

ANNOTATION STRATEGY FOR TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION OF EXPOSITION TEXTS

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Abstract

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk memaparkan salah satu materi pengajaran membaca pemahaman pada teks exposition di Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) dengan menggunakan strategi *annotation*. Strategi *annotation* adalah strategi yang membuat pembaca menjadi lebih aktif dalam memahami isi teks dengan cara memberikan tanda atau symbol pada ide pokok, ide pendukung, kata sulit, kata penghubung, definisi, dan kesimpulan. Lalu membuat kembali dengan bahasa sendiri setiap ide pokok dan ide pendukung. Sehingga siswa bisa menghasilkan teks baru dengan menggunakan bahasa mereka. Guru Bahasa Inggris pada Sekolah Menengah Atas dapat menggunakan strategi ini untuk membantu siswa meningkatkan pemahaman mereka dalam membaca. Sehingga siswa akan lebih tertarik untuk belajar lebih aktif, dan juga dapat meningkatkan keterampilannya dalam berbahasa.

Kata kunci: *reading, comprehension, annotation, exposition*

A. Introduction

In school based curriculum or “*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) 2006*”, reading is one of language skill that should be learned and mastered in any level of education from elementary up to senior high school. Moreover, learning reading skill is more focused at senior high school because reading is to get information and knowledge and KTSP 2006 expects senior high school students to be able to gain their knowledge which help them to face university level. It means that reading is the most important skills to be mastered by senior high school students.

However, most of students have low reading ability especially in reading an exposition text which is designed to give information such as text books, manuals, and trade books that are informational. According to Hamida (2012) there are 63% of the students who got the score under 65 (standard score) in reading test, and the average score is 51. She also adds that the weakness of the students in comprehending a text are the ability of identifying the main idea of a paragraph, the pattern of the text, and details based on the result of the test.

There are some reasons why exposition texts are difficult to understand. The first reason is the author does not give detail background information

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regarding their materials in exposition texts. As a result, the readers are hoped to have some prior knowledge of the topic before reading the texts. These types of texts have low cohesion, which means that they have less explicit explanations. Richard (2011) states that background knowledge are important in the case of informational text. In other words, exposition texts require students to infer content. Therefore, Students who do not know the subject in general have a hard time understanding the texts.

The second reason is exposition text has technical and specialized vocabularies. According to Dymock and Nicholson (2010) Expository texts contain vocabulary that is challenging and outside students' everyday knowledge. Because of that, the students are confused to comprehend the message which is conveyed in the informational texts.

The next reason is exposition texts engage the reader with picture, chart and graphic that require the students to apply reading strategies. As Deutsch (2005) said that reading strategies help students to focus on reading and access relevant information. It makes students to read more effectively and efficiently. So students should use good reading strategies to comprehend the text. If they have bad reading strategies, their reading might become boring and it will be difficult for them to comprehend the text.

To consider the condition above, the writer suggests a strategy to teach reading comprehension of exposition texts at senior high school. It is called annotation strategy. Simpson and Nist (1990) explain that annotation is an active reading strategy that improves comprehension. It is the beginning of the learning and remembering process. In other word, annotation requires the students to understand what he or she is reading and then put it into their own words.

The steps in annotating texts are divided into several activities. First, students will be guided to activate their background knowledge by read the title and interpret the picture in the texts. Second, students read the text twice and mark up the important idea and information in the text, such as; definition, examples, cause and effect, unknown vocabulary and passages that generate a strong positive or negative response. Then, students put the information in the chart or margin and, write it into their own word.

After encoding the information in their words, students and teachers discuss the difficulties faced by students in previous steps. Next, students sum up each paragraph by their own word. At last, students write their opinion about the topic which is discussed. Because the activities above engage learner in making meaning, it will help students to be able to comprehend the texts. Thus, this journal discusses about the implementation of annotation strategy in teaching reading comprehension of exposition text at senior high school.

