

TEACHING READING BY USING METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY: *IN MY HEAD* AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstrak

Pengajaran membaca di sekolah menengah atas memiliki beberapa permasalahan. Diantara masalah tersebut ialah strategi yang digunakan oleh guru dalam mengajar belum menunjang tujuan pembelajaran secara utuh. Hal ini berdampak padapemahaman siswa terhadap isi bacaan yang masihjauh dari apa yang diharapkan oleh guru. Untuk pemecahan masalah tersebut dibutuhkan strategi yang tepat dan yang dapat membantu serta mempermudah siswa dalam membaca serta memahami sebuah teks bahasa inggris. Strategi *In My Head* dianggap cocok untuk diaplikasikan pada pengajaran membaca karena strategi ini dapat membantu siswa dalam menyusun ide – ide yang mereka tangkap dari isi bacaan, yang mana ide-ide tersebut nantinya akan dituangkan siswa ke dalam sebuah handout secara individual. Setelah itu guru akan menanyakan pemahaman masing-masing siswa dan pada akhirnya guru akan merangkum pemahaman siswa secara umum mengenai keseluruhan isi teks sehingga terciptalah sebuah pemahaman yang sempurna.

Kata Kunci: *In My Head strategy, handout, pengajaran membaca.*

A. Introduction

As one of the four basic skills in learning English, reading must be mastered by the students in order to be good at English. Through reading, the students can increase their knowledge and also enrich their English vocabulary. If the students have been familiar with some kinds of English text, they will not find many difficulties anymore while they are reading. In order to understand the meaning of a text, the students must have the reading comprehension skills.

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Senior high school students have done some reading activities since they were in the elementary level, but most of them still get any problems in reading. The problems not only come from the students themselves, but also from the teachers who manage teaching and learning process. From the students' side, first, they are not able to comprehend the whole text individually because they have limited background knowledge about the text. They need others' opinion to complete their comprehension about the whole text. Second, the students feel difficult to document their thought after they read a text. Third, the students have lack confidence to think-aloud about what they have read. Furthermore, the students also have other problems such as poor vocabulary and find any difficulties with the sentence structure and word order.

Besides the students' problem in reading, the problems also come from the teachers. First, the teachers tend not to invite the students to work together in comprehending the text. The teachers usually focus on individual learning rather than collaborative learning. Second, in teaching and learning process, after the students read a text the teachers do not provide any materials that make the students become more expressive in comprehending the text. The last, the teachers do not give any feedback to the students about the material that they have learned.

The teachers are expected to be more active in facilitating their students with the materials that can help them to improve their reading comprehension. Actually, the teachers can use some strategies: cognitive strategies, social/affective strategies, and also metacognitive strategies. *In My Head* strategy is a kind of metacognitive strategies that can help the students to comprehend an English text. In this strategy the students are expected to think about their own thinking. This strategy can help the students to engaging with the text well. The teachers give a text to the students and the students are asked to read it first. After read the text the students documenting their thought in an *In My Head* handout. Then, they are asked to think-aloud about what they have written in their handout. The students' thought will be different each other. The different opinion of the students will be clarified by the teachers. Teachers' clarification will help them to produce a good comprehension about the text. By using *In My Head* strategy, the writer hopes that the teachers and the students can have a good collaboration in the learning process in order to help the students' in comprehending an English texts.

Grabe and Stoller (2002: 9) say that reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret the information appropriately. It is supported by Anderson's statement (2008:2-3) that reading can be defined simply as making meaning from print. Four key elements combine in the process of making meaning from print: the reader, the text, reading strategies and fluency. He also said that reading is a process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. Moreover, Adams and Bruck (in Peregoy, 2008: 286) also state that learning to read involves gradually developing the ability to recognize words almost instantly. Good readers become

so automatic in word recognition that they concentrate on meaning and are rarely aware that they are attending to almost every letter they see.

Teaching English for senior high school students should be based on the curriculum. The recent curriculum that is used at school as the guideline to conduct teaching and learning of English is the curriculum of KTSP or *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*. Teaching English at senior high school uses the *genre based approach* in which the four skills are integrated. It means that in teaching process the teachers do not focus on one skill for each meeting, but they are supposed to teach by using genre based approach and integrate those skills.

Teaching reading means the students mentally focus on their thought in the text that they read to get knowledge and information proposed by the author. This process needs collaboration among creative teachers, active students, good techniques and comfortable atmosphere. The aim of reading at senior high school based on the curriculum used is to comprehend and understand the meaning of the words and sentences from the text.

