Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading at Junior HighSchools in Sirimau Sub-District: Problems and Solutions

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Abstract
The purpose of this research is to explain the understanding of teachers about the method of teaching reading comprehension, the techniques that are widely used, the challenges encountered by the teacher and the approaches that have been found to solve these problems. This used the template of the survey using a hybrid approach, where the results were gathered in quantitative and qualitative terms. The subjects of this research were 35 junior high school English teachers in Ambon city. The data collection method was questionnaire, survey and assessment checklist. The findings revealed that the technique plays a significant role in English reading practices; the techniques enable teachers to conduct their teaching tasks faster and well-arranged. Mostly, students use speaking aloud, summarization, vocabulary development, skimming, and testing. In the end, the teachers themselves and the students were faced with the challenges of using the technique in the teaching and learning process. The approaches used by teachers to solve the challenges were enhancing students' knowledge of vocabulary, inspiring pupils, and introducing different methods for teaching literacy. Teachers need to expand their understanding of techniques in the teaching and learning process.

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BACKGROUND

Reading is more valuable as it allows students to understand a lot of literacy. EFL learners continue to gain reading comprehension through the use of relevant and efficient reading strategies. This ensures that the technique is applicable to pupils in the classroom, and it allows them to understand what they've heard. Therefore, in the context of the text, they are intelligent and can deliver it in a positive way. In other words, the correct use of reading techniques will also make it easier to get productive reading. Reading approaches allow EFL learners to easily grasp reading without having to face any issues. That's why teaching reading has been more difficult andrequires an effective approach to fix the student's question.

As mentioned by Oxford (1996), Strategies are "instruments for productive, self-directed

communication that are important for the growth of communicative skills. Strategies are not only a single event, but rather a dynamic series of activities that learners consciously use. ". One problem with the use of technique is that it is either not explained clearly enough or that it is explained wrongly. When teaching a technique, the technique must be presented with thorough and clear guidance. The student must be taught how to apply the technique by training, assisted practice and individual practice with guidance. The technique can also need to be applied to other environments. Any pupils with comprehension or hearing problems are either not taught techniques at all or do not learn how to use them properly.

According to Farris et al (2004) as quoted by Mahmud (2008), teachers need to learn a broad variety of teaching approaches and how to apply them, based on the needs of the students. Teachers will have a range of teaching literacy techniques and adapt them to classes to help students' understanding. For junior high school students who study language, reading is one ability that needs to be mastered as it will help them improve their skills. But the question is how to help them understand the need to read. Of this cause, the application of learning methods plays a significant role in the perception of students.

The Preliminary Research was completed by classroom assessment and interviews. The study studied and interviewed 2 English teachers at SMP Negeri 1 and SMP Negeri 4 Ambon (Grade IX). Via class study, the researcher observed that both teachers applied reading instruction techniques, but in different ways. A Teacher from SMP Negeri 1 in Grade IX presented students with a range of classroom techniques to help students understand the letter. As a result of the implementation of the correct techniques, it has been very useful to students. The result revealed that in the teaching method, the teacher used techniques such as vocabulary development, RAP, and so on. For the pupils, thus, they were able to consider and understand the passage and fulfill the learning objectives. As a result, the researcher finds that the teacher of SMP Negeri 4 who teaches reading in Grade IX never uses a number of techniques. The teacher gives a text and tells students to answer questions about the text.

Since holding an assessment class with both junior high school teachers of SMP 1 and SMP 4 in Grade IX, the researchers held a short interview with them. The first was a teacher from SMP 1 who taught using a number of techniques. Based on her explanation, she used a number of methods in order to help students not get bored easily because they're going to be involved in the class. Whereas the SMP 4 teacher clarified that the reason she always gave the text to the students and told them to interpret it on their own was that she needed the students to learn to be more confident, to seek and develop their learning techniques in reading, such as skimming and scanning.

