

THE NEEDS OF EFFECTIVE METHOD IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION TO FACE ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

(An Action Research at Junior High School of YASOIDA Boarding School at Lambateung, Tgk Chiek Baitussalam Street, Aceh Besar)

Ferlya Elyza¹, Putri Dini Meutia², Miswar M.Nur³

ferlyail@yahoo.com, putri.dinimutia@gmail.com, miswaruiec123@gmail.com.

ABSTRACT

The role of English is highly important today. A number of development happens in every country. It starts on the agreement of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) that had been signed by ASEAN countries. Thus, it will impact on the needs of skill and ability in preparing learners to face ASEAN Economic Community. The current trends on English Language Teaching are developed in goals of creating the latest findings in the field of study. Thus, this research aims to investigate the needs of an effective method in improving students' reading comprehension to face ASEAN Economic Community. This research was conducted in the first grade students at YASOIDA Boarding School. It was also to know whether the CIRC technique improved students' reading comprehension. This study used the class room action research. The sample of this research consisted of one class, the class consisted of 9 students. In the first meeting, the researcher explained about CIRC technique, in the second meeting the researcher is applied the CIRC technique and give post-test, in the third meeting the researcher gave new material with the picture, and in the last meeting the researcher gave post-test. Based on the research that has been done, the researcher draws some conclusions and suggestions. First, cooperative learning can make learning active in teaching reading comprehension because the students take a large part in learning activity; while the teacher is just as a facilitator and motivator for the students. Second, CIRC is a technique of cooperative learning which the students work in small groups. Besides, there are some suggestions that the researcher can draw from the research. First, the English teachers should use cooperative learning method in teaching reading in order to create an active learning process. Second, the teacher should use the CIRC technique in teaching English, especially in teaching reading because it can help students accountable to their learning. So, based on the data findings of this study, in the first cycle score 65 and the second cycle score 81. This is showed that the CIRC technique can improve the students' reading comprehension.

Keywords: cooperative learning, CIRC technique and reading comprehension

1. INTRODUCTION

English is the most important language in the world, because English language is an international language. Thus, in preparing human resource to face ASEAN community, it is important to familiarize the early year students to English. It is also an emerge effort to

have them comprehend English either oral or written form. As English takes a dominant part in all aspects, especially at early year educational level, English is taught from elementary school until university level. It is hoped that all students can put English as their second language after their mother tongue. They are able to read and write English fluently and master four skills of that language. But in reality, it was found many students especially early year students cannot read and write English. It happened because their basic English is not good. Therefore, as English teachers, it is needed to hard work to enable them to have good English from the basic level.

The writer realizes that there are many factors to be less successful in English learning activities in reading and writing. Several ways had been found to improve teaching and learning activities, one of them is to change the method and strategy in English learning by teacher. Therefore, the writer applied CIRC strategy. CIRC stands for Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition. In this technique students are distributed in small heterogeneous groups, each group has consisted of four or five students, and the group is not divided into gender, ethnicity or intelligence of students level. In other hand, each group had divided in a heterogeneous group. So, each student is suitable for each other students. In cooperative learning, students are expected to increase their ability to think critically and creatively. So, the teacher should be more creative in using the best method according to situation and learning environment.

Based on descriptive above the researcher is interested to conduct a research by the title “improving students in reading comprehension by using cooperative integrated reading and composition”. This research is conducted at junior high school of YASOIDA boarding school at Lambateng, Tgk Chiek Baitussalam Street, Aceh Besar.

Based on the background of study, the writer formulated the problems of study as the following.

- a. Can the use of CIRC improve the first grade students’ ability in reading comprehension ?
- b. What are the problems faced by the students in learning reading comprehension?

The objectives of this study are:

- a. To know whether the use of CIRC can improve the first grade students’ ability in reading comprehension.
- b. To know the problem faced by the students in learning reading comprehension.

The researcher wants to implement Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition to improving students’ ability in reading comprehension at the first Junior High School of YASOIDA Boarding School at Lambateung, Tgk Chiek Baitussalam Street, Aceh Besar. In this study, the writer chose only the first year students. Some of the YASOIDA’s students are from poor family, fatherless child, and orphan.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading is one of the major skill that must be honed and trained since childhood. Spratt said (2011:31) “Reading is one of the four language skills: reading, writing, listening

and speaking. It as a receptive skill, like listening”. Reading is an important skill in teaching learning process, through reading we can know a lot of meaningful information in many things. A few years back, the reader identical read by a book, but in digital era the reader can read a book in anytime, anyplace and anywhere, because the reader can use internet to read some books or articles.

Reading is one of the best way to learn many languages in the world. “Reading is a process that is carried and used by a reader to get a message to be delivered by the writer through the media.”(Hodgson in Tarigan 1979:7).If the reader can read, the reader can control the world, because the reader know what the world want to do, as described in the Al-Quran, Surah Al-Alaq, verses 1-5.