According to Smith (2003:88), metacognition not only means having the knowledge but also refers to the readers' own awareness and understanding of the thinking processes involved and the readers' ability to regulate and direct these processes. Furthermore, Nunan (2003:75) says that metacognition can be defined as thinking about our thinking. He also say that to teach reading comprehension, the readers must monitor their comprehension processes and be able to discuss with the teachers and/ or fellow readers what strategies they use to comprehend.

In addition, Boyle and Peregoy (2008:289) state that metacognition is the process of analyzing our own comprehension processes, or "thinking about thinking." They also say that metacognition is used to recognize and repair understanding when something we read does not make sense. Moreover, Schunk & Zimmerman (in Graves et al, 2011) say that the metacognitive readers have the ability to mentally step outside of themselves and view their own processing of particular learning tasks.

According to Herrera, et al (2010: 142-143), in reading activities students can first document their thoughts on the *In My Head* handout. It is a simple and concrete tool that the students can use to record what they are thinking before articulating the information aloud. It means that the students can document the information that exists on their mind while they are reading a text before they are asked by the teacher to articulate the information itself. They also add that the power of this strategy is that the students are able to document what is happening inside their heads based on their individual understanding. Moreover, knowing students' initial thoughts provides the teachers with a valuable foundation on which new learning can be built.

The purpose of this article is to figure out the procedure in teaching reading for senior high school students by using the *In My Head* strategy. Then,

this article hopefully can be used by English teachers as a choice or additional alternative in teaching reading.

B. Discussion

The implementation of using *In My Head* strategy in teaching reading at senior high school students as follow:

1. Teacher's Preparation

Preparation is the first thing that the teachers have to consider before teaching. The teaching learning activities will not run well if the teacher does not have a good preparation before starting the study in the classroom. Teacher can follow several steps that are done before going to the teaching process.

The first step is selecting the materials to teach. The teachers should choose the materials that are appropriate with the syllabus and curriculum. Those materials should be appropriate with the students' ability level and the students' interest so that it can motivate them to read and help the students to understand the materials easily. In considering the students' ability level, the texts should be written in simple structure and not too long. In addition, the text should be interesting and has moral values. After selecting the materials, the teachers have to make a lesson plan which is appropriate with the level of students learning and matches with the topic. The last step is preparing the media. By using the media the students will be easy to understand the lesson and it will help the teachers in teaching. The students are also interested in studying and they are not bored in study. The media must be appropriate with the material. It should be interesting for the students, so that it can gain the students' motivation to study. In this article, the writer decides to use some pictures as the media of the story *Snow White, Cinderella, and Aladdin* in reading a narrative text. They will be used in the exploration process. Moreover, the writer uses a picture of *Beauty and the Beast* in the elaboration process. In addition the teachers have to prepare some glue to stick the pictures on the whiteboard.

2. Teaching Process

a. Pre-Teaching Activities

Pre – teaching activities are done at the beginning of the lesson. In this phase of teaching, the teachers should comprehend what they are going to teach in order to create more interesting teaching and learning process for the students.

The first thing that the teachers should do is prepare the students both physically and psychologically to join in the learning process. The students usually do this thing by greeting the students. After that, the teachers check the students' attendance list. Then, the teachers have to activate the students' background knowledge about narrative text by asking some questions to the students. For example:

- Teacher* : Do you know what a narrative text is?
- Students* : Yes, mam!
- Teacher* : Have you ever read a narrative text?
- Students* : Yes, mam!
- Teacher* : What is the title of the narrative text that you have read?
- Student 1* : Aladdin!
- Student 2* : Sleeping Beauty!
- Teacher* : Did you enjoy reading that story?
- Students* : Yes, mam!

Finally, the teachers explain the goal of the learning or the basic competence of teaching reading.

b. Whilst-Teaching Activities

In this phase, the teachers have to create the teaching and learning process more challenging, fun, and interactive for the students. The teachers should motivate them to participate actively and give them a chance to develop their independent and creativity based on their interest, talent and their development both psychologically and physically. There are three stages in this phase: exploration, elaboration, and confirmation.

