelitiannya adalah, pertama pre-test dilanjutkan dengan empat kegiatan pengajaran bahasa Inggris dan yang terakhir adalah post test.

Hasil tes menunjukkan bahwa rata-rata pre-test adalah 50. Rata-rata dari keempat aktivitas dengan menggunakan strategi pembelajaran kognitif adalah 59, 67, 73 dan 78. Dan rata-rata post test adalah 82. Rentang dari rata-rata antara pre test dan post test adalah 32. Jadi penggunaan strategi pembelajaran kognitif cukup signifikan untuk diterapkan dalam proses belajar mengajar.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran Kognitif, Peningkatan Kemampuan Siswa dan Membaca

INTRODUCTION

Reading is considered as important aspect because of its valuable benefits in developing knowledge. Reading is also considered as important skill for second language learning. Therefore, students are expected to have good comprehension to deal with all reading aspects and difficulties in academic context. However, English learning in vocational school reading is rarely taught in the classroom since the English learning in vocational school is more focused on speaking. Whereas, as stated before, reading is very important since there are some English tests that should be followed by students which contain reading comprehension test such as National Examination (UN).

Based on those reasons, reading is very important. Furthermore, as the teacher we should prepare students with learning strategies so that the students can use their learning strategies to improve their reading comprehension which could not be taught optimally in the school.

Generally, Grabe and Stoller (2002) define reading as the ability to draw information from a text and to form an interpretation of the information. Commonly, people read for general comprehension, whether for information or for pleasure, the objective is not to memorize most of specific detail but to have a good comprehension of the main ideas and to relate those main ideas to background knowledge as appropriate.

Specifically, in academic context occurs reading to learn. In this context a person needs to learn a significant number of information from a text. This purpose of reading requires abilities to remember the elaboration of main and supporting ideas from the text, recognize and build rhetorical frames that organize the information in the text, and also link the text to the reader's background knowledge. Furthermore, to comprehend, readers have to use the information they already have to filter, organize, and reflect the upcoming information. In addition, McCardle (2002) as cited in Westwood (2008) suggests

that comprehension process draw on many cognitive and linguistic abilities, especially vocabulary, recalling background knowledge, sentence processing, verbal reasoning, and working memory. In addition, Rosenshine as cited in Jordan (2005) states that reading comprehension is an area where cognitive strategies are important.

Based on the explanation, the writer tries to apply the cognitive learning strategies to improve students' reading comprehension. Therefore, this study is intended to investigate the effectiveness of cognitive learning strategies in improving students' reading ability and it is expected that this research will contribute to the practice of reading teaching in the future.

METHODE RESEARCH

This study applied quasi-experimental design by using non-equivalent control group design pre test and post test since the goal of the study is to find the effectiveness of certain strategy. The quasi experimental research is used when random assignment of subject to experimental and control group is possible (Gall and Borg, 1979). Therefore, this used quasi experimental because of limitation time and school regulation.

The experimental class is XI AK4 and the controlled class is XI AK5. Those classes were chosen because each class consists of 35 students and recommended by the school. Both experimental and controlled classes are given pretest and post test. However, the treatment was only given to the experimental class

DISCUSSION

1 The Difference of Students' Score

Statistical computation result of pretest scores of experimental and

control group shows that the data gained from pretest were normally distributed. The test of homogeneity shows that the variances of the two groups were homogeneous. It can be seen from the probability of the variance test which is higher than the significance level ($0,913 > 0,05$). Furthermore the independent t-test result show that the probability (equal variance assumed) is higher than level of significance ($0.487 > 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the experimental and control group are homogenous in term of their initial ability. Meanwhile, the statistical computation of post test scores of experimental and control group show that the data gained from the post test were normality distributed. The test of homogeneity shows that the variances of the two groups were homogenous. It can be proven from the of the homogeneity of variance test which is higher than the level of significance ($0,706 > 0,05$). Furthermore, in order to find out whether or not there is difference between experimental group scores and control group scores the independent t-test was conducted. Furthermore, the result shows that in term of mean students in experimental group ($M=80.24$) and the control group ($M=73.03$) are different. It is also supported by the probability (equal variance assumed) is lower than level of significance ($0.001 < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. The cognitive learning strategies are effective in improving students reading comprehension.

2 The Effectiveness of Cognitive Learning Strategies

Based on statistical computation it is shown that students who had been taught the cognitive learning strategies experienced some improvement in their reading comprehension. The improvement can be seen from the mean of students' score of experimental group before and after the treatment. The mean of students score before the treatment was 76.36 and the mean of students score after the treatment was 80.84. On the hand, students in control group experienced deterioration. The deterioration can be seen from the mean of students score in pretest and post test. Since there is no treatment for students in control group, the mean of students score in pretest was 76.85 while students score in post test was 73.03. In summary, it can be concluded that cognitive learning strategies can improve students reading comprehension. Furthermore, the use of strategy by students plays important role in language learning. As stated by Brown (2000) that successful mastery of the second language will be due to a large extent to a learners' own personal investments of time, effort, and also in the form of an individualized battery of strategy for comprehending and producing the language. Moreover, in term of reading as a complex process that is dependent upon the individuals' language development, experiential background, cognitive ability, and attitude towards reading (Singa (1998) cited in Syafrizal (2000)). In addition, reading is considered as cognitive process, which very much reliant on other basic processes such as attention and memory (Taylor, Harris, and Pearson, 1988). That will

