

The Implementation of Pre-Reading Activities to Improve Senior High Schools Students' Reading Comprehension

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of pre-reading activities in class X-3 SMA Negeri 2 Ambon to improve students' reading comprehension. This research is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) which was conducted in several stages, such as; (1) planning the action (2) implementing the action, (3) Evaluation, and (4) Reflection. The subjects in this study were 36 students in class X-3 of SMA Negeri 2 Ambon. Instruments used in the form of observation, Study report, and questionnaire. The analysis used is qualitative analysis and quantitative analysis. The indicator of success in this research is when students are able to reach the indicator of success where 70 % of students get the score between 70-100. The results of this study indicate that Pre-reading activities help students to improve their reading comprehension towards a text and students give positive response toward the implementation of pre-reading activities.

Keywords: *Pre-reading activities, reading comprehension*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, being able to read is crucial. By reading, we gain a lot of information, knowledge, enjoyment, and even problem-solving skills. Any sort of text reading will benefit us in our daily lives. Briefly, reading might be crucial for students to advance their academic knowledge. In relation to the statement above, Bammann as cited in Maretnowati (2014) stated that "basic to good comprehension is an understanding of the manner in which words are fused into meaningful phrases, phrases into sentences, and sentences into paragraphs". In addition, Grellet (1981) stated that "Reading is an active skill." Moreover, applying pre- reading activity will increase students' attention in reading. Ur (1996) also states that "Reading is comprehension. Reading is not appearing if you read the words but do not understand what they imply". In short reading is the process of giving written and visual information meaning. The students must work with the materials actively. Briefly, teacher is expected to hold an attractive activity to involve students to be active in the classroom.

A pre-reading activity might help students comprehend English content. By engaging in pre-reading activities that include thinking of similar topics, individuals engage their background knowledge, which may help them better understand the text. According to Hudson's (2007) statement, "Prior knowledge may have some effects on students' understanding because a reader who already has an elaborate schema can more easily fit incoming textual information into those schemata." The way that students understand the material is implied by this presumption.

However, based preliminary study about student's perspective in learning, they still face some difficulties in answering and understanding the text. In addition, based on the analysis of lesson plan of Narrative text, the activities were focused on how to create a product. In contrast, based on the interview (as part of diagnostic assessment conducted in February 2023) with four students, they prefer to get the explanation from the teacher and play vocabulary games before study about generic structure, language features and social function of the text. Based on the preliminary study conducted, the specific problem of the study was the lack of students comprehends towards the text due to the lack of pre-reading activities in the classroom. The study aims to answer how pre-reading activities improve students comprehend towards the text and their responds toward pre-reading activities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Comprehension

Reading and comprehension are two things that cannot be separated. Reading means understanding the text and it is the same things as comprehension. Reading comprehension understands a written text which means extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible. It needs deeper comprehension to know what the text means (Grellet, 1981). Moreover, Gillet, Temple and Crawford (2013) mentioned that there are few characteristics in good comprehension such as summon up their prior knowledge about the topic of reading, ask question about the topic before and during the reading, make appropriate inferences when ideas are not explicitly stated, find main ideas, and summarize. Therefore, for students to have good comprehended in reading, pre-reading activities could be one of the teacher's activities which can be used to guide or stimulate student's interest in text. Peaty (1997) also adds that there are some procedures of teaching reading specially in using text in EFL context. Those procedures are dealing with students in EFL Classroom includes before Reading, While Reading, and After Reading.

Pre-reading Activities

The pre-reading stage can be interpreted as the activities before students are given the whole text to read. This activity usually brainstorms or arouses student's prediction about text. In the pre-reading activities, the teacher will encourage the students to activate their background knowledge with the topic they learn. Furthermore, Silberstein (1994) as cited in Salehi and Abbaszadeh (2017) mentioned that pre-reading activities are activities created which occurs before the students read the whole passages or text. Before students read any text, teachers can direct their attention to how a text is organized. It could be a way to help students comprehend the text easily. Pre-reading activities allow students to think about what they already know about a given topic and predict what they will read or hear. Therefore, by understanding what the students want to read, it will help them to comprehend the text better. It will affect on student's reading comprehension test achievement.

