

THE APPLICATION OF COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIC READING (CSR) IN IMPROVING READING EXPOSITORY TEXTS

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Abstract

Reading is one of the language skills taught in teaching English at Senior High School. According to KTSP Curriculum (2006), the materials given were based on text types known as "genre". Based on direct observation, it was found that many students had serious problems in comprehending each text-type, especially expository texts. This classroom action research aimed to improve Reading Comprehension ability using expository texts through the use of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR). The subjects of this research were one class of 36 second year students of SMAN 2 Bangkinang - Kampar Regency, Riau Province. The research was conducted in two cycles where each had 4 meetings with one and a half months for each cycle. The data of this research were the students' reading comprehension ability. Before the Collaborative Strategic Reading was applied, a pre-test was conducted while a post-test was administered after the treatment. The data were analyzed by comparing the result of pre-test and the result of post test and the minimum criteria of successful action (KKM). The result indicates that the post-test (71,05) was higher than the pre-test (48,33) and the minimum criteria of successful action (60). Then, to know the significance level, the t-table was used. It was found that the t-observed (3.13) was greater than the t-table, namely 2.00 at the level of significance 0,05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the application of CSR is effective in improving the students' reading comprehension ability.

Key words : *Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), reading comprehension, expository texts.*

BACKGROUND

According to Curriculum 2006 (KTSP) for SLTA level, Reading is one of the language skills taught in English subject. The general purpose is to enable the students to comprehend various kinds of text types (genres) written in English.

Dealing with this, reading materials given for SLTA level include the text types, such as : Procedure, Recount, Spoof, Report, Narrative, News Item, Descriptive, Anecdote, Exposition, Explanation, Discussion, and Review.

In the teaching and learning process in the classroom, teachers and students usually discuss about: *the social function, the text organization and the language features* of each text type to help students have a better understanding of the texts.

Expository/ Exposition texts, especially, is one of the text types that should be mastered by

students. The social function is to persuade readers or listeners that something is the ease/ should/ should not be the ease. The text organization consists of: Thesis – Arguments (1, 2, 3....) and Reiteration/Recommendation. The language features among others are: general nouns, abstract nouns, topic sentence, theme, thinking verbs, modal verbs, and emotive/ evaluative language.

However, the students understanding of the expository texts is quite low or their marks are below the criteria of the successful action (KKM). Based on a close observation and discussion done with the teacher, it is found that most students still faced difficulties in comprehending expository texts. This may be caused by various factors, such as: students' lack of motivation, vocabulary, of school facilities, media, and strategy used by the teacher.

In relation to the strategy in teaching reading, there are so many alternative strategies of which the teacher can apply, among others are: SQ3R, Porpe, Scaffolding, DR-TA, and Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR).

CSR which is used in this research is one of the interactive approaches that function to make the students understand about how to comprehend the text well. It is one kind of Cooperative Learning Groups which is proven to be a successful technique. Thus, based on the phenomena above, this action research aimed to improve students' reading comprehension ability, especially expository texts. Then, CSR has been chosen and considered as the appropriate strategy to deal with.

In accordance with the description above, the topic of this research is formulated as follows: "**Is the Application of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) Using Expository Texts Improve Reading Comprehension of the Second Year Students at SMAN 2 Bangkinang?**"

1. Reading Comprehension

Harris and Edward (1980:8) state that reading is the meaningful interpretation of printed or written verbal symbols. In addition, they also explain that reading (comprehending) is a result of the interaction between the perception of graphic symbols that represent language and the reader's language skills and knowledge of the world. In addition, Burns, Roe, and Ross (1996: 7) argue that comprehension involves much more than decoding symbols into sounds, but the reader must construct meaning while interacting with the printed page. Furthermore, Akson (1976: 71) states that reading is a highly complex skill in involving a familiarity in the reader's part with two fundamental aspects of the language under study, structure and lexicon. The better student's knowledge of structure and the wider his command of the lexicon, the more advanced the texts he or she will be able to comprehend. Goodman (1978:9) explains that reading is not a passive but rather an active process, involving the reader in ongoing interaction with the text. Goodman situates reading within the broader context of communicative, meaning seeking, and information processing.