Comprehension is the process of understanding meaning of the written material and covers the conscious strategies that lead to understanding. The process of reading deals with language form, while comprehension, the end of product deals with language content.

At senior high school, the purpose of teaching reading comprehension is to gain meaning from the texts by involving student's ability to know and use strategies (Rohim, 2005). According to *Permendiknas* No. 41 in 2007 as the

national education standards for teaching and learning process, teaching activity is divided into;

a. Pre-teaching

1. The teacher prepares students' psychology and physical to be ready in studying's process by greeting them.
2. The teacher give some questions that help students to connect with the material
3. The teacher tells the goal of study and standard competence that should be achieved
4. The teacher explains what the material will be covered and activity that will be done based on syllabus.

b. Whilst teaching

In this activity the teacher has to be able to adjust students' characteristic in three processes;

Exploration

1. Teachers lead students to use text features by asking their opinion about the picture and relate it with the title.
2. The teacher helps students to make interaction between students, students and teacher, students and environment, and students and sources by doing discussion, games, and others activity. The teacher involves students to be active in studying activity by doing spelling bee games to introduce key word or difficult vocabulary.

Elaboration

1. Students should be taught self-questioning strategies to monitor their comprehension of the text being read. Teacher and students examine the first sentence of a paragraph for a statement of a main idea that foreshadows the rest of the paragraph. Then, they stop at the end of each paragraph and discuss if the main idea predicted at the beginning of a paragraph is supported by the other information in the paragraph.
2. The teacher teaches students to be able to report in spoken and written what they have learned.
3. The teacher facilitates students to exhibit their creation.

Confirmation

1. The teacher gives positive feedback in spoken and written for students' succeeded.
2. The teacher gives confirmation to the activity that students have done.
3. The teacher gives a meaningful task to students to help students to do reflection. The teacher could give a new text to apply the strategy by them.
4. The teacher checks students' answer by discussing it together.

c. Post teaching

1. The teacher and students make a summary and conclusion of the material.
2. The teacher asks students difficulties in reading process.
3. The teacher could give homework for students
4. The teacher tells the lesson plan for the next meeting.

Exposition is a text whose purpose to inform, explains, describe, or define about a subject or a topic to other people. It is a tool that possesses authentic and accurate information on the subject in written form. According to Gerot and Wignel (1994) exposition is kind of texts which have the main purpose to persuade people to think about a subject from a specific point of view.

There are two kinds of exposition text according to Gerot & Wignell (1994). They are analytical and hortatory exposition. There are differences between hortatory and analytical exposition text. Analytical exposition text has a purpose to inform the reader something in the case. So that, the generic structure of the texts is thesis, argument, reiteration or conclusion. On the other hand, hortatory exposition has a purpose to explain the readers that something should or should not happen. Because of the purpose above, the generic structure of hortatory is different with analytical exposition texts. The generic structure of hortatory is thesis, argument, and recommendation. In short, exposition text persuades readers through giving information and argument about the issue.

Annotation is an interactive strategy which helps readers to comprehend the text. It can be used to improve comprehension and encourage active reading. Likewise, O'Donel (2004) states that annotating is writing-to-learn strategy for use while reading or rereading. It helps readers reach a deeper level of engagement and promotes active reading.

According to Zywica and Gomes (2008) annotation is a reading that students can, and do, adopt, a use in subjects such as social studies, literature, and science. It can be a particularly useful strategy to use in science classes to encourage students to focus their attention on science content because it helps students visualize as they read so that it is easier for students to understand the content and become involved and engaged with the text. Those are some activities which are suggested O' Donnell (2004) to apply annotation strategy in informational text;

a. Before Reading

First, students read title and subtitles (if applicable). Later on, they examine any illustrations that are included. Then, they examine the print (bold, italics, etc.). As these components are being examined, write questions and make predictions or connections near the text.