There are varieties of pre reading activities (Hedge, 2000 as cited in Ekaningrum and Prabandari, 2015): a) Brainstorming. In this activity, students must utilize words and concepts that have associations with the keyword provided by the teacher throughout the brainstorming exercise; b) Pre-teaching vocabulary. It can assist students improve their reading comprehension. In addition, pre-teaching vocabulary can assist students improve their reading comprehension; c) Pre-questioning. Another pre-reading activity which can be implemented before reading is giving questions related to the text. Moreover, some pre-reading activities are simply questions to which the reader must find answers in the text; d) Visual Aids. The use of visual aids in pre-reading activities can aid students in activating or expanding their prior knowledge; e) Conceptual related readings. Giving students multiple texts on the same topic might also help them activate their background knowledge and create their frame of reference; f) Previews. It gives students a frame of reference to help them understand new content. Teacher can begin with a sequence of short comments and one or more questions that stimulate students' curiosity, provide a link between a familiar topic and the story's topic, and encourage students to actively think on the overall topic; g) KWL Strategy. The abbreviation stands for "What do I Know?", "What do I Want to know?", and, "What have I Learned?" These questions will activate students' prior knowledge while also encouraging them to find the answer in the text.

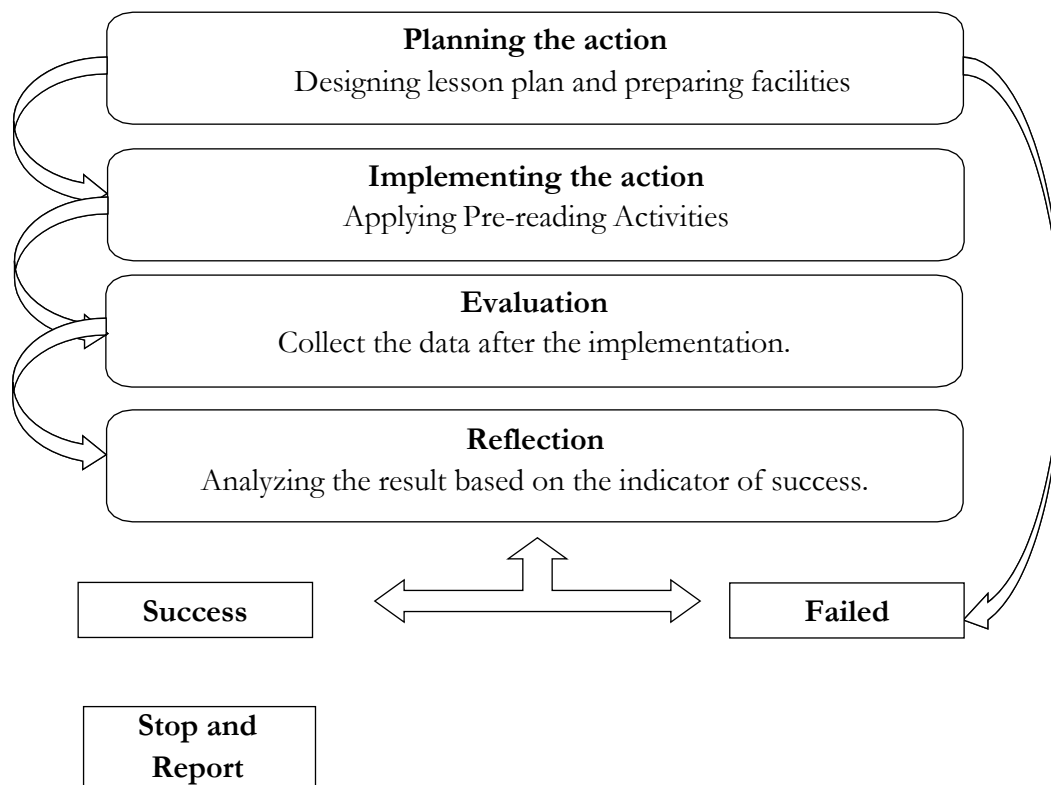
METHOD

Research Design

The study employs CAR (Classroom Action Research) as research design. Kemmis and McTaggart (1998) state that action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry

undertaken by participants in social situations to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of the practices and the situation in which these practices are carried out. The result of research used to evaluate the process. In conducting the action research, the writer structure the procedure for continuous treatment based on the inquiry cycle by Kemmis & McTaggart (1998) as follow:

