THE USE OF PAIRS CHECK STRATEGY IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION ON NARRATIVE TEXT TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Patria Ningsih[1] and Rusdi Noor Rosa[2]
English Department
Faculty of Languages and Arts
Universitas Negeri Padang
email: patrianingsih.pn@gmailcom

Abstract

This paper discusses how to use Pairs Check Strategy in teaching reading comprehension on narrative text at Junior High School. Based on the writers' experience in teaching English, many students find the difficulties in reading, especially reading narrative text. The teacher can use Pair Check Strategy to teach reading comprehension in teaching and learning process. This strategy is applied to help students solve problems in reading. This strategy allows the students to share ideas, opinion, and check their comprehension each other with their discussion pairs. By applying the Pairs Check Strategy in reading narrative text, the teacher can reach the goal of teaching narrative text to junior high school students. In other words, this strategy can help teacher in teaching reading narrative text to the students.

Keywords: Teaching reading, reading comprehension, narrative text, pairs check strategy.

A. INTRODUCTION

English language is one of the important languages in the world for its role as an international language. Considering the importance of language, in the Indonesian education system, English becomes one of the subjects that must be learned by the students in junior high school and senior high school. According to Brown (2000: 5), language is a system that consists of conventionalized vocal, written or gestural symbols used to communicate with one another. There are four skills that people should master in learning English such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The skill which is being highlighted is reading. It is a skill that must be mastered as well by the students.

Reading is one of language skills which is very important to be learned by students. Willis (2008) who states that reading is when the reader can find the information that they need with the specific information. Reading helps the reader to get what they want to know. The purpose of reading is to gather the knowledge and information about the problems and questions faced by the people or

something they have not known before. Moreover, teaching reading to EFL junior high school students can improve their own language and experience.

In teaching reading, students need to understand reading comprehension. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Readers usually make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand the written text. According to Snow (2002: 11), reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously between extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. By reading comprehension, students not only get some information or knowledge, but they also can get an enjoyment and understand.

According to the 2013 Curriculum, there are two text genres learned by junior high school students: monologue text and functional text. A monologue text can be defined as a long text used for a purpose of conveying an idea or viewpoint through words and discussing broader knowledge. It includes narrative, procedure, recount, descriptive, report etc. Meanwhile, a functional text is a text shorter than a monologue text. It includes invitation, announcement, greeting cards, notice etc. In junior high school curriculum, reading is taught by giving five kinds of text types, including descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, and report text. In this paper, the text that is going to be discussed is a narrative text which belongs to a monologue text.

Narrative text is a text which has a sequence of events chronologically that is unusual in entertaining ways. According to Abbott (2002: 6), narrative is a series of events conveyed chronologically; we get apprehend the world in time that is almost built in to the way we see. Narrative text can be used to improve student's ability in reading. The purpose of narrative text is to entertain, to tell a story or to provide literary experience.

The problem of strategies in teaching reading narrative texts has been mentioned in several previous studies. As a result a variety of strategies in teaching reading narrative texts has been proposed. Adrian and Rosa (2012) propose a syntax surgery strategy in teaching reading narrative text, especially in identifying the problematic sentence, write the sentence and initiate the surgery, rearrange the words into more understandable form, pratice and time the lesson. Moreover, Rusdi and Marlina (2017) propose VIP (Very Important Point) as strategy in teaching reading narrative text. This strategy is one of the strategies to build students interest in reading a narrative text.

Based on the writer's experience in learning English at junior high school, the writer found the students' problem in comprehending the text or reading, especially reading a narrative text. There are some problems faced by students in reading a narrative text. In some facts, the students find some difficulties in understanding a reading narrative text when they are asked to read. There are some problems that cause difficulties to students in reading a narrative text. First, the lack of vocabulary in English becomes one of the problems why students find it difficult to understand what they read. Students which have enough vocabulary in English will feel that reading a narrative text is fun and enjoyable for them. Second, the students cannot find the main ideas or keyword of the text

automatically and they cannot get the meaning of the text and bring the ideas from the text into their own word. If the students can find the main ideas or keyword of the text correctly based on the text they read, it will help the students get information and comprehend the text. The last problem, students get low motivation and low reading skills in the classroom. In comprehending a narrative text students should have a high motivation and reading ability, so it is easy for them to understand what they have read.