helpful if students can implement cognitive learning strategies in reading. Furthermore, the implementation of cognitive learning strategies in reading classroom is proposed by Oxford (1990). There are four sets of cognitive strategies that are: Practicing, Receiving and Sending Message, Analyzing and Reasoning, and Creating Structure for input and Output (Oxford, 1990). Additionally, the implementation of those is really helpful in improving reading comprehension. Since reading comprehension is an active process where the reader contracts the meaning to form a deeper understanding of a concept and information presented in a text. Therefore, to comprehend readers have to use the information they already have to filter, organize, and reflect the upcoming information (Westwood, 2008). This fact is in line with meaningful learning proposed by Brown (2000) which states “wherever a new topic or concept is introduced the teacher should attach it in students existing and background knowledge so that it becomes associated with something they already know”. In addition, the implementation of cognitive learning strategies is also effective in helping students improving their level of reading comprehension. Therefore, the students are not only able to reach literal comprehension but also able to achieve higher level of reading comprehension. Therefore, it can be proven that cognitive strategies are effective in improving students reading comprehension. Furthermore, the improvement can be seen based on statistical

computation and also the increasing of students scores before and after the treatment.

3 Reading Difficulties Faced by Students

As reading is considered as a complex process that is dependent upon the individuals’ language development, experiential background, cognitive ability, and attitude towards reading (Singa (1998) cited in Syafrizal (2000)) students might face some difficulties when they read. There are two levels of reading difficulties such as difficulties in word level and difficulties in text level. The difficulties at words level mostly faced by beginning readers and students with learning difficulties because they have limited range option of available words (Westwood, 2008). Furthermore Westwood states there are at least eight factors causing reading difficulties at text level. For instance, limited vocabulary knowledge, lack of fluency, lack of familiarity with subject matter, difficulty level of the text (readability), inadequate use of effective reading strategies, weak verbal reasoning, problem with processing information, and problem in recalling information after reading. The researcher used questionnaire to find out which difficulties mostly faced by the students. The questionnaire was given to 35 students of experimental group. The result of the questionnaire can be seen in the following chart: Reading difficulties Difficulty 1 9% 15% Difficulty 2 18% 16% 11% Difficulty 3 Difficulty 4 7% 7% Difficulty 5 17% Difficulty 6 Difficulty 7 Chart 4.2 The

percentage of reading difficulties faced by the students As can be seen from the chart the questionnaire found that there are 24 students with limited vocabulary knowledge. This was the highest number of reading difficulties faced by the students. Studies confirmed that reading comprehension is closely related to a students' competence of language competence (Hummel, 2000; Kempe et al., 2008 cited in Westwood, 2008). Furthermore, there are 21 students think that their lack of fluency was their reading difficulties. As student don't speak English in their daily life and they are not used to read English text. Moreover, there are 23 students think that their difficulty was the difficulty level of the text. Since text that is complex in terms of concepts, vocabulary, sentence length and structure is difficult for readers to process (Westwood, 2008). The next difficulty face by the students is problem with processing information. students who think that this was their difficulty. Because individuals differ in their working-memory capacity, with some able to process and accommodate much more information than others. Therefore, the teacher should encourage students to re-read material, several times if necessary, in order to process the information successfully. As the students were taught to use cognitive strategies, the strategy of practicing naturalistically can help student with this difficulty. Furthermore there are 9 students with lack of familiarity with subject matter and inadequate use of effective reading strategies. However, the students were taught several reading strategies related to cognitive

strategies. Thus, it can help students with this difficulty. In addition, there are also 12 students who think that their difficulty was problem in recalling information after reading. And the last there are 14 students with verbal reasoning difficulty. Actually, the ability to reason is determined by an individual's level of intelligence; but guided reading activities in which a teacher uses effective questioning to challenge students to think more deeply about the text they are reading are helpful in developing their ability to reason from the information given (Westwood, 2008). In conclusion, the difficulty mostly faced by students is the lack of vocabulary knowledge. And the less faced by the students is the lack of familiarity with subject matter and inadequate use of effective reading strategies. It was caused by the use of cognitive learning strategies in reading that had been taught to the students.

CLOSURE

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part provides some conclusions which are taken from research findings and the second part provides some suggestions for teachers and further study.

The aim of the research is to find out the effectiveness of cognitive learning strategies in improving students reading comprehension. The answer of the question is searched by comparing the result of achievement between the experimental group and the control group. Moreover, based on the result of data analysis shows those students who were taught cognitive learning strategies in reading show some improvement.

There are some conclusions that can be drawn from the present study. First, the cognitive learning strategies are effective in improving reading comprehension. The improvement can be seen by the result of t-test on students score. The independent t-test shows that there is a significant difference between the mean of students' scores in the experimental group and the control group. The significant difference is also supported by the result of t-test which is larger than tcritical and the probability which is lower than the level of significances. also shows that there is a large effect of independent variable upon dependent variable. Therefore, it indicates that cognitive learning strategies have major effect in improving students reading comprehension. Second, the cognitive learning strategies help students to improve their reading comprehension by themselves both inside and outside the classroom, with or without the teacher assistance. Since there are some implementations of cognitive learning strategies in reading students can choose which strategy is more suitable for them. Third, the cognitive learning strategies provide students with interesting, challenging, and enjoyable classroom activity. It also contributes to help students to comprehend the material more easily. As a result, based on the research findings it can be concluded that cognitive learning strategies are effective in improving students reading comprehension and it can be applied by both the teacher and the students inside or outside the classroom.

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