THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERACTIVE APPROACH TO TEACH READING COMPREHENSION TO FIRST SEMESTER STUDENTS OF STIE NGANJUK

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Abstract

The objective of the study is to investigate whether the students who is taught using interactive approach have better achievement in reading comprehension than the students who is taught by using conventional technique. This research used experimental design. The study is carried out in popuulation of students of STIE Nganjuk. It means the researcher has English for Specific Purposes (ESP) class. The result of the research is to measure the effects interactive approach has on students' reading comprehension because they are as non-English Department learners. From the comparison of absolute gain scores between experimental group and control group, it can be concluded that the students of the experimental group have already been more proficient in dealing with the reading text because they are given interactive reading approach which has appropriate emphasis on the bottom-up and the top-down processing. Besides, while teaching them the researcher also found that the students were more attracted and motivated in learning reading when the researcher used interactive approach.

Key words: interactive approach, reading comprehension

Introduction

Currently, an important subject to be taught and must be studied systematically is English. Listening, speaking, writing, and reading are some of the macro skills that STIE Nganjuk must taught and understand. Macro skills consist of receptive and productive skills. Receptive skills are reading and listening, while productive skills are writing and speaking. Everything is interconnected and can have a big influence on improving English learning, so all these skills need to be done in every English learning class. These four skills have different uses in real life when students are dealing with English, so students must learn each skill so they really understand.

Reading skills are one of the macro skills that are very important and useful for STIE Nganjuk students to obtain information in their daily lives and work. To understand information about various aspects of life, reading skills are needed. Reading skills can help students to understand some English words that they

might find outside of school. For example, understanding instructions for using cell phones, remote control, computers and other devices that exist in real life. There are also advantages that they can have in the form of communicating with students from other countries and being able to communicate with people from other countries who visit Indonesia. In addition, reading skills can also help students understand learning references, such as English text books, magazines, newspapers, and even product labels that they can find in everyday life.

However, learning reading for STIE Nganjuk students is not a simple matter. There are several reasons related to this phenomenon. First, English is not their mother tongue. It may have some differences in terms of grammar, pronunciation, and spelling which makes the reading text looks difficult to read. Second, Indonesia has differences in cultures with other English-speaking countries which affect the way the people write. That is why the students still have hard time in understanding the style of English reading text. Third, not all students of STIE Nganjuk have good motivation in learning reading.

In terms of using the approach, STIE Nganjuk lecturers tend to use an approach that starts with teaching students from the smallest parts of the reading text such as words, phrases and clauses. This approach is good for some levels especially the beginner level but it is a waste of time for intermediate and advanced levels. Therefore, the quality of reading comprehension of STIE Nganjuk students needs to be improved with a better approach. The interactive reading approach, a combination between the top-down and the bottom-up approach, can be said as the solution to face the problems. This approach is an appropriate approach that can be conducted for beginners, intermediate, and advanced learners, for example STIE Nganjuk students. It uses the good side from the top-down approach that can support the needs of learners by attracting their assumptions about the meaning of the text based on their background knowledge and a good side from the bottom-up approach that might suit vocabulary needs of learners by leading them in learning reading through single-direction to analyze text from small part like words. By using the interactive reading approach as the approach in teaching reading in STIE Nganjuk, the researcher thinks students can be more attracted and learn reading better.

The reading skill is a skill which has close relation to the comprehension ability of the students in analyzing text. Students should not only use their vocabulary mastery to analyze the text but also their schemata to comprehend what the text tells about. In teaching reading, there are some important terms like reading strategies, reading techniques, micro-skills in reading, teaching principles in reading, and even teaching techniques in reading. They are useful terms that can be used as consideration to provide and prepare a good teaching and learning reading course. There are some difficulties that the students of STIE Nganjuk meet in facing an English reading text. Sometimes college students feel bored and lazy to continue to read. It is because of the text is too easy to read or too difficult to read. If they do not have a willing to read, they will never understand how to comprehend the text. It results a conclusion that in teaching reading the teacher should provide suitable material and, more importantly, appropriate approach that can be used to teach the students. Moreover, the students will be more motivated with the reading lesson that the teacher conducts.