In light of the above examples, the teacher wants to think about the specific and effective methods that can be used in the learning process to make it easy for students to understand, and the students should be more involved in the classroom and do not feel frustrated because they are more engaged in the learning process. The researcher is also interested in learning more about the reading teaching strategies widely used by junior high school teachers in the Sirimau Sub-district. The research also aims to find out the viewpoint of teachers on the approaches, the challenges encountered by teachers in reading class practices, and how they can solve these problems.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This paper has three questions to answer as follows in conducting this research. First, what are the strategies that commonly used by the Junior High School teachers in teaching reading. Second, what are the problems faced by the Junior High School teachers in teaching reading. The

third question was how the Junior High School teachers overcome the problems faced in teaching reading.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Difficulties in Reading for EFL Learners

There are multiple reasons that become obstacles for students so that they have difficulty in reading comprehension. Some students have difficulties because they have not really mastered reading fluently. When a student reads, they only focus on saying the words correctly, or it can be said that they are not really focused on what they are reading. All of their cognitive abilities they focus on reading words properly and little effort to understand what or what the content of the reading is. This is especially true for students with disabilities (Woolley, 2010).

Bad concentration will lead the students fail to comprehend the text. It can be worse when the students do reading test. Difficulty in concentration is another reason for students' poor reading because concentration is an important factor for a good and effective reading. Shaw (1959) in Hidayati (2018) stated that comprehension of a text results from reading with concentration. But students, in most cases, were not able to concentrate properly while reading. Jitendra & Gajria (2011) stated that "students who have cognitive disabilities, working memory problems, and difficulties with making inferences are also likely to have comprehension difficulties. An example of a student would be a student with autism. This student's cognitive abilities may make reading comprehension adifficult task".

Poor reading comprehension may also be related to a lack of prior experiences or a lower socio-economic environment (Jitendra & Gajria 2011). Then how to get students to understand what they read? To be able to properly comprehend what is being read, students are often required to make connections with what is being read to their own lives and experiences. If a student has not had many experiences or comes from a background that is very different from what is being read in the story, then the student will have difficulty in understanding the story. Reading comprehension component is often referred to as the activation of prior knowledge. Some students have no prior knowledge. Some students have knowledge of this but they lack the skills needed to activate it so that they have difficulty in understanding the text. Vocabulary is also an important component in terms of reading comprehension. Some researchers believe that vocabulary is the strongest or major component of proper reading comprehension and studies have shown that students who have a large working vocabulary receive better grades than students who do not. "Students should be able to know the meanings of 90%-95% of the words in a text to be able to gather meaning from the text (Yildirim et al., 2011)". If students read and do not understand what two or three of the words mean, then they may (not) be able to gather some meaning out of the text to understand it. However, students will have difficulty understanding what they read if they do not understand the majority of words from the story or text. "Individuals who have comprehension problems generally have a more limited vocabulary than those who do not have comprehension problems" (Yildirim et al., 2011). It means to be able to understand the text or the story correctly, the student must be able to know the meaning of the vocabulary because itreally helps the students' comprehension.

The Importance of Reading Strategies

There are many evidence that have been shown on the importance of reading strategies and their effective role in enhancing and developing reading comprehension. Mc Namara et al (2009) as cited in Souhila (2014) viewed that "reading strategies are more useful and beneficial

for learners who show lack of knowledge in the domain of reading, as well as those with lower reading skill, these kinds of learners are strongly needed to these strategies to achieve reading comprehension". Therefore, the continuous use of reading strategies will lead the readers to become skilled and later they will be able to utilize the reading skills acquired without conscious efforts.

EFL learners face many problems especially in comprehension of written materials in reading. Understanding the meaning of texts can be a great challenge. They able to understand each word and even each sentence; but unfortunately, they fail to achieve the meaning of text as a whole. Because of most of these students lack the reading strategies that may help them to overcome their reading problems.

