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## USING HIGH 5 STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT AND READING INTEREST OF THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMA NEGERI 10 PALEMBANG

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### Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to find out whether or not High 5 strategies could make a significant difference in improving both students reading comprehension achievement and reading interest. The population consisted of 423 eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 10 Palembang in academic year of 2012/2013. Forty of them were selected as the sample by using purposive random sampling technique based on the following criteria: (1) the students who were below the schools' standard score of English in the previous semester (<75), (2) the students who were taught by the same teacher in their regular class, (3) the students who were in the eleventh grade, (4) the students who were not taking an English course during the study. The research was conducted in terms of reading comprehension and reading interest for about two months or 24 meetings including pre and post tests and questionnaire before and after the treatment. The result showed that (1) there was a significant progress within each group in both reading comprehension and reading interest, (2) there were also significant difference between the experimental and control groups in students' reading comprehension achievement and reading interest. Finally, it was concluded that High 5 strategies was considered applicable to improve students' reading comprehension achievement and reading interest.

**Keywords:** High 5 strategies, reading comprehension achievement, and reading interest

In the present time, no one denies the importance of English language as a global language. In Indonesia, English taught at senior high schools, using School-based curriculum or *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan* (KTSP). It is stated that the aim of teaching English at senior high school is to develop communicative competence in oral and written in order to reach the level of informational literacy, to have an awareness of the nature and the importance of English in order to improve the nation's competitiveness in the global community, and to develop learners' understanding of the interrelationships between language and culture (Depdiknas, 2006). English is known as one of the most important means for acquiring knowledge and information. Mastering English is one way to reach out the world because English is an international language which is used as a means of communication among nations.

Some facts reveal that reading ability of Indonesian students is very low. It indicated that Indonesian students have a problem in reading. According to the *International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement in East Asia in 2003*, reading ability of Indonesian students was still low. Indonesian students were just capable of mastering 30% reading material, and found difficulty in reading items that were in the form of commentary requiring cognitive process (IAE for the evaluation of Educational Achievement, 2003). In addition, *PISA 2009* database showed that



Indonesian students' score was below the OECD average and on the 57<sup>th</sup> of 65 countries (OECD, PISA 2009). It was noticed that some conditions in the process of teaching and learning English must be improved by using an appropriate method in order to overcome the problem in this school because the students have difficulty in reading. Reading is similar to driving in that the brain, from processing pages and pages of text, develops a variety of strategies and connections that facilitate efficient comprehension (Zwiers, 2004, p. 2).

In reading, comprehension is an important part. Comprehension can be defined broadly as the process of constructing a supportable understanding of a text. Without comprehension, there would be no reading. If readers can read the words but do not understand what they are reading, they are not really reading. It means that comprehension is the process of deriving meaning from connected text. Reading involves word knowledge (vocabulary) as well as thinking and reasoning. Students who have good comprehension will be successful to get the author's idea (Neufeld, 2005).

It means that comprehension is the goal of reading instruction, that is, the ability to create meaning from the text. In addition, the improvement of reading comprehension will be achieved by the students if they have high interest in reading. Readers are affected by their interest and background knowledge when they are reading (Gill, 2008). Highly interested readers have feelings of involvement, stimulation, or enjoyment during reading, and tend to possess knowledge in the domain of their interest (Renninger, 2000, p. 373-404).

Furthermore, in a study "Reading Interest and Behavior in Middle School Students in Inner-city and Rural Settings" by Greenberg, Gilbert, and Fredrick (2006), it is stated that increasing reading skills, promoting the interest and excitement of reading to students is important. Interest is important in reading activities since it accommodates students to have desire and willingness to involve in the process of reading the text. Therefore, teachers should promote positive reading attitudes through enjoyable reading and find ways to encourage children to read more in order to improve their reading ability.

Moreover, according to Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, Humenick, and Littles (2006), With respect to affect, the most highly interested students had positive affect toward books, favored certain authors, and enjoyed favorite topics (p. 294). It means that the students who had high interest, based on their positive affect and enthusiasm for specific topics or authors, also had high memory for plots and topics, which implies high comprehension for the books they read. Students with low interest had dramatically lower memory, and presumably lower comprehension, during their reading. Therefore, the students who were highly involved, highly interested, they are readers who consume a lot of books and comprehend them at relatively substantial levels.