There are several famous approaches in teaching reading, such as the bottom- up approach, the top-down approach, and the interactive reading approach in teaching reading. The bottom-up approach is the approach that is focused on teaching the students from small part of language, and then it continues with broader knowledge. The top-down approach is the reverse of bottom up. It starts with the broader items in teaching reading then continues to the more specific things. Interactive reading model or the combination between the bottom-up and the top down is the ultimate approach. It uses the good side of the bottom-up and the top down model. It can be applied in teaching reading for vocational high school students in order to provide a better explanation and a better approach that can suit the needs and the level of the students especially in intermediate level. That is why the interactive reading approach is definitely appropriate to be conducted for tenth grade students of STIE Nganjuk. This approach is focused on both, the vocabulary mastery of the students and also their schemata or background knowledge. This approach can be used in teaching reading and suitable to the students' level. By using this approach, STIE Nganjuk

students will find that the reading lesson is interesting and challenging to be learnt.

The success in teaching reading is definitely influenced by the approach selected by the teacher. The interactive reading approach, combination between the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach, is the approach that suits the needs of the students with beginner, intermediate, and advanced level because this approach focuses on the good side both from the top-down and the bottom-up approach. In applying the interactive reading approach, teachers have to conduct both the top-down and the bottom-up processing in a balance way since both the top- down and the bottom-up processing play an important role in the interactive reading approach. Eskey and Grabe (1988) in Morales (2010: 60) argue that both the bottom-up processing and the top-down processing have important implications to the interactive approach to reading. Since second language (L2) readers are susceptible to both language and content problems of a text, there is a need for classroom instruction to include both bottom-up and top-down processes of reading to assist students in the comprehension process. Furthermore, Nuttall (1996: 17) in Rahman (2004: 51) defines the implication of the interactive reading approach in teaching as: the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach, is the approach that suits the needs of the students with beginner, intermediate, and advanced level because this approach focuses on the good side both from the top-down and the bottom-up approach. In applying the interactive reading approach, teachers have to conduct both the top-down and the bottom-up processing in a balance way since both the top- down and the bottom-up processing play an important role in the interactive reading approach. Eskey and Grabe (1988) in Morales (2010: 60) argue that both the bottom-up processing and the top-down processing have important implications to the interactive approach to reading. Since second language (L2) readers are susceptible to both language and content problems of a text, there is a need for classroom instruction to include both bottom-up and top-down processes of reading to assist students in the comprehension process. Furthermore, Nuttall (1996: 17) in Rahman (2004: 51) defines the implication of the interactive reading approach in teaching as: ―A reader continually shifts from one focus to another, now adopting a top down

approach to predict the probable meaning, then moving to the bottom up approach to check whether that is really what the writer says.‖ The interactive approach puts the good side between of the bottom-up and the top-down approaches to reading. Brown (2001:18) states in the bottom-up processing, readers must first recognize a multiplicity of linguistic signals (letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, grammatical cues, and discourse makers) and their linguistic data processing mechanisms to impose some sort of order on these signals. He also states that in the top-down, or conceptually driven, the modern interactive reading models enable second language (SL) readers to be ―less reliant on the top-down processing‖ and enable them to achieve ―greater reliance on bottom-up strategies as they become more proficient‖. It seems that teachers can use a balanced approach to teach reading by incorporating both the top down and the bottom-up processes. They will have flexibility in choosing the reading tasks. Moreover, the interactive reading approach will also care with the importance of reading comprehension which is on its pre-reading stage. Abraham (2002) in Alyousef (2006: 69) states that an interactive approach ―demands that the teachers activate the students' schemata‖ during the pre reading phase by helping ―students recognize the knowledge that they already have about the topic of a text‖. The reading activity can be started through discussion of titles, subheadings, photographs, identifying text structure, previewing, etc. Supporting this, Alyousef (2006: 69) states that while reading in interactive reading approach is to develop the students' ability in tackling texts by developing their linguistic and semantic knowledge. According to Vacca (2006: 38), teachers who hold an interactive view of reading and learning to read fall between the bottom-up and the top-down belief systems on the beliefs continuum. Such teachers recognize that a reader processes both letter–sound cues and meaning cues during reading. Reading as a meaning- making activity is uttermost in their thoughts about reading and learning to read, but they also believe that readers must be able to identify words quickly and accurately if they are going to make sense of what they read. The mix of the top-down and the bottom-up approaches is called the interactive reading approach. The implementation of this approach can be seen in real context when the teacher starts teaching the reading materials using the top-