METHODOLOGY

The method that used in conducting this study is a mixed-method research methodology. As stated by PCMH Research Method Series (nd) "Mixed method refers to an emergent methodology of research that advances the systematic integration or mixing of quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation or sustained program of inquiry". Moreover, this study used survey design. According to De Leeuw, Hox and Dillman (nd), in survey the data were collected in quantitative from the sample of population. The type of this survey is cross-sectional survey design where aim to examine current attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or practices. Attitudes, beliefs, and opinions are ways in which individuals think about issues and practices are their real behaviors (Creswell, 2012). Connecting to the explanations above, this study was quantitative and qualitative in the nature and aimed to collect information from a sample of the population. As the population of the research, Arikunto (2006) mentioned that population is the whole number of research subject. The population on this study was the English teachers of Junior High Schools in Sirimau Sub-district and it consist of 13 Junior High Schools with total teachers are 35. This data were collected from Education Department Office Maluku Province. Moreover, the sample of the research used area of probability sample where in its technique of sampling, at this point participants were taken as the representative from an area within a province (Arikunto, 2006). Arikunto (2006) defined sample as some or representative of the population for being examined. In carrying out the survey according to Arikunto, if the subject is less than 100 is better to take all becoming the sample. In line to this reason, the participants in this survey were 35 English teachers. Thus, there were only 35 teachers and it less than 100 therefore the 35 teachers will be selected to become the sample. On the other hand, 5 teachers were chosen to be observed and interviewed based on their answers within the questionnaire and the following qualifications. First, the teachers have more than 10-15 years of teaching experiences; it was one consideration of choosing them. 10- 15 years were considered long enough to be qualified as an experience English teacher. Secondly, they have participated in workshop or teacher trainings which would lead them to have new idea of innovation in creating and managing comfortable EFL classroom activities. Lastly, they have teaching certificate, this also become consideration in choosing the teachers to be observed and interview because it confirms themselves. The instrument that being used to gain data from the respondents was questionnaire. Babbie (1990) as quoted by Acharya (2010) stated that questionnaire is defined as a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis. The type of the questionnaire that was used is open-ended and close-ended questionnaire. The responses to the questionnaire were obtained from 13 Junior high school English teachers and it consisted of 35 teachers. The observation was aimed to identify the information regarding the teachers' strategies that being

used in classroom activity. The teacher taught the students while the researcher observed using an observation checklist. The observation was done for 5 teachers who have been selected based on their answer with the qualifications. The researcher also prepared some questions for the 5 teachers who have been selected according to their answers in the questionnaire and their qualifications. The interview was consisted of 7 questions. It was aimed to get further information that related to the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was aimed to gather the quantitatively data from 35 teachers while observation and the interview was aimed to gain data qualitatively from 5 selectedteachers.

DISCUSSION

Strategies that commonly used by the Junior High School teachers in teaching reading comprehension

From the survey, it was found that Cultivate Vocabulary has the highest frequency among other preferences because there were 88.5% of the respondents who frequently used and heavily used Cultivate Vocabulary and 82.7% respondents stated that it was effective to be used in teaching reading comprehension. As explained in previous chapter where Mahmud (2008) stated that, vocabulary has an important role in the development of reading skill and academic achievement. The strategy itself showed how important the mastery vocabulary in learning reading. However, it was also a good sign to realize the existence of vocabulary to help students in understanding the text. Vocabulary development can facilitate students in their reading because when they understand the meaning of the word and word in context, it will help them in comprehending the text because they have some basic knowledge of the text.

The second most used strategy in teaching reading was Reading Aloud with 85.7% respondents were frequently used and heavily used and 88.5% who stated that it was effective to be used. As a teaching strategy read-aloud is effective and is also recommended by Razinski & Padak (2000) cited by Jennifer et all (2012), to be used as a teaching routine in every class to reinforce reading skills, furthermore such strategy eases learners to become familiar with literacy. So it can be said that reading aloud facilitates reading because practice pronunciation, improve oral English, get deeper understanding, strengthen the knowledge, improve the classroom atmosphere. This strategy gives students an opportunity to hear the instructor model fluency and expression in reading technical or literary language. Through intonation, expression, and attention to punctuation, the reader demonstrates meaning embedded in the text.