Carroll (1977) discussed three bases for reading comprehension: They are cognition, language comprehension, and reading skill. The three are interrelated but need to be distinguished from one another. Cognition means knowing, reasoning, inferencing, and the like intelligence; cannot be taught directly, but set limits to the individual's ability to develop language comprehension and reading comprehension.

Brooks *et al* (1977:152) describe that comprehension is not a separate, isolated skill but involves the relationship of the students' knowledge and organizations of that knowledge as it relates to the material read. Piaget (1982:47) point out that comprehension is a process involving assimilation of incoming information onto the students' existing knowledge. According to Hood (1977:47) there are some individual differences, such as cognitive style, persistence, and curiosity as factors which affect the development of comprehension. In addition, Melinda Rice in (<http://www.fcrr.org/FCRReports>) states that comprehension is probably better regarded as a process rather than a particular outcome or product through which a reader interacts with a text to construct meaning.

According to the National Reading Panel (2000) the effectiveness of reading comprehension strategies has been documented in several studies. These prominent strategies include: *(a) activating prior knowledge, (b) monitoring comprehension (e.g., self-questioning), (c) finding main ideas and supporting details, (d) summarizing, (e) using text structure, (f) drawing inferences, and (g) using mental imagery*. The strategies that have demonstrated effectiveness in enhancing reading comprehension can be categorized into the time periods during which they were used: *(a) before reading, (b) during reading (e.g., monitoring reading), and (c) after reading (e.g., summarization)*.

Harmer (1998:68) points out that reading comprehension provide opportunities to study language: vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the way we construct sentences, paragraphs, and texts.

In short, comprehension is developed both in terms of stages of language growth and in terms of intellectual demands. Based on the some explanation above, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is a reading-thinking activity and such relies for its success upon the level of intelligence of the reader, his or her speed thinking, and ability to detect relationships.

2. Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR)

Klingner and Vaughn (1998) says that Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) is a method of teaching reading comprehension strategies which is originally designed for teacher-led small groups of

students in special education whose first language is not English. This was then adapted to cooperative learning and peer-led small group instruction in general education classes that include students with special needs. Furthermore, Klinger & Vaughn, et. al. (2001) described that CSR was designed to facilitate reading comprehension for students with reading, learning, and behaviour problems included in general education classrooms. In addition, they said that CSR is great for students with learning disabilities because in this strategy, students are easier to contribute to their groups and feel successful, and they get the help that they need in their reading.

In accordance to learning disabilities, Harris and Elbert (1980) states that specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological process involved in understanding or in using language both in spoken and written which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, speak, read, write, and spell or to do mathematical calculations.

Klingner and Vaughn (1998) suggest that CSR was designed to be used with expository texts as well as with narrative texts. It is highly compatible with a range of reading programs, including literature-based instructions, basal reading programs, and eclectic or balanced approaches. They state that the goals of CSR are to improve reading comprehension and increase conceptual learning in ways that maximize students' involvements. Besides, CSR procedures are also designed to help all students to be successful in heterogeneous or mixed learning level classrooms.

Klingner and Vaughn (1996) state that CSR is a reading comprehension practice that combines Modified Reciprocal Teaching and Student Pairing. In Reciprocal Teaching, teachers and students take turns leading a dialogue concerning key features of the text through summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting. Besides that, reciprocal teaching was developed with the intention of aiding students having difficulty with reading comprehension.

In relation to cooperative learning, Johnson & Johnson (1986) said that cooperative teams achieve at higher levels of taught and retains information longer than students who work quietly as individuals. According to Burns et.al. (1996), cooperative learning helps students to activate their prior knowledge and learn from the prior knowledge of their classmates, keeps them actively engaged in learning and enhances attention. Klingner et.al (2001) review the research that validates the effectiveness of comprehension strategy instruction and the use of cooperative learning approaches. They found that cooperative learning to teach comprehension has improved the learning opportunities for students with learning disabilities, and ESL (English as a Second Language) students. They also found that peer interaction increases opportunities for meaningful communication about academic content. The National Reading Panel (2000) found that readers need to learn to work in group, listen, and understand their peers as they read, and help one another promote effective reading

comprehension. Specifically, cooperative learning procedures save on teacher time and give the students more control over their learning and social interaction with peers.