However, success of learning is determined by the exact use of learning strategies. According to Ueta (2005), reading involves very complex processes and varies depending on purpose (p. 5). Therefore, English teachers in teaching and learning processes should apply good techniques to make students realize the pleasure of reading which can increase students' reading comprehension and interest. Nowadays, people, particularly the students should like to read something because it can increase their knowledge and they can seek information. Using High 5 strategies was one of the efforts to improve reading ability. According to Dymock and Nicholoso (2010) in their research "High 5 Strategies to Enhance Comprehension of Expository Text", stated that High 5 strategies help students tackle expository text with success. The explicit and systematic teaching of five comprehension strategies is so helpful in reading. High 5 strategies consist of (1) activating background knowledge (2) questioning, (3) analyzing text structure, (4) creating mental images, and (5) summarizing. These strategies are effective in enhancing students' comprehension of text.



Based on the description above, the writer was interested in doing study related to improve reading comprehension achievement and reading interest of the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 10 Palembang by using high 5 strategies. The writer applied High 5 strategies in order to help the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 10 Palembang in improving their reading comprehension achievement and reading interest. Hopefully, this technique can be one of good alternative strategies especially in teaching students' reading comprehension and increasing reading interest.

My research questions were: (1) Was there any significant progress in students' reading comprehension achievement after they were taught by using High 5 strategies?, (2) Was there any significant progress in students' reading interest after they were taught by using High 5 strategies?, (3) Was there any significant difference in reading comprehension achievement between the students who were taught by using High 5 strategies and those who were not?, (4) Was there any significant difference in reading interest between the students who were taught by using High 5 strategies and those who were not?. (5) How was the eleventh grade students' reading interest before and after being taught by using high 5 strategies?

### **HIGH 5 STRATEGIES**

High 5 strategies are the key five comprehension strategies that published studies support. The strategies are (1) activating background knowledge (2) questioning, (3) analyzing text structure, (4) creating mental images, and summarizing (Dymock and Nicholson, 2010).

#### **Activating Background Knowledge**

Activating one's prior or knowledge of a topic before reading provides a mental "hook" linking knowledge the reader already possesses with ideas in the text (Neufeld, 2005). In reading, the letters are identified by letter-by-letter decoding, which is generally supposed to be mechanical and autonomous, but the number of letters received, how long it is allowed to run, is sensitive to how much the observer already knows about the word (Rosenblatt, 2006). This reveals the marvelous flexibility of the word identification process that identifies only as many letters as are needed to identify each word. A good reader usually uses prior knowledge to make sense of new information; asks question about the text before, during, and after reading; draws inferences from text; monitors comprehension; uses fix up strategies when meaning breaks down; determines what is important; and synthesizes information to create sensory image. Reading slow is as the number of possible words increases. In addition, an accurate, successful word-decoding upgrades readers to the stage of connecting information with prior knowledge, so as to reach textual meanings/comprehension eventually (Bamford and Day, 2004). Therefore, students' prior knowledge is needed in reading that help readers make connections between what they know and what they are reading.

#### **Questioning**

Questions help the students focus on the most important parts of text, and they help readers find the key information (Zwiers, 2004, p. 97). In addition, helping students develop the ability to ask and answer questions of themselves and the text before, during, and after reading is an important part of the process of becoming a strategic reader (Neufeld, 2005). According to Dymock, and Nicholson (2010), stated that in high 5 strategies, there are three types of the questions the students can ask: right there, think and search, and beyond the text which help students clarify and deepen understanding of the text they are reading. A right there question about the text is factual, such as, What are the facts here? An example of think and search question is What does the writer want me to figure out based on



the fact? A sample beyond the text question is, What is not being said here that I should check by doing some background research? Prior to reading, good readers also ask themselves questions that active background knowledge.

Good readers ask questions and consider the text structure as they read (Dymock and Nicholson, 2010). If the text has a sequential structure, readers should be encouraged as they read to ask themselves what will happen next. If the text is exposition and focused on one topic, readers should ask themselves as they read what the subtopics are. In this study, the students continually should ask and answer questions as they read.

### **Analyzing Text Structure**

Making the structure of the text more salient improves comprehension and learning (Goldman and Rakestraw, 2000, p. 316). Text structure awareness, or the ability to analyze text in terms of its structure, is a mental awareness of how writers organize information. It involves the reader looking mentally for the structure, looking at keywords, subheadings, and other text features that can reveal the structure the writer is using. It means that analyzing structure also help the reader in comprehending the text.

Capturing the structures helps hugely in terms of comprehension (Dymock and Nicholson, 2010). Capturing the design of the text in the mind as soon as possible is part of text structure awareness. A diagram will be used to help the students to analyze the structures easily. There are three generic structures of exposition text, thesis, argument and recommendation; the students will generate the structure into the diagram that can help them to analyze the structure. Since the text is about hortatory exposition text which consists of three generic structures, so the diagram will also consist of thesis, argumentation and recommendation.