b. During Reading

First, Students mark word, phrase, sentence that can be key words or difficult words that need further information. The important information is marked in the text by creating a coding system of circles, squares and underlining. In the margin, students write prediction, opinion and summaries of the texts with their own words. They also write a connection, concept that show cause and effect relationship or similar and difference case arrows; ask and analyze of the authors craft, how the author use the language; a judgment about the logic, clarity, or

validity of the argument; and the question they want to ask in the class discussion in the margin. Then, readers look for pattern or repetition in the text.

c. After reading

After students write in the margin, they reread annotations and draw conclusions. Next, they examine patterns and repetition to determine possible meanings which is presented in the text. The last, they find out what the title might mean.

B. Discussion

In order to achieve successful in teaching reading comprehension using this strategy, English teacher should do some preparations. The teacher needs to prepare lesson plan, material, and media. The material which is needed in teaching reading comprehension of exposition text is an exposition text which is interesting and suitable with students' ability, so they will not feel bored in reading.

The last is media that help the teacher in teaching and learning process easily. The media can be used are: laptop or computer, and LCD. The laptop is used for operating the material and media made by the teacher, and LCDA is used to display it. Therefore, teachers should prepare a poster that appropriate to the material.

1. Pre Teaching Activities

In pre teaching activity the teacher should attract the students' attention by greeting them firstly. Before the teacher comes to a discussion about new material, the teacher recalls student's last material. Later on, the teacher motivates students to follow the upcoming lesson. The teacher guides the students to the topic that will be discussed; mineral water. Next, teacher asks about student's understanding about mineral water.

2. Whilst Teaching Activities

a. Exploration

The teacher builds students' knowledge by showing a picture about mineral water. Then, the teacher explores students' knowledge about mineral water through the picture. That activity could help students to predict the information that will be mentioned in the texts. While sharing the information they have about mineral water, the teacher writes the important point on the board. After activating student's background knowledge and building their prediction about the texts, the teacher as the facilitator shows an article.

b. Elaboration

Here the teacher shares annotation handout to the students (figure 1). She tells that they will find the answer of their prediction in the text as they read by using annotation strategy. Then, the teacher explains what annotation and steps of annotation by modeling it.

There are some annotation steps that will be applied in this text. First, readers put a triangle around difficult or confusing words. Teachers ask students to look for difficult or confusing words and put triangle in those words. After that, she leads students to discuss some of difficult words whose crucial meaning in the text. Next, teacher also asks students to keep a glossary of words in the back of their notebooks. Students are responsible for writing the definitions of

the words based on their understanding, and if necessary, they can check in the dictionary.

Figure 1

Annotation Handout

1.  = Other difficult words
2.  = Important fact or main ideas
3.  = Supporting ideas (evidence)
4. Def = definition provided in the text
5. * = other points of transition (words)
6. Concl = major conclusion draw
7.  = important formula or equation
8. ? = confusing information

Second step is reader use a double-underline for main idea. Main idea covers all information in the text. It can be stated or unstated. The stated main idea may be in the form a single sentence, or part of a sentence. The teacher reads the first paragraph out loud and then finds out the main idea of the text. If the main idea is stated, it can be marked by double-underlining it. Then, the teacher explains why she chose the sentence as the main idea. However, if the main idea is unstated the students can write it down in the box provided under the text.

Step three is readers use a single-underline for marking supporting ideas in the text. The teacher tells the students that supporting ideas back up the main idea and provide more information about the main idea. Teacher continues to read paragraphs and ask students to find supporting idea.

The next step is readers write *def* next to definition which is found in the text. Teacher asks students to find the words or phrases that have function to give definitions. For the first time, teacher give an example in paragraph one. The next paragraph, the teacher asks students to find and mark them.

Step five is readers put an asterisk next to transition words or phrases. In this occasion, the teacher explains and gives a copy of transition word. The teacher finds one example of transition word in the text. Then, teacher asks students to find the rest and draw asterisk in the words.