down style by questioning the students about several terms related to the main topic that will be discussed and ends using the bottom-up style by reviewing the smallest units of language that the students have learnt from the lesson.

The objective of the study is to investigate whether the students who is taught using interactive approach have better achievement in reading comprehension than the students who is taught by using conventional technique.

Research Method

This study was categorized as quasi-experimental study which used pre-test and post-test instruments. The sampling technique which was used in this study was purposive sampling. The researcher chose two classes which have similar characteristics and met certain criteria dealing with the competency in learning and the number of the students. After that, the researcher selected one class which became the experimental group (X 1) and one class which became the control group (X 2). The reason why the researcher used purposive sampling was because it was impossible to do a random sampling a school area.

The study also applied two variables to the groups of students, independent variable and dependent variable. The independent variable was the interactive reading approach which was used by the researcher in teaching reading and the dependent variable was, of course, the students' reading ability.

On the basis of what is discussed in the theoretical review and the conceptual framework, the researcher proposes a study hypothesis as follows. There is a significant difference in the students' reading ability between the students who are taught by using the interactive reading approach and the students who are taught by using the bottom-up approach

The population of the study was the tenth-grade students of STIE Nganjuk which consist of 8 different classes with total 240 students in different semester or level. The experimental group in this study was the whole class of X 1 and the control group was the whole class of X 2. The control group, X 1, consisted of 27 female students and experimental group, X 2, also consisted of 27 female students. The experimental group in this study was the whole class of X 1 and the control group was the whole class of X 2 The control group, X 1, consisted of 27

female students and experimental group, X 2, also consisted of 27 female students. Time of the study was from 15th August until 15th September 2021. Place of the study was in STIE Nganjuk in Management Department. The classes in which the researcher conducted the study were X 1 class and X 1 class.
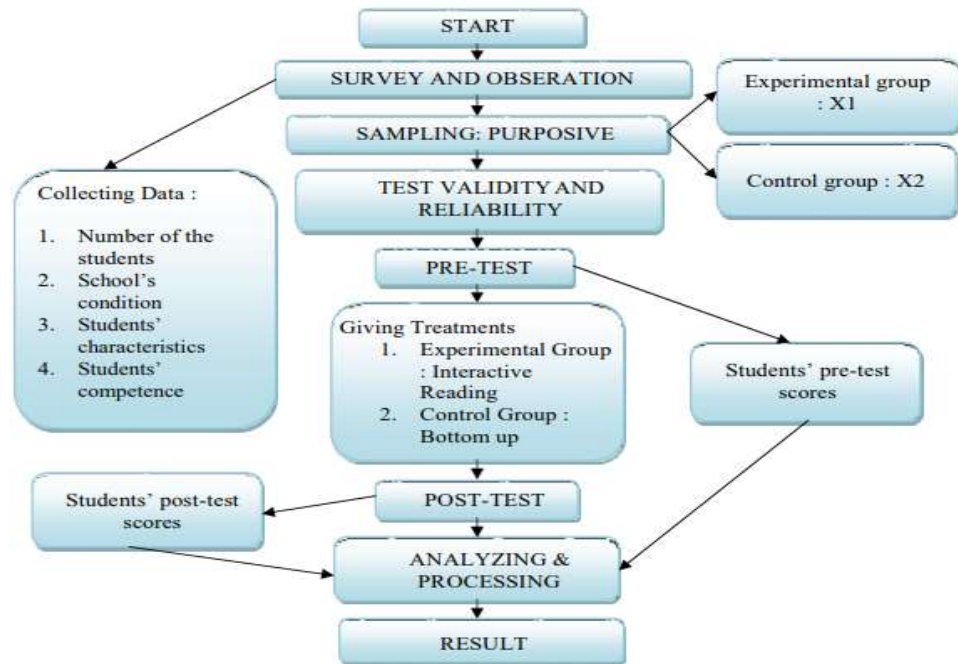