### **Creating Mental Images**

Dymock and Nicholson (2010) stated that when learning about structures, it is helpful for students to image the structure, that is, to visualize it while reading so that they can make the structure concrete. Visualizing is the mental organizing that helps the images and the information stick in our brain (Zwiers, 2004, p. 56). Good readers are like architects when reading text. They can see the ribs and bones of the text: “The structure is the key to comprehension to comprehend a passage is to create a mental structure”. Therefore, readers, as they process the text, should be able to get a visual image of its ribs and bones, its structure. When learning about text structures, strategies 3 and 4 reinforce each other, it is helpful for students to image the structure, that is, to visualize while reading so that they can later make a diagram of it. Diagrams help students make the structure concrete. Therefore, the students will make the structure of the text in diagram that can help them comprehend the text.

### **Summarizing**

After creating mental images, summarizing is the last step that can give positive impact in reading comprehension. According to Karbalaei and Rajyashree (2010), summarizing allows readers to differentiate key ideas from supporting or unimportant ideas and to construct logical connections between them. Research shows that the ability to summarize a text can enhance comprehension. Summarizing is the last component of High 5 which can help students easily comprehend their reading. Knowing how to summarize the main ideas has a positive impact on comprehension. A summary is concise and gives only the main points, which is as the ability to delete irrelevant details, combine



similar ideas, condense main ideas, and connect major themes into concise statements that capture the purpose of a reading for the reader.

According to Dymock and Nicholson (2010), students can easily produce a summary if they use Strategy 3. First, read the text. Second, identify the text structure the writer has used. Third, make a diagram of the structure. Fourth, discard redundant information so that only the key ideas remain. Fifth, circle only the critical ideas that is needed for the summary. Therefore, in this study the writer will use diagram that can help students summarize the text.

## **METHOD OF RESEARCH**

In this study, the writer used an experimental method by applying quasi experimental design and specifically chose non-equivalent group pre-test and post-test design. In this design, there were experimental and control groups. In the experimental group, the students were given pre-test, questionnaire, treatment of High5 strategy, post-test and questionnaire, while in the control group the student were given only pre-test and post-test without treatment of High 5 at all. The effect of High 5 strategy could be seen from the result of reading test and reading interest obtained by the experimental group compared with those of obtained by the control group.

In selecting the sample from the population which consisted of 423 students of senior high school, purposive random sampling technique was used. The selection of the sample was based on the following criteria: (1) the students who were English score below *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal* (KKM), that was 75, (2) they were taught by the same teacher in their regular class, (3) they were all in the same grade (the eleventh grade), (4) they were not taking the English course during the study is conducted. Among 423 students, it was taken 40 of them as the sample of the study based on the criteria above. Based on the classification, the writer chose 20 of students, as experimental group, and another 20 of students, in the control group. The sample that fulfilled the criteria above was selected and equally divided into experimental group (20 students; 10 males).

## **INSTRUMENTATION**

All the samples were tested by using reading comprehension test and reading interest questionnaires. The reading test was administered to the students before and after being taught by using High 5 strategies. The reading test included questions reflecting the aspects of reading comprehension: Main idea, details, sequence, inference, cause and effect, and vocabulary. The test consisted of 30 items of a multiple choice type test with five options: A, B, C, D, or E.

There was also questionnaire which was used to measure students' reading interest. This study used Scale of Likert type which consisted 20 items comprising situational interest, individual interest, and well-developed interest.

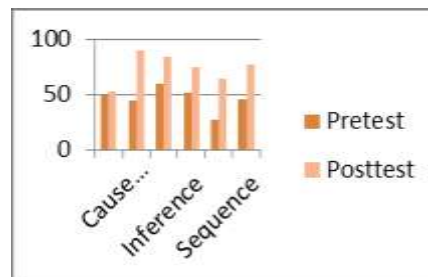
## **RESULT**

### **Reading Comprehension Achievement**

The results of the tests were presented in the form of scores. The scoring system used range from 0 to 100. The highest reading score in the pre-test of the experimental group was 53, the lowest score was 33, and the mean score was 41.60. The highest reading score in the post-test of the experimental group was 87, the lowest score was 63, and the mean score was 74.10. It showed that there was an increase in the result of pre-test and post-test in the experimental group.

It is also supported by the component of the result of students' scores in each aspect from pretest to posttest in the experimental group; they are cause-effect (49-53), main idea (44-90),

inference (59-84), detail (51-75), sequence (27-64), and vocabulary (46-77). There were also the improvement of students' reading scores in the pretest and posttest. It is shown in Graph 1.