In order to help students to improve their reading narrative text is not easy; consequently, teachers should provide them with an effective way. To solve the problems above, teachers can use this strategy as one of strategies in teaching reading narrative text. Teachers should have appropriate strategy that can be applied to motivate students to be more interested in reading narrative text. To overcome the students' problems, the writer suggests pairs check as an alternative strategy in teaching reading comprehension especially for narrative text. Pairs check strategy is one of the strategies that involve students' active learning.

B. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
1. Reading as a Language Skill
Reading is one of the skills that play an important role in English learning. It is supported by Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011: 142) who say that reading has two important reasons for academic language skill shown to be more focused on receiving foreign language teaching. First, the important reason for reading is important goals to learn the language for foreign language students. Second, it is various pedagogical purposes to help reading receive the special focus in foreign language teaching. By reading the students will get a lot of information and knowledge of what they read. Reading is not a passive skill because reading is more active than thinking. According to Toprak and Almacioglu (2009: 21), reading may be a more active process than we think. Reading skill also gives specific attention to interactive process to allow readers to read and think at the same time. Alyousef (2006: 64) states that reading is relationship between a reader and a text which leads to automaticity or reading fluency which is called an interactive process. Reading is also an activity that helps to increase knowledge and vocabulary. So, reading extremely helps the readers to get what they want to know.

2. Definition of Reading Comprehension
In terms of reading, one of the assessments in English reading is the students' ability to comprehend the written text. Reading comprehension is the ability to the read text and understand its meaning. To get a comprehension in reading, Harvey (2011: 2) explains that reading comprehension requires the students to actually know and understand what they are reading. At the end of the reading process, hopefully they understand the content of the text, what it is about, and get knowledge of the text. When the students comprehend a text, they must be able to understand and imagine the context of the reading text. Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is the ability of students to get much information from their understanding of what they read. It is

also the ability to read a text, understand the meaning from the text, and imagine the context of the reading text.

3. Purpose of Reading Comprehension

Purpose of reading is comprehending meaning from what the students read. When students begin to read, they actually have most cases unconsciously. Many people are reading to understand and comprehend what they read. According to Cadlin and Hall (2002:13), there are seven purposes of reading, they are:

1. Reading to search for simple information

   The purpose of reading the first is reading to search for simple information. It is a common reading purpose to improve reading ability. It used often in reading tasks that it is almost certainly best seen as a kind of reading ability.

2. Reading to skim

   This purpose related to the first purpose. Reading to skim helps students in the scan the text for a specific piece of information or a specific word.

3. Reading to learn for texts

   Reading to learn usually occurs in academic and professional contexts in which a student needs to learn information from a text. Reading to learn is usually carried out at a reading rate somewhat slower than general reading comprehension.

4. Reading to integrate information

   Reading to integrate information needs additional decisions about the relative importance of complementary, mutually supporting or conflicting information and the likely restructuring of a theoretical frame to accommodate information from multiple sources.

5. Reading to write

   Reading to write is task variants of reading to integrate information.

6. Reading to critique texts

   Same with reading to write, reading to critique is part of task variants of reading to integrate information.

7. Reading for general information

   Reading for general comprehension when accomplished by a skilled fluent reader, requires very rapid and automatic processing of words, strong skills in informing a general meaning representation of main ideas, and efficient coordination of many processes under very limited time constraints.

4. Stages of Reading Activities

According to Toprak and Almacioglu (2009: 23-24), there are three stages of reading activities, they are:

1. Pre-reading is an activity to start a learning as a warm-up before reading. This activity introduces students to a particular text, obtain or provide suitable background knowledge, and activate necessary schemata. The pre-reading phase helps students define selection criteria for the central theme of a story or the major argument of an

essay. Pre-reading activities include: discussing author or text type, brainstorming, reviewing familiar stories, considering illustrations and titles, skimming and scanning.

2. While-reading is an activity conducted during through reading. This activity helps students develop reading strategies, improve their control of the foreign language, and decode problematic text passages. Helping students to use strategies while reading can be difficult because individual students control and need different strategies. Nevertheless, the teacher can find effective strategies, explain which strategies individuals most need to practice, and offer concrete exercises in the form of "guided reading" activity sheets.