Figure 4: Scheme of the Study

In this study, there were two techniques that were used to analyze the data. They were descriptive and inferential statistics. In the descriptive analysis, there were two formulas used in the computation; mean and standard deviation analysis. In the inferential statistics, this study conducted test of normality, test of homogeneity, and test of hypothesis. Descriptive analysis provided a provable answer to the researcher questions about if there was any significant different between students who were taught by using the interactive reading approach and students who were taught by using the bottom-up approach. Inferential analysis in this study was divided into three tests. They were normality test, homogeneity test, and hypothesis test. a. Normality Test This test was used to see if the data meet the normal distribution or not. The researcher applied the Kolmogorov – Smirnov by using SPSS 17. The distribution of the scores was considered as normal if D value obtained (Do) in the statistics result was lower than D value of the table in significance level of 5% (Dt) b. Homogeneity Test This test was used

to analyze whether the sample variance was homogeneous or not. It was aimed to find out whether the samples belong to the same population or not. F-test was applied in this analysis. The sample was considered as homogeneous if the value of F-obtained (Fo) in the statistics result was fewer than F- table (Ft).

Result and Discussion

Having finished conducting the study in STIE Nganjuk, the researcher, then, analyzed the obtained data by using SPSS 17 with the decided formulas. After that, it was found that there were several evidences which proved theories that supported the hypothesis the researcher formulated. The evidences were in the form of numeric data based on the analyzing process. Firstly, it can be seen from means of pre-test and post-test of both experimental group and control group. They show different results of mean. The pre-test of experimental group is 22.07 and the post-test of experimental group is 24.63. Meanwhile the pre-test of control group is 21.04 and the post-test of control group is 23.22.

Therefore, means of the two groups have shown different result where the experimental group gets more means rather than the control group. The fact that the experimental group has higher mean rather than control group shows that the classroom instruction which includes bottom-up and top down approach is successful to guide the students from experimental group in decreasing problems dealing with their reading comprehension ability. It proves Grabe's statement (1988) in Morales (2010: 60) which says that both the bottom- up processing and the top-down processing have important implications to the interactive approach to reading.

Since second language (L2) readers are susceptible to both language and content problems of a text, there is a need for classroom instruction to include both bottom-up and top down processes of reading to assist students in the comprehension process. Secondly, in terms of categorization and its percentage, it also can be seen that there are some differences between pre-test and post-test of both experimental and control groups. In pre-test, the experimental group data show that the category of ―good‖ reaches 6 points or 22.2%, ―average‖ reaches only 17 points or 63.0%, and ―low‖ reaches only 4 points or 14.8%. Meanwhile,

in the pre-test of control group, the ―good‖ category reaches only 5 points or 18.5%, ―average‖ reaches 20 points or 74.1%, and ―low‖ only reaches 2 points or 7.4%. In post-test, the experimental group data show that the ―good‖ category reaches 9 points or 33.3%, ―average‖ category reaches 15 points or 55.6%, and ―low‖ category reaches only 3 points or 11.1%. Then, the post-test in control group data show that ―good‖ category reaches 6 points or 22.2%, ―average‖ category reaches 17 points or 63.0%, and ―low‖ category reaches only 4 points or 14.8%. From the differences in terms of categorization in pre test scores of two groups, it can be concluded that the experimental group gets more points in ―good‖ category rather than control group.