According to Klingner and Vaughn (1998), CSR utilizes four strategies: 1). **Preview** (students brainstorm about the topic and predict what will be learned; occurs before reading); 2). **Click and Clunk** (students identify parts of a passage that are hard to understand, then using four “fix-up” strategies); 3). **Get the Gist** (students identify the most important information in a passage); 4). **Wrap Up** (students ask and answer questions that demonstrate understanding; review what was learned)

Students are also taught to use the following cooperative group roles: **Leader** (determines next steps for the group; **Clunk Expert** (reminds group of steps); **Gist Expert** (guides the group through getting the gist); **Announcer** (asks group members to carry out activities); **Encourager** (gives encouragement to group members) (Klingner and Vaughn, 1998).

In accordance to the teacher’s role in CSR, the teacher’s initial role is to teach each of the strategies and students role to the entire class prior to reading. This activity may take place over several days and includes identifying in advance the vocabulary words from the reading materials which students will probably not be able to figure out through the group process. Once the students are ready to implement the CSR process, the teacher introduces the materials to be read to the entire class. Then, taking on the role of facilitator, the teacher monitors small group process. After each day’s reading assignment is completed, the teacher leads a wrap-up involving the entire class (Klingner and Vaughn, 1998).

Before practicing CSR, Klinger & Vaughn, et. al. (2001) suggest teachers to prepare materials, such as the following: 1. Reading Materials, Clunk Cards, Cue Cards, Learning Logs, Timer, and Score Card.

3. Expository Text

Wiratno (2003) explains that exposition texts express thoughts or ideas from one point of view.. The texts function to assure others that what was said was really based on the conveyed reasons or arguments. The acceptance or the rejection of the ideas was depended upon on the argumentations given. Furthermore, he states that exposition texts can be found in magazines or newspapers, such as in Editorial under the topics of Your Letters, Letters to the Editor. And academically, exposition text is used in writing essays or papers.

Linguistically, exposition text has some characteristics or language features as follows: 1). Contains self-ideas, so the writer usually uses pronoun “I” and “We” ; 2). Use material, relational, and mental verbs, such as, I believe that....., I think....; 3). Use one side argumentation; 4). Use

conjunctions to arrange the arguments, such as : first, second, third, conjunctions to retain the arguments, such as: in fact, even, also, moreover, and conjunctions to state cause and effect, such as: since, before ; 5). Use modalities to build opinions on giving suggestions, such as: should (Wiratno, 2003: 61-62).

Moreover, Wiratno (2003: 63-64) describes the text organization of exposition texts as the followings: Thesis – Argumentation – Reiteration. Thesis is the ideas to be approved, argumentation is the reason to use as the approval, and reiteration is to claim against the reason.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. The Setting of the Research

This action research has been carried out for the second year students at SMAN 2 Bangkinang-Kampar Regency. It is a collaborative study with one of the English teachers taught in the second year. The sample of this study consists of 36 students. They were in semester two in 2007/2008 academic year.

2. Data Collection Technique

The data for this study consists of both quantitative and qualitative. The data were collected using two kinds of instruments, namely:

1. Observation sheet: to get data about students participation during the teaching and learning process.
2. Test : to get data of Pre-test and Post-test on Reading Comprehension

Research Plan

This action research has been designed in two cycles, where each had 4 meetings with one and a half months for each cycle. Thus, this study needs time for about 3 months. The research plan of this study consists of 4 phases of activities, namely: 1). Planning 2). Implementation. 3).Evaluation 4). Analysis and Reflection. Pre-test was done before the treatment and Post- Test was done after the treatment.