Based on the independents sample t-test: the mean difference between reading achievement in the experimental group and control group was 74.10 and t-obtained 15.203 ( $p < 0.000$ ). Since the p-output of reading comprehension was less than the value of probability 0.05 and t-obtained was higher than t-table (2.024), it showed that there was significant difference in reading comprehension achievement between students who were taught through High 5 strategies and those who were not.

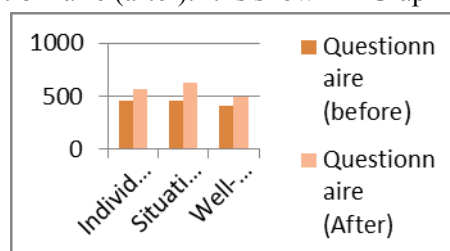
Based on the paired sample t-test, the mean of the students' reading comprehension pre-test in the experimental group was 41.60 with the standard deviation 4.465. While the mean of reading comprehension post test was 74.10 with the standard deviation was 5.929. The output showed that the mean difference of reading comprehension achievement between pre-test and post-test.

in the experimental group was 32.5 with standard deviation 5.671, and t-obtained was 25.630 ( $p < 0.000$ ). While the mean of the students' reading comprehension pre-test in the control group was 39.85 with the standard deviation 4.464. The mean of reading comprehension post test was 47.75 with the standard deviation was 4.993. The output showed that the mean difference of reading comprehension achievement between pre-test and post-test in the control group was 7.90, with standard deviation 4.141 and t-obtained was 8.532 ( $p < 0.000$ ).

### Reading Interest

The results of the questionnaires were presented in the form of scores. The scoring system used range from 20 to 100. The highest reading interest score (before) of the experimental group was 77, the lowest score was 46, and the mean score was 66.20. The highest reading interest score (after) of the experimental group was 91, the lowest score was 71, and the mean score was 84.15.

It was also showed by the result of reading interest score in each aspect of experimental group; they were individual interest (458-563), situational interest (462-623), and well-developed individual interest (404-497). There were also the improvement of students' reading interest scores in the questionnaire (before) and questionnaire (after). It is shown in Graph 2.



Based on the Paired sample t-test, in the experimental group, the mean of the students' reading interest questionnaire after the treatment was 84.15 with the standard deviation 5.842. The output



showed that the mean difference of between reading interest questionnaire before and after the treatment in experimental group was 17.950, with standard deviation 8.532, and t-obtained 9.409 ( $p < 0.000$ ). Since the t-obtained of reading interest was higher than t-table 2.093, It means that there was a significant progress in students' reading interest after the treatment in the experimental group was done.

While the mean of the students' reading interest questionnaire after the teaching and learning process was 75.90 with the standard deviation 7.159. The output showed that the mean difference of between reading interest questionnaire before and after the treatment in control group was 10.500, with standard deviation 8.751, and t-obtained 5.366 ( $p < 0.000$ ). Since the t-obtained of reading interest was higher than t-table 2.093, it could be stated that there was significant difference in students' achievements after the treatment in control group was done.

Based on the independents sample t-test, the mean difference between reading interest in the experimental group was 8.250 and t-obtained 3.993 ( $p < 0.000$ ). Since the p-output of reading interest was less than the value of probability 0.05 and t-obtained was higher than t-table (2.024), it showed that there was significant difference in reading interest between students who were taught through High 5 strategies and those who were not.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusions**

Based on analysis of the data, five conclusions are drawn in this study. First, students made progress in reading comprehension because the application of High 5 strategies during the process of teaching and learning activities. Second, students made progress in reading interest due to the application of High 5 strategies during the process of teaching and learning activities. Third, there was significant difference in reading comprehension achievement between the students who were taught by using High 5 strategies and those who were not. Fourth, there was significant difference in reading interest between the students who were taught by using High 5 strategies and those who were not. Last conclusion, students tend to have better reading interest after the treatment rather than before the treatment. It showed that High 5 strategies have positive impact on their reading interest. It showed that High 5 strategies have positive impact on their reading interest.

### **Suggestions**

Three suggestions are offered in order to develop the teaching and learning in EFL classroom. First, the students should do more practice in reading other texts to increase their mastery in order to become a good reader. Second, the teachers of English should develop various approaches in their classes that may be appropriate to their students. The approach should make the students become interested in reading and avoid the boredom in reading activity. One of the plausible approaches is High 5 strategies approach, especially in teaching reading skill. To use this approach effectively, the teachers of English should consider appropriate materials based on students' level of reading. Third, it also suggested that further researchers do similar study but focusing more on aspects of interest development and its correlation to reading comprehension, as detail as possible in their reading.



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