Generally, the hypothesis test was applied to see if there were any differences between the students who were taught by using the interactive reading approach and the students who were taught by using the bottom-up approach, the regular approach that the teacher of vocational high school tends to use. In the hypothesis test the null hypothesis (H0) and alternative hypothesis (Ha) had to be formed first. The null hypothesis states that ―there is no significant difference in the students' reading ability between the students who are taught by using the interactive reading approach and the students who are taught by using the bottom up approach‖. Meanwhile alternative hypothesis states that ―there is a significant difference in the students' reading ability between the students who are taught by using the interactive reading approach and the students who are taught by using the bottom-up approach‖. In other words, this test also can be used to see which one is rejected or accepted, (H0) or (Ha).

From the comparison of absolute gain scores between experimental group and control group, it can be concluded that the students of the experimental group have already been more proficient in dealing with the reading text because they are given interactive reading approach which has appropriate emphasis on the bottom-up and the top-down processing. This fact proves Morales' statement (2010) which states that the interactive reading approach to reading materials is effective in improving the students reading comprehension ability because of the appropriate emphasis on the bottom-up and the top-down processing.

The hypothesis test which has been done by using SPSS 17 shows that there is a significant difference in the students' reading ability between the students who were taught by using the interactive reading approach and the students who were taught by using the bottom-up approach. It can be seen from (t0) of post-test (2.395) which is definitely higher than t table (2.000). This fact simply rejects the null hypothesis (H0) which says ―there is no significant difference in the students' reading ability between the students who are taught by using the interactive reading approach and the students who are taught by using the bottom-up approach‖ and accepts the alternative hypothesis (Ha) which says ―there is a significant difference in the students' reading ability between the students who are taught by using the interactive reading approach and the students who are taught by using the bottom-up approach.

The improvement of the experimental group's reading comprehension ability, after getting the interactive reading approach as the treatment, proves that the interactive reading approach can show a better result in the end since this approach combines the good side of the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach. In interactive reading approach, the students will first recognize a multiplicity of linguistic signals and then draw their intelligence and experience in understanding the text more efficiently. Brown (2001:18) states in the bottom-up approach, readers must first recognize a multiplicity of linguistic signals (letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, grammatical cues, and discourse makers) and in the top-down approach, or conceptually driven, processing, the readers draw their own intelligence and experience to understand a text. It is also clear that the interactive reading approach can maintain the use of pre-reading phase which is important in reading comprehension. If the pre-reading phase is good then the reading comprehension ability of the students can be improved. From those evidences above, it can be concluded that this success of the interactive reading approach is not only determined by students' linguistics features knowledge but it is also determined by building students' schemata of the reading text that the students are about to deal with. The schemata is useful to prepare the students to figure out the general content of the reading passage so that the students can guess what the reading passage is about before they read the text.

Whereas, the linguistics features such as, vocabularies, phrases, and clauses can enrich the students detail understanding. When the students do not understand some vocabularies, phrases, or clauses, they can look up the meaning from the dictionary.

Conclusion and Recommendation

After conducting the study from the beginning until the end and analyzing the data that the researcher had found, the researcher formulated some conclusions. They are: First, conducting a study required patience and will to finish it. The researcher realized that conducting a study was not easy. There were many new things that had to be learnt and many problems that had to be solved. Without a strong will to deal with them, the researcher would never be able to finish the study. Second, reading books, articles, and more references were very useful and helpful in guiding the researcher to build ideas related to the study. Researcher realized that, as an amateur researcher, reading a lot of references was an important thing to do. Without references, conducting a study was like walking in the dark without a torch. It was true that conducting a study could not be done well if there were no references to hold on. Third, implementing treatment to the students had to be conducted in systematic and objective ways. The researcher realized that everything had to be prepared well in order to succeed and maximize the process of teaching and giving treatment. Moreover, the researcher also had to be a positivist in giving equal teaching to both the experimental and control groups, only the approaches were different. Fourth, interactive reading approach worked better in improving the students' reading comprehension ability rather than bottom-up approach.

After conducting experimental research dealing with the interactive approach and bottom-up approach in reading, the researcher found out results which showed that the students who got interactive approach had a better achievement in reading test that the researcher conducted in the end of the study. Besides, while teaching them the researcher also found that the students were

more attracted and motivated in learning reading when the researcher used interactive approach.

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