The third most used strategy in teaching reading comprehension, there was Skimming with the total amount of 79.9% respondents who frequently used and heavily used Skimming and 82.7% respondents stated that Skimming was effective to be used in teaching reading comprehension. Skimming is a very good technique in comprehending it because it gives the reader to predict the purposes of the text as well as identify the gist of the text. The students must be convinced that keywords are needed as a prediction to answer the question. It is important because in skimming, a reader have not to read all sentences. Skimming consists of quickly running one's eyes across a whole text (such as an essay, article, or chapter) for its gist. By skimming technique, the students will be able to get the main idea of the text easily. It supported by Hutabarat & Arifin (2012) who stated that Skimming gives readers the advantage for being able to predict the purpose of the passage, the main topic, or message, and possibly some of the developing or supporting idea.

Then in the fourth most used strategy in teaching reading comprehension was Scanning with

the total amount of 79.9% respondents who frequently used and heavily used Scanning and 82.7% respondents stated that Scanning was effective to be used in teaching reading comprehension. Scanning is a focused search for specific information or it can be said that Scanning is a technique used by a reader to get relevant information in a text. When scanning, the reader does not start from the beginning and read to the end. Instead, what the reader does is jump around in the text, trying to find the information that is needed. Yan Shan (2009) in Oumelkhir & Wafa (2017) also said that scanning is a helpful technique when students are looking for answer to a particular question. Scanning involves moving through the passage seeking specific words and sentences. Based on the explanations above, in scanning, the students read the text in order to get relevant information without reading the whole text. So this strategy is very useful to apply to get a specific piece of information or to find the answer of a particular question.

Lastly, the most used strategy in teaching reading comprehension was Summarization with the total amount of 71.4% respondents who frequently used and heavily used Summarization and 82.8% respondents stated that Summarization was effective in teaching reading comprehension. Summarizing teaches students how to take a large selection of text and reduce it to the main points for more concise understanding. Upon reading a passage, summarizing helps students learn to determine essential ideas and consolidate important details that support them. It is a technique that enables students to focus on key words and phrases of an assigned text that are worth noting and remembering. Cassaza (1993) stated in Nurhayati et all (2018) said that good readers are able to distinguish the most important ideas in a passage and summarizing them according to an appropriate organizational pattern. Furthermore she said that teaching students to summarize increase their comprehension of report text. The students will be creative to summary the text with their own language and they will be motivated to study and read the material well. It can be said that summarization technique gives significant effect to the students' reading comprehension. It was effective to the students' reading comprehension.

In conclusion, using strategies in teaching reading proves that it will help both the teachers and the students in teaching and learning activity. As Nunan (1999) in Alfiyanti (2017) said that success in teaching depends on many factors, one of them is teaching strategies. In teaching process, it necessary for the teacher make students interested in learning English and make them enjoy in the middle of teaching learning process. It is the important one that the teacher as possible makes students good achievement by applying appropriate strategies.

Problems faced by the Junior High School teachers in teaching reading
First, the findings showed that during the teaching process there were problems arose from students themselves as their lack of vocabulary and low level of interest to study English. Moreover, vocabulary had a very important role in learning English. The lack of vocabulary of students could hamper their ability in understanding the reading text provided. On the other hand, that the lack of interest from students in learning also became a problem. Those who were less motivated in learning so that not all students are active in the classroom. These low interest as also visible library where many English books were prepared to make it easy for students to learn at leisure. But it is very rare for students to spend their time in the library to study, even the teachers had often reminded them. To sum, students who are passive would be resulting in lead to less participation in the process of learning English. This was caused by the lack of interest toward the materials that being taught, and how the low acquisition of vocabulary contributed to make them not willing to engage during learning process ad create whole atmosphere of learning become that less appropriate for making students want to participate.

