THE USE OF COGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN ENCOURAGING STUDENTS' ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

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Abstract

In mastering reading skills, many students face several problems in reading, such as a lack of vocabulary that makes it difficult for them to understand the text and they do not understand the strategies. In fact, the goal of reading is to understand and comprehend what is being read. Therefore, it is the teacher's responsibility to apply the right method or strategy to achieve reading goals for students. The research problem in this study is how the use of cognitive strategies improves students' reading skills ? The purpose of this study is to determine the process of using cognitive strategies in improving students' reading comprehension skills. Data collection uses tests and treatment (training).

Keywords : *Reading , Cognitive Strategy , Experimental Study*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an active and fluid process that involves the reader and the reading material in constructing meaning. Therefore, reading without comprehension is futile. If readers can read words but don't understand what they've read, they haven't truly read. Therefore, the specific goal of reading is to comprehend the content of the text. It can be concluded that comprehension is the process of acquiring meaning to achieve understanding.

Several previous studies have been conducted by several researchers such as first, Anne (2014), this study aims to find out which cognitive reading strategies are considered most helpful for EFL students to develop especially in answering questions in reading comprehension tests successfully. Data were obtained from two sources: a self-report questionnaire given to 76 students and the Think-Aloud Protocol (TAP) conducted on 15 students. The results of the study showed that the cognitive reading strategies most frequently used by students were using the title to predict the content of the text, guessing the meaning of words from the context, using a dictionary for important words, and considering other sentences in the paragraph to find out the meaning.

Second, Mariska (2016) aimed to identify the nature of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies used by Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers. It also aimed to determine the relationship between the reading strategies used and the pre-service teachers' reading comprehension performance . The results showed that for cognitive reading strategies , Highly Successful Readers (HSR) were reported

used memory sub-strategies more than Less Successful Readers (LSR) and Moderately Successful Readers (MSR), and used comprehension and retrieval sub-strategies less than MSR, but more than LSR.

In mastering reading skills, many students face several challenges, such as a lack of vocabulary, which makes it difficult to comprehend texts, and a lack of understanding of strategies. The goal of reading is to comprehend and comprehend what is being read. Therefore, it is the teacher's responsibility to implement appropriate methods and strategies to achieve students' reading goals.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is quantitative. Quantitative research is a type of research that tends to use statistics as a measure of data in drawing conclusions. The researcher took one class out of seven classes where students received a pretest before treatment and a posttest after treatment. Treatment was given to students using cognitive strategies. The pretest was used to determine students' reading achievement before treatment, and the posttest was used to determine the extent of improvement in students' reading achievement after treatment. The data source in this study was what the researcher obtained during the research. In quantitative research, the primary data source is information or explanations expressed in the form of numbers or figures. The researcher collected data sources related to this research from tests. In this study, the researcher will use tests. According to Alyson (2015:43), tests are an important part of every teaching and learning experience. There are two types of tests commonly used in the teaching process:

1. Pre-test can also be interpreted as an activity to test students' level of knowledge regarding the material to be delivered, pre-test activities are carried out before teaching activities are given .
2. A post-test is a form of question given after a lesson/material has been delivered. In short, a post-test is a final evaluation after the material taught that day has been delivered. A teacher gives a post-test to see whether students have understood and mastered the material just presented that day.

In this study, the researcher requires data from students. In obtaining and collecting data, the researcher will use a test technique. In this study, the researcher will collect data by administering tests (pre-test and post-test) at the third meeting. For the first meeting, the researcher will administer a pre-test, which can also be interpreted as an activity to test the level of student knowledge of the material to be presented. The pre-test activity is carried out before the teaching activity is given, and to determine students' ability to read comprehension taught by their teacher.

In the second meeting, the researcher will conduct and explain the treatment using Cognitive Strategies to Encourage Students' Reading Comprehension Skills to the students. For the final meeting, the researcher will give a written test (post-test) to the students. The post-test aims to determine whether Cognitive Strategies can improve students' reading comprehension skills or not. In analyzing the data, the researcher obtained data from student test results. In processing the data, the researcher used descriptive analysis. This is to explain the conditions of the teaching and learning process using cognitive strategies to improve reading skills .

using Quantitative Descriptive Analysis . Then categorized based on the T- Test

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following is an explanation of the results and discussion of the two research questions in this study.

1. Student ReadingComprehensionResults

The results of students' reading comprehension were obtained from a reading test. The reading test contained four cognitive strategies. In addition, a practice sheet was used to observe the teaching and learning process during the cognitive strategy treatment. The results will be presented in the following section. *This subsection* answers the first research question, namely *"Does cognitive strategy training help students improve their reading comprehension?"* To answer the research question, the author conducted the following activities:

A. Results of Pre- and Post- TestReading Comprehensionin the Experimental Class

The reading comprehension scores of students tested in the Pre and Post Test are presented in the following table:

	Means	N	St. Deviation	St. error Means
Pretest-Science 1	59.00	30	11,730	2,142
Posttest-Science 1	76.73	30	8,428	1,539

Based on the table above, we can see the average reading comprehension scores of students in the experimental class before and after being given treatment. The average total scores for the Pre- and Post-Test were 59.00 and 76.73, respectively.