Figure 1. The Action Inquiry Cycle by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998)



Research Site and Participants

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 2 Ambon. The subjects in this study were 36 students from class X-3. These participants were selected based on a preliminary study conducted in February 2023, which revealed that students in this class faced difficulties in reading comprehension and showed a preference for teacher explanations and vocabulary games before studying text structures.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data was taken from observation, test, and observation. Observation is used to know the teaching process. The observer was another teacher. Then, there was two times of observation for two meetings in the classroom. Besides that, there was an observation towards the worksheet done by the students. Second, Study Report. In this study report, researcher used the score taken

from student worksheet. Researcher compared between the score in narrative text and the core in report text. Furthermore, researcher also used Reflection. It was taken from students' reflection paper. Where there are two points those students should write in relation to the learning process of meeting one. The reflection used a technique called two stars and one wish. Third, Questionnaire is used to get students' response towards the implementation of some pre-reading activities before students began to read the whole text.

Analysing action research data is to continue the process of reducing information to find explanation and patterns (Burns, 2010). In addition, to get a framework for the analysis, the researcher followed the five stages proposed by Burns (2010):

1. Assembling the data. For the first stage, researcher gather the data over the period of the research
2. Coding the data. This stage allowed the researcher to identify which of the data could code qualitatively and which could code quantitatively.
3. Comparing the data. Once the coding was complete, the researcher compared the categories across different sets of data to see whether they say the same thing or not. In short, the aim of this stage is to display and describe data rather than interpret.
4. Building meanings and interpretation. This stage forced the researcher to look for in-depth analyses of the data as well as step-by-step descriptions of what she had discovered.
5. Reporting the outcome. The last stage was about how the researcher organizes the whole story of the research from beginning to end. It was more about how the researcher can present her research and what she has found to tell others.

FINDINGS

The Implementation of Pre-Reading Activities to Improve Students Comprehend towards the Text.

There were two meetings of the implementation from pre-reading activities before students read the whole report text:

a. First meeting/Tuesday, May 9th 2023

On May 9th 2023, the research was implementing the pre-reading activities. There are some activities that implement in the worksheet. The lesson plan consists of three major activities: Pre-activity, whilst- activity, and post-activity. For the first meeting there were three learning objectives: "Learners observe the video and answer questions, Learners determine the antonyms of certain words and Learners are able to match words with their explanations based on the text provided." The pre-reading activities began in pre and whilst activities, as mentioned bellow:

1. Pre-activity

- Played vocabulary game call “Word Association Game”. The game is to give a whole class a word or phrase and students will give a word that comes to mind. The word given by the researcher was Animal.

2. Whilst-activity

- Observed a video and answer questions based on the video. The video is about animal in wildlife. There were three questions that the students have to answer; What are the animals, you see in the video?, Based on the video, what are the unfamiliar animals for you? And which animal are dangerous? Why is it dangerous?
- Write down the antonym of the adjective. The adjectives were the adjectives that students will find it later in the text.
- Match the word with the definition. In this activity, the students matched the words with the definition.

b. Second meeting/Tuesday, May 16th 2023

While for second meeting, researcher implemented the pre-reading activities in whilst activity, as follow:

- Organized the scramble sentences into a correct short report text. the text provided for the student was about Komodo Dragons. The students were asked to work in group.
- Determined the generic structure of the text and analyzed the language features of given report text after students studied the explanation and listened to teacher explanation.
- Answered questioned based on the given report text but the answers should be in complete sentences.

In short the pre-reading activities began with vocabulary then sentences and the last was paragraph.