The sixth step is readers write *concl* next to conclusions or above any conclusion in the texts. Conclusion is a paragraph or sentence which consists of summary of the points made in the text, a restatement of the thesis statements or final comment on your topic. The teacher asks students to identify a conclusion of the text and mark it.

Steps seven is when the reader finds the same idea, they can put an equal sign. It help students to find information when answering question or solving problems. Teacher asks students to draw equal for words who have same meaning. Later on, readers put a question mark next to confusing information. A question mark should be drawn in the margin or space next to any sentence or

paragraph that is confusing or unclear. Teacher asks student to put a question mark next to confusing information.

The next steps, teacher asks students to sum up each paragraph in their own word in the margin. They also could add or give their own example. The teacher together with students reviews the whole text. Next, the teacher shows the text which is annotated (figure 2).

After comprehending the text, the teacher explains the generic structure of hortatory text which consists of thesis, argument, and recommendation. The teacher explains to students that thesis is announcement of issue which is concern, argument is reason for concern, and recommendation is statements of what ought to or ought not to happen. After that, teacher asks students to find the generic structure of the texts. Based on the generic structure above, teacher asks students to guess what the purpose of the text.

Figure 2

The Advantages of Mineral Water for Your Health

Water is one of the most important things for human life since they cannot survive without this. The type of water that people drink in their life is mineral water. It is healthy drinking water to keep their body healthy. It is usually taken from the groundwater that contains dissolved minerals. Instead of dissolved, there is also magnesium, calcium, and potassium there. When drinking this type of water, there are many benefits for health so that people should drink this every day. The followings are some benefits of drinking mineral water for human health.

The calcium in this type of water will be very important for human body especially for their bones. For people who cannot drink milk because of its lactose intolerance, drinking this type of water will also fulfill their calcium needs. In a study that is conducted by H. Bohmer, the high calcium mineral water is comparable to the dairy products such as milk. This means that people can drink this type of water as one of calcium.

The calcium that human gets from mineral water is very useful for their bone density. According to a study that is published in Calcified Tissue International, drinking this type of water can decrease the bone loss in postmenopausal women. In other words, this is very essential to make sure that people drink enough water.

It is found that mineral water is very good for human cardiovascular health. This fact has been proven in a study that is published in Journal of Nutrition in 2008. Additionally, this type of water can decrease the human blood pressure. Thus, this will be very beneficial for human health.

In short, there are a great number of benefits people could gain from drinking mineral water. It is useful for heart, and bones, so let's consume mineral water every day minimal eight glasses to keep healthy.

Main Idea:

task is teacher ask them to make a summary.

C. Conclusions

Based on the previous discussion, it can be concluded that reading is very important to gain knowledge. However, reading is not simple activity to comprehend the text. Consequently, reading comprehension is an important component in teaching reading at senior high school.

Based on the previous discussion, it can be said that most of senior high school students have difficulty in comprehend exposition texts; analytical and hortatory exposition. To solve these problem teachers could engage reader to use some strategies in reading the texts. However, annotation strategy is the appropriate one in reading comprehension of exposition text.

Annotation is an active reading strategy in understanding the texts, especially exposition text. It makes the readers' (dialogue with the text") a visible record of the thoughts that emerge while making sense of the reading. The activity in this strategy is that students are asked to mark a key and difficult vocabulary and phrase, identify main and supporting ideas, and sum up the paragraph by their own word. Through the processes during teaching and learning reading, annotation strategy is introduced in pre teaching after students' background knowledge is activated.

In whilst teaching, there are three activities. Those are exploration, elaboration, and confirmation. In exploration, the teacher as a model shows how to apply annotating in the text. Next is elaboration, the teacher asks students to do annotation in a new text in group. After that, in confirmation the teacher and students discuss about the difficulty in comprehending the texts. The last stage is post teaching, the teacher asks students to annotate the new text.

Note: this article is compiled based on the writer's paper with her advisor Fitrawati, S,S,. M.Pd.

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