3. Post-reading is an activity follow-up that conducted after beyond reading. This activity first checks students' comprehension and then lead students to a deeper analysis of the text, when justified. Because the goals of most real-world reading are not to memorize an author's point of view or to summarize text content, but rather to see into another mind, or to connect new information into what one already knows, foreign language reading must go beyond detail eliciting comprehension drills to help students recognize that different strategies are appropriate with different text types.

It is clear that stages of reading activities can help in developing students' reading ability. These stages are the representation of activities in understanding a reading. In these stages, there are three activities; they are pre-reading, while reading and post-reading activities.

5. Effective Strategies of Reading Comprehension

In reading comprehension, there are some effective strategies to help students to improve reading ability. According to Gilakjani (2016: 234), there are several effective strategies of reading comprehension, they are activating and using background knowledge, generating and asking questions, making inferences, predicting, summarizing, visualizing, and comprehension monitoring. From some effective strategies, the writer used comprehension monitoring in pairs check strategy to help students improving students' ability reading comprehension. Part of checking students' reading comprehension, finally the teacher can use summarizing strategy and ask students to summarize the stories that have been read by them.

6. Teaching Reading at Junior High School

Teaching reading at junior high school is one of the important parts in learning English because it helps students to get new knowledge and more information from what they read. According to Maulizan (2015: 371), junior high school students have to learn reading comprehension for the reason that reading is a skill required to get information. In addition, teaching reading not only helps students to know how to read the text, but it also helps them to be more successful in general because they will understand information there. Reading at junior high school requires the student to read some texts, as one of narrative text.

The curriculum is very helpful to education in Indonesian; because there is curriculum the teacher have a guide in teaching students. Nasir (2015) states that

curriculum has an important function for the success of education. Ideally, the English teachers must have some competences to apply the curriculum. The 2013 curriculum also has the main purposes in the teaching learning process. In this curriculum, there are some monolog text types that are taught at junior high school, they are narrative, descriptive, report, recount, and procedure. In junior high school curriculum, students have to know several text types or genres. One of them is narrative text. The teacher should introduce narrative text to their students in junior high school. Teaching reading at junior high school be able to use the genre-based approach. Genre-based approach is one of approach which is used to help in the teaching learning reading comprehension of narrative text to junior high school students. The aim of reading a narrative text at junior high school based on the prevailing curriculum is to comprehend and understand the meaning of the words and sentences from the text.

7. Definition of Narrative Text

Narrative text is a story that has a complication or problematic events and it tries to find the resolutions to solve the problem. At the end of the story, it will give moral value to the students. According to Purba (2018: 29), a narrative is some kinds of retelling, something that happened, tell a story. In addition, Anderson and Anderson (2003) explain that narrative text is a text which is related a series of events chronologically. A key of comprehending narrative is to understand the plot, theme, characters, events, and their relationship. This is in line with Gerot and Wignell's statement that the social function of narratives is to amuse, to entertain, and to deal with problematic events which lead to a crisis point of some kinds, in turn find a resolution (Gerot and Wignell, 1994: 204). According to Pearson and Fielding (1991), the students will get a lot of knowledge if they read a lot of narrative texts. They also get many moral lessons from the stories they read. Therefore, teachers can use many narrative texts to teach moral lessons.

8. The Generic Structure of Narrative Text

The narrative text has the generic structure that can be explained storyline of narrative text. According to Mislaini (2015: 3), there are some generic structures of narrative text; its structure is as follows: (i) orientation, the introduction of the form: a story about what (what is the story about), who (who is the participant), where (where did it happen or where is the place setting) and when (when did it happen or when is the time setting); (ii) complication or problem, playing the most important part of the narrative text. Without any problems, this text is just one form of events followed by another event; (iii) resolution, in which the problem can be solved. In a narrative text, several problems appear to be no solution when the problem cannot be solved. So, they can be closed with a happy ending or not a little ended tragically, and the sad ending; and (iv) re-orientation (optional). In addition to such four elements of narrative generic structure, Rosa et al. (2008: 91) add one more element, i.e. evaluation. This part of a narrative is used to show a stepping back to evaluate the plight.