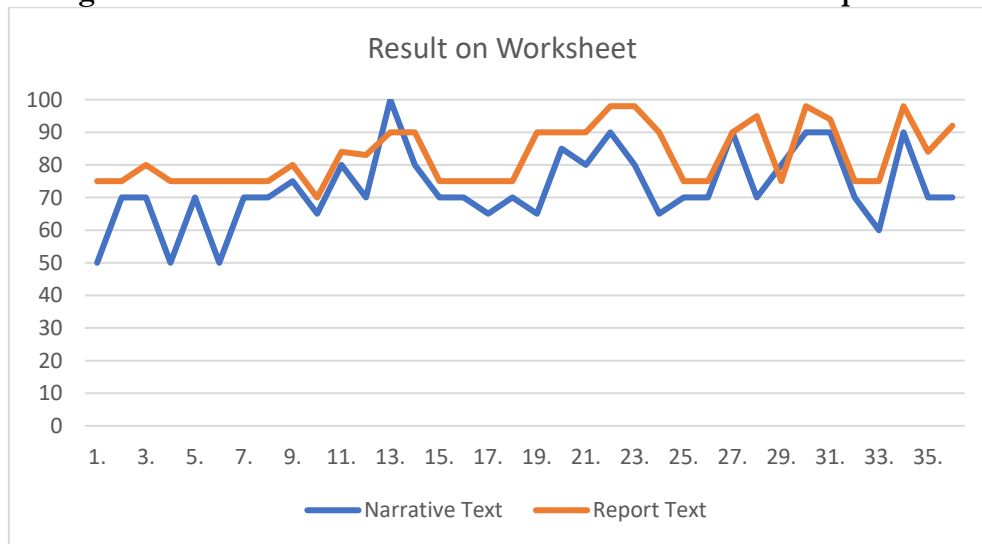
Observation

The observers were two teachers. Then, there was two times of observation for two meetings in the classroom. The observation checklist was adopted from the observation checklist for Observation of Learning Implementation from Teacher Professional Education. Another observation was students’ worksheet which researcher compares the previous score in narrative text with score from report text.

The observation from the first meeting showed that researcher applied all the pre-reading activities based on the lesson plan. However, there was a note from the observer which researcher almost forgets to conduct the reflection in the post activity.

The observation from the second meeting showed that researcher applied all the pre-reading activities based on the lesson plan. However, there was a note from the observer which researcher should be clear toward the way researcher gave the instructions to students.

Figure 2. Result of Students' LKPD in narrative text and report text



Improving Students' Reading Comprehension by Using Pre-Reading Activities.

Based on the observation, researcher applied the pre-reading activities based on the lesson plan. For the first meeting, the activities began with Word association game where it was part of pre teaching vocabulary that help student to improve their reading comprehension. Next activity was observing and answering questions. This activity was visual aids where visual aids help students activating their prior knowledge. Then, the activities continue with match the word with the explanation. Followed up with exercise to the new concept of report text such as generic structure of the text, language features of the text, social function of the text. However, during the implementation, researchers need to pay attention towards instruction of the exercises to avoid students' misunderstanding towards the way of completing the exercise.

In addition, in second meeting based on the result of students' worksheet, students were able to answer questions based on the text. Then, they were able to determine the generic structure and language features of report text after learned the explanation and example from the teacher. In conclusion, pre-reading activity is needed in reading class by providing students with a predicting cue to warm up their brains will give many benefits, one of the benefits is to understand the text easily.

Students Response towards the Implementation of Pre-Reading Activities

In relation to students' response towards pre-reading activities on students worksheet showed that 39.29 % is for an excellent category and 17.86% is for fair category. In addition, the reflection in post activity from the students showed that they were interest with the exercises in the worksheet. The reflection was using "Two Starts, One Wish" as technique to evaluate and to get students perspective about the learning process.