Secondly, the problems come from teacher themselves. Some teachers stated that the use of

strategies that are not in accordance with the students' level as one of the factors which affects the achievement of learning objectives. This causes students to feel bored, not interested or motivated to learn, so the atmosphere in the classroom feels empty. If the strategy used is suited with the level and needs of students, then the atmosphere in the class will feel totally different, students will be more active during the learning process. The strategy used must also be varied, so students do not easily feel bored. Next problem is the material or topic taught must be suited with students' level. The teacher must be selective in selecting the reading material that will be used in the learning process. The material provided must be attractive to students, if it not students will feel bored because they are not interested in the material. So it can be concluded that the teacher must be selective in using the strategies that will be applied supported by the use of appropriate material.

The Solutions used by Junior High School teachers to overcome the problems in teaching reading

Dealing with the obstacles in the process of teaching and learning reading, surely the teacher needs an appropriate solution to be used in order to overcome those problems and achieve their learning goals. From the results of the survey conducted to the senior high school teachers, there are some highlighted aspects such improving students' mastery of vocabulary, imposing motivation towards students, and implementing various strategies in teaching reading. Mastering vocabulary is an important issue in reading comprehension. Thornbury (2002) as cited by Prihasiwi (2011) stated that vocabulary means a large collection of items. He also adds that learning vocabulary is important because it enriches someone's knowledge of words. In reference to the reading comprehension, the students should acquire a number of vocabularies to get better understanding in reading an English text. Therefore, it is beneficial for English learners to master vocabulary in reading comprehension. When students did not know the unfamiliar words in the English text, they cannot understand well what the text tells about. For example, in the examination students were not allowed to bring dictionary. This condition made them difficult to find the meanings of the unfamiliar words in the reading text. That is why they have to improve their vocabulary mastery. The teacher should provide various techniques in order to improve the students' reading ability. One of them is implementing of deducing meaning of unfamiliar words from the context. With their mastery of vocabulary in reading comprehension, learners will be able to catch the message of the text they read.

Next solution that used by the teachers is imposing motivation toward students. Motivation is one of the important factors that influence English learning achievement. It supported by Parsons et all (2001) in Irsanti 2017, defined motivation as an important component or factor in the learning process. Learning and motivation have the same importance to achieve something. Learning makes students gain new knowledge and skills and motivation pushes or encourage students to go through the learning process. Based on the definition above, it can be understood that motivation is defined as an important energy that every people has to have, because it can be as a direction to do and achieve something that will change someone's life to be better than before. All teacher teach students who have different motivations and characters. They also need different attention also. Therefore, an English teacher tries to provide motivation by trying as much as possible to make the process of learning English as pleasant as possible for them because of the highly motivation in learning, students will achieve the best results in the learning process. That is why motivation is influential to the learning process. Lastly, the teachers agree that the use of various strategies in teaching reading can solve the obstacles or problems they face in the

classroom. Teacher should have effective reading strategy for the students to gain better reading comprehension. According to Anderson (2008) in Wulandari (2017), to make students become active and get involved in reading activities, it is needed to teach them using reading strategies because reading with various strategies creates students to be creative and critical readers. The teacher needs a strategy to make the students comprehend and catch the idea of the text easily.

CONCLUSION
From the result of this study, the researcher can conclude that the use of strategies in teaching reading comprehension is crusial. The teachers can perform their teaching activity better and well-arranged if they apply strategies in their teaching and learning process. Furthermore, the students can also learn how to improve themselves through the use of appropriate strategies in the classroom. Secondly, the strategies that commonly used by the senior high school teachers in Ambon are Cultivate Vocabulary, Reading Aloud, Skimming, scanning, and Summerization. In addition, they perceive that those five strategies are effective to help them in teaching reading. However, the teachers also need to find or use another kind of strategies in order to create a comfort learning environment for the students. Next, most of the teachers admit that in teaching and learning reading there were problems faced by them which come from the students and themselves. Lastly the senior high school teachers have a lot of proper solutions to overcome their problems such as improving students' mastery of vocabulary, imposing motivation towards students, and implementing various strategies in teaching reading. More importantly, the more various strategies to apply, the better results the teachers achieve. It was a great need for teachers to acknowledge different kinds of strategies in order to facilitate all the students to improve their English reading skill.

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