If the student wants to master reading skill, the student has to learn the pronunciation, vocabulary, and comprehension before they can begin to read.

Therefore, coperative learning is often applied in encoraging students to learn in a learning community. According to Kagan (1994) “Cooperative Learning is a teaching arrangement that refers to small, heterogeneous groups of student working together achieve a common goal”. During the 1960s, some scientists have started to develop and evaluate cooperative learning methods in the context of teaching. In an historic overview (Johnson & Johnson, 1999) said “nine methods of cooperative learning are listed. Johnson and Johnson developed Learning Together and Alone and Constructive Controversy, DeVries & Edwards created Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), Sharan & Sharan developed Group Investigation, Aronson developed the Jigsaw Procedure, Slavin created Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD), Team Accelerated Instruction (TAI) and Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC), and Kagan developed Cooperative Learning Structures”.

This technique was first time discovered by Robert J. Stevents, Nancy A. Madden, Robert E. Slavin, and Anna Marie Farnish in their book reading research quarterly. In this technique, students should be more active to improve their knowledge in reading and writing. So that, students' skills in reading and writing will increase step by step. Suyitno (2006:6) said some mentions of advantages the technique CIRC are:

1. CIRC is very appropriate to boost students' skills in solving problems.
2. Reduced dominance of teacher in learning.
3. Helped students who are weak in reading.

It can be concluded that the CIRC is very appropriate technique for improving students' skills in reading. In the other hands Miller (1967:1) added that “Reading is fundamental communication skill”. As described in the Al-Quran, Surah Al-Alaq, verses 1-5 and why Allah asked to our prophet Muhammad S.W.A to read, because reading is a key of knowledge.

The principle of CIRC is the students are asked to be more active than their teacher. So that, their ability in developing English skills are better. In addition, the students do not only improve their ability in reading and writing, but they can evolve the other talents. One of them is, they are able how the way to become a good leader in a group.

Every body can be a good leader in himself and environment. In this study, CIRC is very helpful for creating a good leader. CIRC shapes learning model groups. So, one group consists of four or five students that are selected randomly and has a leader in it. Success or no success in a group depends on the leader. So, a leader becomes the most important part of the success in a group.

Moreover, they can present materials in front of their friends. Before asking to perform the student in front of class, the teacher chooses one student in each group with randomly. So that, all of students must prepare their presentation. They do not know who will be present the material of reading. In this case, the teacher gives assessment to a group depends on their presentation. If they are well presented, the teacher will give a good assessment to all of that group.

CIRC principle is consistent with the four pillars of education that has been outlined by UNESCO in learning activities. The four pillars are “Learning to know, learning to do, learn to be ourself and learning to live together” Depdiknas (2002).

In this case, the involvement of students in active learning is actively helping students to improve their reading skills. So that, the students do not only receive materials from teacher, but students try to explore and develop in their group. This is reinforced by Eggen and Kauchack (1998:1) “Effective learning occurs when students are actively involved in organizing and finding relationships in the information”. In reading there are some forms of reading texts for instance descriptive, narrative, recount and procedure. In this case, the writer wants to give the descriptive text in learning process. Descriptive text is a text that describes a particular people, places and objects. The reseacher wants to explain the signal of a descriptive text.

III. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION

In cycle 1, the implementing of the action was conducted in two meetings. The first meeting, the researcher explained about descriptive text and how to apply the model of cooperative integrated reading and composition, the students read the text and answer question based on the text.

To see whether the action was successful or not, the researcher acted as the teacher while the collaborator observed the teaching learning process and made the reflection. The reflection was focused on the analysis in order to know whether the criteria of success was achieved or not.

The analysis of the teaching learning process was done by referring to the information obtained the observation checklist to students and teacher. The information was about the student’s and teacher’s activities in the class and also about the strategy applied. The strength and the weaknesses of the strategy were analyzed in this phase. Some findings that needed to be improved in the strategy either from the teacher or from the students side were recorded.

Based on the result of the observation, to the researcher in teaching reading activities showed that the researcher entered to the class and greeted the students as usually. The researcher began the lesson and gave clear instructions about descriptive text especially describe about people. The researcher found several obstacles in the learning process, one of them, when the researcher explained the purpose of this study by using the English language,

some students become confused. So, the researcher must explain by using simple word to make students easily understood.

On the first activities in the first meeting, the students seemed to be worried about responding the teacher's questions. They still worries to answer the questions. This was due to the fact that not only because of the students had lack of vocabulary, but they were confused in comprehending the text

Basically, teaching reading comprehension by using descriptive had been applied by the teacher. Some good points should be maintained, such as: giving freedom for the students to read the text and understanding the meaning of text. Descriptive text helped the students to get more vocabulary.