Table 1. Result from the Questionnaire of Students' Response toward Pre-reading Activities

No	Statement	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Bad
		5	4	3	2	1
1	I can understand the game "Word Association Games" with the topic "Animal"	16	13	6	1	0
2	I can answer questions based on the video about "Animal" that I watched	18	12	4	2	0
3	I can write down the opposite words of certain adjectives	17	14	4	1	0
4	I can match the word with its meaning	12	16	7	1	0
5	I can structure sentences into correct short text	12	15	7	2	0
6	I can specify the text structure from the report text after being explained by the teacher	14	12	9	1	0
7	I can determine the linguistic feature of the report text after it has been explained by the teacher	10	16	8	2	0
Total Percentage		39.29%	38.89%	17.86%	39.7%	0

The reflection showed some positive comments from the students. For example, "I like this lesson because it is easy to understand" CS. Another comment was from LS who wrote "I like to learn while playing games and I like to do exercise 1 and exercise 2". In the worksheet, Exercise 1 was pre-teaching vocabulary (find the antonym of the adjectives) and Exercise 2 was fit the word with the explanation. Furthermore, another student also wrote that "I like today's learning because the learning is relaxed and I can understand today's learning".

These positive comments showed that the students get the benefit of pre-reading activities. For example, the pre-reading activities give students the background knowledge necessary for comprehension of the text like brainstorming activities and pre-teaching vocabulary, make students aware of the type of text they will be reading such link the topic with the exercises in worksheet and provide opportunities for group or collaborative work and for class discussion activities such as work in pair or work in group of 6.

In short, the result from the questionnaire and students' reflection of the learning process showed positive result on the implementation of pre-reading activities to improve students' reading comprehension.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate several significant aspects regarding the implementation of pre-reading activities and their impact on students' reading comprehension. The research results can be discussed from three main perspectives:

First, the implementation of pre-reading activities showed a structured and progressive approach, moving from vocabulary-level activities to sentence-level and finally to paragraph-level comprehension. The Word Association Game, video observation activities, and antonym exercises in the first meeting provided students with the necessary vocabulary foundation and background knowledge. This aligns with Hudson (2007) who asserts that "Prior knowledge may have some effects on students' understanding because a reader who already has an elaborate schema can more easily fit incoming textual information into those schemata." This prior knowledge activation through pre-reading activities proved beneficial for students' comprehension.

Second, the improvement in students' reading comprehension was evident through their performance in various tasks. The comparison between narrative text scores and report text scores demonstrated progress in students' ability to comprehend texts. This improvement can be attributed to the systematic implementation of pre-reading activities, which included visual aids, pre-teaching vocabulary, and structured exercises. These findings support Ekaningrum and Prabandari's (2015) study on pre-reading activities, which highlighted the effectiveness of various pre-reading strategies in enhancing reading comprehension.

Third, student responses to the pre-reading activities were predominantly positive, with 39.29% rating the activities as excellent and 38.89% as good. The reflective comments from students, such as "I like this lesson because it is easy to understand" and "I like to learn while playing games," indicate that the activities not only improved comprehension but also enhanced student engagement and motivation. This positive response aligns with Salehi and Abbaszadeh

(2017), who found that pre-reading activities effectively direct students' attention and facilitate better text comprehension.

The implementation of various pre-reading activities proved effective in addressing the initial problems identified in the preliminary study. Students who previously struggled with text comprehension showed improvement when provided with appropriate scaffolding through pre-reading activities. This finding supports Gillet, Temple, and Crawford's (2013) characteristics of good comprehension, which include summoning prior knowledge, asking questions before and during reading, and making appropriate inferences.

However, it is important to note that the success of these activities relied heavily on clear instruction delivery, as observed during the second meeting. This suggests that while pre-reading activities are valuable tools for improving reading comprehension, their effectiveness depends significantly on the teacher's ability to provide clear guidance and instructions.

The positive outcomes of this study support the theoretical framework presented by Grellet (1981), who emphasizes that reading comprehension is an active skill that requires understanding a written text and extracting required information efficiently. Additionally, Ur (1996) reinforces this by stating that "Reading is comprehension" and that reading does not occur if words are read without understanding their implications. The pre-reading activities successfully facilitated this active engagement, helping students transition from passive readers to active participants in the reading process, as evidenced by their improved comprehension and positive responses to the activities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of pre-reading activities is effectively works. The implementation of pre-reading activities Assis students to gain comprehension from the text (teaching material) and create active learning activities before students read a whole text. Besides, student can work cooperatively to complete the exercise both pair work and group work. Moreover, the pre-reading activities help teacher to manage the classroom activities.

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