B. PreandPostTestResults of Control ClassReading Comprehension

	Means	N	St. Deviation	St. error Means
Pretest-Science 2 _	59.93	30	11,396	2,081
Posttest-Science 2	60.13	30	12,261	2,238

Based on the table above, it can be seen the average reading comprehension score of students in the control class without being given treatment. The total average of the Pre- and Post-Test scores is 59.93 and 60.13. Based on the table above, it can be said that the results answer the first research question, namely " *does cognitive strategy training help students improve their reading comprehension?* ". It can be seen that there is a statistically significant increase between the Pre-Test and Post-Test scores on students' reading comprehension in the experimental class and the control class.

C. Descriptive Statistics Values of Pre-Test and Post-Test Reading Comprehension Scores of Students in the Experimental and Control Classes

Partner	Differences in pairs					T	Df.	Meng ataka n. (2-tailed)
	Means	St. Deviation	St. Maksu d Kesala Han	Interval 95% Confidence of Difference				
				Lower	On			
Posttest Scienc e 1-Scien ce Prete st 1	**17,733**	**9,450**	**1,725**	**14,205**	**21,262**	**10,278**	**29**	**.000**
Posttest Scienc e 2-Exam Science 2	**9,200**	**6,509**	**1,188**	**6,769**	**11,631**	**7,741**	**29**	**.000**

As seen in Table 3 above, the Pre Test and Post Test scores of students in the experimental class have a significant difference in their reading comprehension. The results of the Paired Sample T - Test show that the effect of training on students' scores is significant, because the sig value of the variable. (2-tailed) is *.000* . The reading comprehension mean of students in the experimental class is 17.733. Analysis of the collected data shows a statistically significant positive relationship between cognitive strategy training in improving students' reading comprehension.

The average score of control class students is 9.200 and the significance level is 0.00. So, this table shows that there is an increase in students' reading comprehension, but it is not very significant because control group students were not given cognitive strategy training. The significance value (2-tailed) is 0.00. As is known, it is considered significant if $p < 0.005$. In short, the first hypothesis is accepted because students' reading comprehension has increased significantly. The findings of this study, which are related to cognitive strategy training in language classes, show that there is a statistically significant increase in students' reading comprehension. These findings reveal that students' reading comprehension has increased significantly. Based on the results above, it means that cognitive strategy training helps students to improve their reading comprehension. The author provides several studies related to cognitive strategy training and reading comprehension (Yang, 2016; Bachore, 2014; Khoshsima and Tiyar, 2014). The results of the study above support the first finding of this study in terms of increasing reading comprehension, after being trained using cognitive strategies. As is known, students' reading comprehension has increased after treatment.

2. Cognitive Strategy TrainingResults

This subsection answers the second research question, namely "How is the *cognitive* strategy *training process* ? " To answer the research question, the researcher carried out the following activities in the cognitive strategy training process: _

1. The first step for students is strategy practice. The author provides students with text and practices several sub-strategies within the practice. They repeat, practice formally with sounds and writing systems, recognize and use formulas and patterns, recombine, and practice naturally.

2. The second treatment is the strategy of receiving and sending messages. _ There are two sub-strategies for receiving and sending messages, namely finding the main idea through Skimming and scanning to find specific information, using resources. In training on how to find the main idea through skimming and scanning to find specific information, the author gives the text to the students, asking them to find the main idea on their own.

3. The third treatment is analysis and reasoning strategies. There are several sub-strategies for analysis and reasoning strategies. They are deductive reasoning, expression analysis, contrastive analysis, translation, and transfer.

4. On the final day of treatment, the author trained students on strategies for creating input and output structures. There are several sub-strategies for creating input and output structures. They took notes, summarized, and highlighted.

5. The results of the study showed that students were able to follow the cognitive strategy training process. They were also able to answer questions during and after the training.

6. The findings related to the cognitive strategy training process in language classes are in line with research conducted by Yang (2016), Song (as cited in Bachore, 2014) and Ratna (2014).

7. Song (as cited in Bachore, 2014) stated that teaching reading strategies improves students' reading ability . But, again , remember that the instruction must be carefully observed, following the procedures proposed by scholars. This statement supports the second finding, that the process of cognitive strategy training improves students' reading comprehension.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This research builds on existing knowledge in the field of cognitive strategy training to improve students' reading comprehension . The results of the initial study showed that cognitive strategies improved students' reading comprehension . This study also demonstrated the benefits of cognitive strategies in students' reading comprehension, particularly in using cognitive strategies in their reading activities.

The second result of this study shows that there are four types of cognitive strategy training in improving students' reading comprehension. They are practicing, receiving and sending messages, analyzing and reasoning, and creating structures for input and output. The results of this study also lead to the awareness that the infrequent use of strategies in reading activities and students' poor comprehension of reading texts. Research evidence shows that students only used a few strategies in their reading activities before treatment. Students' posttest scores increased after being given treatment. This is due to the influence of cognitive strategy training. Although the scores did not increase significantly, the results of the training had an impact on students' understanding of the text and they were able to identify strategies and apply them in reading activities.

In relation to the above results, the author would like to offer some suggestions for the English language component, particularly English Language Teaching (ELT). First, teachers must pay attention to students' needs. The teaching and learning process can run smoothly if we understand their needs. We can create engaging materials that can engage students actively in class, ensuring a healthy teaching and learning process. Second, there should be more reading activities. Reading is not just about reading the entire text and answering questions. There are many activities that can be implemented using cognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies come in various types, for example, practicing using sounds, summarizing, skimming and scanning, and so on .

Teachers can implement a wide variety of activities using all subcategories of cognitive strategies. Third, teachers must motivate students to use the strategies and provide explicit training. All of this helps learners achieve success in the language learning process.

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