Some improvements were shown during the teaching and learning process. At first meeting, they had the difficulties in reading and answering the questions but in the second meeting, most of students were better than before. Based on the observation, it also indicated that the students had started with read the reading text, and started to comprehend the meaning word in learning reading. This indicated that the strategy applied worked well to improve student's ability in reading comprehension.

This told about the student's learning result. One aspect of the criteria of success of this study was that the student's result of reading comprehension by using descriptive text could achieve. In reference to the criteria, the student's reading score analyzed using the determination that mentioned previously in chapter three. Furthermore, in doing post-test researcher prepared the reading test and answered the questions by using descriptive text. The average score of post-test was 65, it showed that the implementation of CIRC strategy improved the student's ability in reading comprehension.

Based on the result of analysis, the researcher and collaborator concluded that in the first test (post-test) the students did not meet criteria of success yet (see appendixes). This was shown that students got difficulties in reading comprehension and answered the questions.

Considering the problems mentioned above and made more effectively, the researcher continue to the second cycle. The researcher and collaborator made decision to continue the implementation of this study in the second cycle. The lesson plan and preparation of the study in the second cycle were revised based on the result in the first cycle.

The cycle 2 was carried out for two days, on May 26th and 28th, 2014. It was conducted in two meetings. The planning, the implementation, the analysis and the reflection of this cycle presented in this cycle. All the activities were designed using descriptive text in teaching reading comprehension that had been improved based on the findings of the first cycle. These all were aimed at solving the student's problem in mastering reading comprehension.

Based on the result of analysis of both teaching and learning process and the students' result during the cycle 1, the researcher and collaborator agreed to make some revisions and improvements that were not only covered the strategy, but also the way of the researcher dealt with students. The researcher and collaborator made the criteria of success. Because of this research was collaborative action research, the criteria of success could be determined by researcher and collaborator. Based on the result of the first cycle, the researcher and collaborator determined that the criteria of success were 75 (standard score).

To initiate the activities, the researcher and collaborator greeted the students and checked the attendance list as usual. After that, the researcher explained the objective of the lesson. The researcher opened the lesson by asking the students whether they still remembered about the descriptive text. It was done to refresh the students' mind on the activities.

Next, the researcher gave the material and some of the students still confused because they did not understand the meaning of words and the researcher asked to students to read it and answer the question, after finished all, the researcher asked to students to check the other group. Then, the researcher asked to students to presentation that material, each group has only two students presented the material, before ending the class, the researcher gave advice to all of students. The researcher asked to student to be better than today.

The second meeting was conducted on Wednesday 28th, May 2014. It was focused on answering the question based on the text. It was done by students and the researcher as the facilitator and monitor. In this meeting, the researcher only gave motivation about studying English, new material and gave post-test by using descriptive text.

The reflection was focused on the analysis in order to see whether the criteria of success were achieved or not. The observation checklist showed that the students were more obedient in doing the researcher instruction. They showed their enthusiasm in answering the researcher's question. It seemed when the researcher asked them in answering the question on the paper. They were happy and looked easy to answer the questions without opening the dictionary. This condition can be concluded that they focused on mastering reading comprehension.

Based on the result of the observation checklist, the teaching and learning process became better and gave a good impact to improve the learning result of the students.

In term of the students' participation in learning process, it was shown that the activities applied in cycle 2 were kept well in the students' ability in reading comprehension. Different with the first cycle, the researcher only encouraged the students to answer the questions. In the second cycle the researcher not only encouraged the students to answer questions, but also gave more attention to make the students easy to comprehend. In the second cycle the students have the progress in reading comprehension. They were active in responded questions. The result of the teacher's observation sheet in the first cycle was 82% and the second cycle was 94%.

Analysis of the students' reading comprehension ability was done based on the result of students' performance in practicing descriptive text. They felt easier and added their knowledge about reading and they got many vocabulary. They had more understanding in reading comprehension.

The result of analysis showed that all of subject was able to develop their ability in mastering reading comprehension by using descriptive text. The final result showed that the students were success. It can be seen from the score of criteria of success. The students can improve their reading comprehension by using descriptive text; their final score of post-test was 81. The result of the student's observation sheet in the first cycle was 80% and the second cycle was 89%.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data findings of this study. First, the students' ability in mastering reading comprehension at the first cycle had improved. From, the average score 65, it showed that the result of students met the criteria of success. In addition the second cycle showed the improvement of students' score from 65 to 81. It can be concluded the score met criteria of success.

Second, the students' problem during learning English reading comprehension can be simplified as follow: vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension and lack of strategy in learning reading. So, these problems made student is easy in learning reading comprehension.

Based on the result of the research, the result showed that the implementation of the descriptive text can improve the students' ability in mastering reading comprehension. This way becomes as the strategy in reading comprehension especially for junior high school. It seemed that the improving student ability in reading comprehension by using descriptive text is one of suitable approach in creating students enjoyable and interesting in learning reading. Thus, it can be a benefit for students in expanding their ability in facing ASEAN Economic Society.

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