1. Planning

In this phase, teacher prepares:

1. Lesson Plan
2. Teaching Materials

3. Teaching Scenario in applying CSR
4. Writing test (Pre-test and Post-test)
5. Observation sheet
6. Evaluation scoring system for the test

2. Implementation

Based on the topic of this research, CSR was used in improving students' reading comprehension ability, so the scenario in this treatment was arranged as follows:

1. Explain about CSR aim in improving Reading Comprehension ability
2. Decide reading materials
3. Explain about CSR procedures, students' roles, and tasks in group
4. Assign students to groups, arrange the place and set the time for discussion.
5. Assign roles to students, such as: Leader, Clunk Expert, Gist Expert and Announcer.
6. Introduce reading materials to students to discuss in group
7. Give CSR Leader's Cue Card and CSR Learning Logs to students.
8. Ask students to have group presentation.
9. Teacher and students discussed about the text and the exercises.

3. Observation and Evaluation

Class observation was done by the teacher as a partner in doing this research. Observation was done during the treatment. Variables observed, include:

1. Students' activities during the treatment, such as: group participation in asking/answering questions, giving opinions/suggestions, understandings of the roles.
2. The result of the test (Pre-test and Post-test)

The Criteria of Successful Action

The criteria of successful action were considered from the result of observation and the result of tests. From observation, it was considered success when 70 % or more students were active, and from the result of test, it was considered success when 60% or more students got the minimum criteria of successful action (KKM) namely 60.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Result of Pre-Test

Pre-test has been conducted to get data about students' Reading Comprehension ability before

doing the treatment. This activity was done one week before the treatment. The result of the Pre-test was 48,33 (student's average score)

2. The Result of the Research in Cycle 1

a. The Result of Observation

As stated earlier, observation was done by the teacher as a partner in this research during the treatment. The result of the observation can be seen from the table below:

Table 1. Distribution of students' activities in Cycle I

No.	Indicator	Percentage	Category
1.	Students' participation in group	40.5	Not active
2.	Students' interaction in group	45.2	Not active
3.	Motivation in discussion, solving the problems, and doing exercises	50.1	Not active
4.	Doing the roles of CSR	40. 8	Not active

From the table above, it can be concluded that students were still not active in the teaching and learning process in all indicators during the treatment (the percentage is still below the minimum criteria of successful action, 70%).

b. The Result of Post- test

Post-test has been done at the end of Cycle I or after doing the treatment for 4 meetings. The average score the students got was 55.2. It means that the students' reading comprehension ability in Cycle I was 55.2%.

ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION IN CYCLE I

From the result of observation about the students' activities during the treatment, it was found that students' participation in group was 40.5 %, students' interaction in group was 45.2 %, motivation in discussion, solving the problems, and doing exercises was 50.1 %, and doing the roles of CSR was 40,8 %. In short, most students were categorized as not active, since the average score was 44.15 %. It seemed that the students were not fully understood about their roles in group discussion. Besides, the time allocated is not enough for discussion and do all the exercises. Also, most students were ashamed

to ask /answering questions, ask/giving opinions in discussion. Then, from the result of post-test, it was found that the average score was 55,2.

Based on the analysis above, it can be said that the result of the research in Cycle I was not success yet since:

1. The average score of observation found, 44.15% was still below the successful criteria, 70%
2. The average score of post-test, 55.2 was still below the minimum criteria of successful action 60.

Thus, a question proposed as a reflection in this research was: Why students ability in Reading Comprehension was still low after applying CSR ?

As the result of this reflection, so the research should be continued to Cycle II. The activities for Cycle II were arranged as follows:

1. Continue the previous activities in Cycle I
2. Give a clearer explanation and description about their roles
3. Guide and motivate students to participate actively in group discussion.
4. Give students more time to discuss and do exercises.