9. Languge Feature of Narrative Text

A narrative text typically has such language features as: (i) focusing on specific and usually individualized participants; (ii) highlighting the use of material processes; (iii) using relational processes and mental processes; (iv) using temporal conjunctions to show how the story goes on based on chronological order, and temporal circumstances to show the places where the story takes place; and (v) frequently using past tenses (Gerot and Wignell, 1994: 204; Rosa et al., 2008: 91).

10. The Concept of Pairs Check Strategy

Pairs check is focus on comprehension and communication; it is thought that using pairs check strategy to develop reading comprehension narrative text through discussing in pairs. Pairs check strategy is a strategy group work that involves the students work in pair to solve the problems learning (Eggen and Kauchak, 2012). According to Muklas (2016: 42), pairs check strategy is divided into some groups and each group consists of two people or pairs, and each pair has a problem. They must try to resolve the problem, and then the results of their group discussion will be checked by a couple of other groups. Because it consists of only two people, the couple will learn to be more active in solving problems and can give new knowledge. This strategy is one of the strategies from the cooperative learning. Pairs check is one way to help students who are passive in group activities; they do the same work in pairs and pairs get a checking arrangement (Dana in Muklas, 2016). A strategy of type pair check is the paired group learning popularized by Spencer Kagan in 1993. This strategy is applying cooperative learning demanding in the dependence and the ability of students in solving problems.

C. DISCUSSION

1. Teaching Preparation

Before the teacher teaches reading a narrative text, the teacher must have good preparation which can be seen from the way the teacher prepares the lesson plan. Having a good preparation will help the teachers in teaching and learning process and also increase their confidence because they have already known things to do in the classroom. The lesson plan consists of core competence, basic competence, indicators, objectives, learning materials, teaching and learning activity, media, and evaluation. In the lesson plan, there is a written procedure that is going to be used by the teacher as an orientation in teaching. Preparing lesson plan prevents the teacher from getting confused when they are teaching. Moreover, lesson plan helps the teacher manage the time allocation and match the time with the activity. It helps the learning to be more effective and can achieve the purpose of the learning process.

2. The Procedure of Teaching Reading Narrative Text by Using Pairs Check Strategy

In applying pairs check strategy, the teacher divides the teaching process in three stages, they are pre teaching, whilst teaching and post teaching.
1. Pre- teaching activity

In pre-teaching activity, the teacher needs to recall the students' background knowledge in order to know the ability of students, also activate and stimulate the students' understanding. In this activity by using pairs check strategy is almost the same with the activities by using other strategies, such as greeting the students, motivating them, and explaining the learning objectives. However, this activity is different when brainstorming is carried out. Brainstorming activity is carried out in a specific way. The teacher should encourage the students' background knowledge about narrative text by showing text in the PowerPoint containing the information of the generic structure and language features the narrative text can be found. This text can help the students to relate and understand the topic to learn. Besides, it is also expected that, through this text, the students can recall their memories related to the text. The time allocation of this activity is 15 minutes.

2. Whilst-teaching activity

In the stage, teachers explain the lesson and also apply pairs check strategy. This activity includes several steps: observing, questioning, collecting information, associating and communicating.

a. Observing

Students observe the text in table of PowerPoint that have been given by the teacher.

b. Questioning

The teacher encourages students to question about:
1. Have you ever seen this text before?
2. When was it?
3. Did you enjoy it?

c. Collecting information

Students can collect information about the narrative text from what provided by the teacher to each pair. The pairs can find the generic structure, language features, and purpose of the narrative text. It can help them more understand the lesson. After that, the pairs can find some story from the textbook and the internet. The teacher can guide them to do this activity.

d. Associating

Students discuss, check, and associate their answers and ideas with the teacher. In this stage, teacher and students have feedback of narrative text studied. The teacher also asks students to give answers and responses of their friends' answers and ideas.

e. Communicating

In this stage, the students make a summary story and moral value of the narrative text. Each student submits their work to the teacher. Then, the teacher revises their work if there is a mistake from their work. After the teacher revises, the teacher asks students to read the whole text.

3. Post-teaching activity

Post-teaching activity is the last activity. In the last activity by using pairs check strategy, the teacher evaluates the students' comprehension from the worksheet provided about "narrative text". The teacher asks each pair to conclude

the answers of worksheet they had done to the other pair. This activity is needed to know how far the students understand the related topic. After that, the teacher concludes the lesson. To improve the student's ability in reading comprehension, the teacher gives individual homework. Before closing the lesson, the teacher gives chance to the students to give feedback. Then, the teacher tells about the topic of the lesson for the next meeting so that the students have prepared in every step of the teaching and learning process, and then the teacher closes the lesson.

3. The Advantages of Using Pairs Check Strategy in Teaching Reading Narrative Text

There are several advantages of teaching reading narrative text by using pairs check strategy to junior high school students. First, pairs check strategy encourages communication. When the students discuss with their pairs, the communication happens. This strategy also helps to decrease shy and reserved students so that get confidence in their ability to take part in lessons. This is appropriate with the goal of this strategy that students can become more active. This idea is supported by Dana in Muklas (2016) who states that pairs check strategy is one way to help students in order to be active in group activities; they can do the same work in pairs and get checking arrangement. So, through this strategy students can communicate one another and be active in group activities.

Second, pairs check strategy gives more students the opportunity to share ideas, develop scientific understanding, and solve the problem. Moreover, the pair check is a strategy that used to solve the problem. This strategy is done in pairs. Eggen and Kauchak (2012) state that pairs check strategy is a strategy group work that involves the students work in pair to solve the problems learning. So, this strategy extremely helps to solve the problem.

Third, pairs check strategy gives motivation to the students to try ideas in a public forum and gives responsibility for learning to the students. Moreover, this strategy enables students to learn from each other. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) state that motivation in reading is the most important thing in learning activity those students should consider their positive or negative idea about reading. So, they are more confidence in sharing ideas with friends.

Fourth, pairs check strategy allows students to mix with everyone in the group or pair. Through this strategy, students are given an opportunity for social interaction with each pairs to convey and share ideas about the problem discussed. Raja (2012: 155) states that in collaborative teaching, group and pair work are techniques that give an opportunity to students for social interaction. This really helps them to share ideas, develop scientific understanding, and solve their problem.

Fifth, pairs check strategy teaches students how to lead and be lead by someone other than the teacher. Moreover, this can help students to get a better understanding of themselves. Burke (2011: 88) states that students gain better understanding of themselves. Group or pair work allows people to get a more accurate picture of how others see them. In addition, this strategy also can train students to be open to constructive criticism or suggestion from their pairs. It can be seen when they check the results of other pairs.

Finally, pairs check strategy gives a sense of achievement to students when reaching a team goal. Their participation in groups or in pairs gives achievement in solving the existing problems. According to Gok and Silay (2010: 7), problem solving refers to the effort required in achieve a goal or find a solution when there is no solution directly available. Based on the explanation above that this strategy has advantages in solving problems so that the group or pair gets the achievement of goals in a team.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the discussion elaborated above, it is concluded that reading comprehension on narrative text can be taught by applying pairs check strategy. It means the teacher can use pairs check strategy in teaching reading a narrative text in the teaching and learning process. By applying this strategy, the students can get interested, motivated and able to understand the narrative text well.

Teaching reading skill in the classroom by using the pairs check strategy is divided into three stages. They are pre-teaching, whilst-teaching, and post-teaching. In pre-teaching, the teacher prepares students to get involved actively in the learning process and see the willingness of students to receive the material to be given. In whilst teaching, the teacher gives text and discusses it with students to get ideas or information. The teacher will lead the students to the main activity in the teaching learning process. Here, the teacher will explain the definition, social function, generic structure, language features and form of narrative text. After that, the teacher divides the students into several pairs and gives the texts to each pair. Each pair can do exercises as instructed by the teacher. Finally, in post-teaching, the teacher asks students to conclude the lesson and solves their difficulties.

From the conclusion above, it is suggested for teachers to use an appropriate material and strategy that can make the students interested in the learning and improving their ability in reading a narrative text which students are able to know the form of the narrative text. Moreover, the use of this strategy should encourage and motivate students in reading a narrative text. Using the pairs check strategy in teaching reading can help students understand what they read. Before implementing this strategy, teachers should do some preparation. They need to choose and prepare the appropriate teaching material and media, understand the topics to be discussed in the classroom, make a lesson plan, and consider the time allocation for conducting the teaching-learning process.

In order to know the effectiveness of using pairs check strategy in reading a narrative text, it is expected that there is further research on how pairs check strategy can be used to improve junior high school students' ability in reading a narrative text.

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