3. The Result of the Research in Cycle II

a. The Result of Observation

Observation in Cycle II was done during meeting 5, 6, 7, and 8. The variables/indicators observed were the same as the variables/indicators observed in Cycle I. The result of the observation can be seen from the table below:

Table 2. Distribution of students' activities in Cycle II

No.	Indicator	Percentage	Category
1.	Students' participation in group	76.3	Active
2.	Students' interaction in group	80.3	Very active
3.	Motivation in discussion, solving the problems, and doing exercises	75.7	Active
4.	Doing the roles of CSR	81.5	Very active

From the table above, it can be concluded that students' participation was 76.3 %, students' interaction in group was 80,3 %, motivation in discussion, solving the problems, and doing exercises was 75.7 %, and doing the roles of CSR was 81,5 %.

b. The Result of Post- test

Post-test has been done at the end of Cycle II or after doing the treatment for 4 meetings. The average score the students got was 71.05. It means that the students ' reading comprehension ability in

Cycle I was 71.05 %. Then, in order to know the level of significance of the result of post-test, t-test was applied. It was found that t-observed (3,13) was bigger than t-table (2.00) in the level of significance 5 %.

ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION IN CYCLE II

From the result of observation about the students' activities during the treatment in Cycle II, it was found that students' participation in group (76.3) was bigger than 40.5 % in Cycle I (was categorize as active), students' interaction in group (80.3) was bigger than 45.2 % in Cycle I, (was categorized as very active), motivation in discussion, solving the problems, and doing exercises(75,7) was bigger than 50.1 % in Cycle I (was categorized as active), and doing the roles of CSR (81.5) was bigger than 40,8 % in Cycle I (was categorized as very active). In short, most students were categorized as quite active, since the average score was 78.45 %. It seemed that the students were fully understand about their roles in group discussion. Then, the time allocated was enough for discussion and do all the exercises. Most students were not ashamed to ask /answering questions, ask/giving opinions in discussion. Then, from the result of post-test, it was found that the average score was 71.05.

Based on the analysis above, it can be said that the result of the research in Cycle II was successful. It can be seen from:

1. The average score of observation found, 78.45 % was bigger than the successful criteria, 70 %
2. The average score of post-test, 71.05 was bigger than the minimum criteria of successful action 60 and the average score of Pre-test, 48,33.
3. The result of the t-test was that t-observed (3,13) was bigger than t-table (2.00) in the level of significance 5 %.

4. Discussion

The result of this action research using Pre-Cycle and Cycles I, and II, in fact, could answer the research question. In brief, students' reading comprehension ability was significantly improved after applying CSR in the teaching and learning process. This can be seen from the result of observation, post-test, and t-test in Cycle II which has fulfilled the criteria established. Therefore, CSR can be applied as an alternative strategy in improving students' reading comprehension ability.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

After doing the action research about the application of Collaborative Strategic Reading in improving students' reading comprehension ability of the second year at SMAN 2 Bangkinang-Kampar Regency-Riau, some conclusions can be stated as the followings:

1. The students' average score in Pre-test was 48,33.
2. The application of CSR in Cycle I was not success because the average score of observation found, 44.15 % was still below the successful criteria, 70 %. And, the average score of post-test, 55.2 was still below the minimum criteria of successful action 60. Thus, the research was continued to Cycle II
3. The application of CSR in Cycle II was success. As the result, the average score of observation found, 78.45 % was bigger than the successful criteria, 70 %, and the average score of post-test found, 71.05 was bigger than the minimum criteria of successful action 60 and the average score of Pre-test, 48,33. Furthermore, from the result of t-test it was found that t-observed (3,13) was bigger than t-table (2.00) in the level of significance 5 %.
4. The students' reading comprehension ability was significantly improved after applying CSR. In other words, CSR gives a positive contribution in improving students' reading comprehension ability.

Suggestions

Based on the result of this research in which the application of CSR could improved students' reading comprehension ability, so it is suggested that the teacher can use CSR as an alternative strategy in teaching reading comprehension to improve students' ability. Since the CSR strategy is suitable to use in teaching narrative and expository texts, so, for the next research, it is suggested to do more research in applying CSR in reading narrative texts as well as expository texts.

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