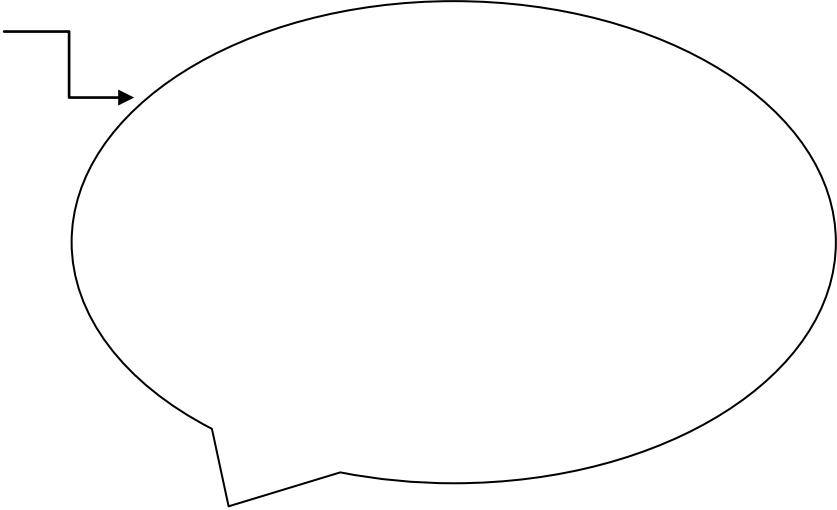
The first stage is exploration. In this stage, the teachers start the lesson by sticking the pictures of *Snow White*, *Cinderella*, and *Aladdin* on the whiteboard. After that the teachers give some questions related to the pictures so that the teachers can explore the students' background knowledge about those stories. Next, the teachers explain the social function of a narrative text: to entertain and to share experience to the readers. After that, the teachers explain the generic structure of a narrative text, those are: (a) orientation: the introduction of the characters and setting of the story, (b) complication: the conflicts that happen in the story, and (c) resolution: how the conflicts are solved. Finally, the teachers explain the language features of a narrative text, those are: (a) focuses on the specific participants, (b) uses action verb, (c) uses simple past tense, and (d) uses main linking word.

The second stage is elaboration. The *In My Head* strategy will be applied in this stage. The first thing that the teachers should do is providing a monolog text for each student. In this case, the teachers provide a narrative text entitled *Beauty and the Beast*. The teachers also have to provide some copies of *In My Head* handout for each student. The handout can be drawn as follow:

IN MY HEAD

Name : _____

What are you thinking about as you read _____ (title of the story)?

I think 

After the texts and the handouts have been provided, the teachers have to distribute a text and a handout for each student. Then, the teachers have to explain the procedures of filling in the handout clearly, so that the students will not feel confused to do their works. The first thing that the students should do is writing down their name on the top part of the handout. After that, they should write down the title of the story that they read. Next, the teachers will give some times to the students to read the text that has been provided before. After all students have finished, the students have to write down the information that they can catch from the texts in the balloon that exists on their handout without seeing the text anymore. After the students have finished, the teachers will ask some students to read what they have written orally. While the students read their works, the teachers have to check whether the information is correct or not directly. If there any wrong information, the students can do some correction by discussing with the whole class and led by the teachers. Finally, the teachers clarify about the incorrect information and summarize the whole text briefly. Thus all students can understand the content of the text well.

The third stage is confirmation. In the confirmation process, the teachers tell the whole information about the text in the elaboration process correctly and completely. Thus the students can get a good comprehension about the whole text. In this stage, the students and the teachers can also have a discussion about the difficulties in reading by using *In My Head* strategy. The students can share anything with the teachers and vice versa. Moreover, in this process the teachers

also give a positive feedback to the students, so that the students' motivation will be increased.

c. Post-Teaching Activities

In post-teaching activities, the teachers have to ask about the students' difficulties related to the lesson at that time. If there are any difficulties or questions from the students, the teachers will answer and explain it to the students clearly. After that, the teachers have to conclude the lesson together with the students. After the lesson has been concluded, the teachers give homework to the students that are related to the materials at that meeting in order to increase the students understanding about the lesson. Next, the teachers will inform about the topic for the next meeting briefly. Finally, the teachers will do the leave taking and close the lesson.

C. Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the previous discussion, it can be concluded that the senior high school students still face some difficulties in comprehending the English text. The first problem is they have limited background knowledge about the text, so that they need others' opinion to complete their comprehension about the whole text. Second, they feel difficult to document their thought after they read a text, especially while they are reading a narrative text which has an imaginative component. The last problem is the lack of confidence to express what is on their mind.

In My Head is one of the strategies that can be used in reading activities. By implementing this strategy, the students can be motivated to participate more actively in the learning process because they can document their thought freely on their own handout. This strategy also makes the learning process become more interactive because the whole class can share their own opinion in order to complete their comprehension. This strategy gives a good contribution for the English teachers to achieve the goals and the purpose of the language teaching.

In order to make students eager in studying English, especially in reading, some suggestions are given to the English teachers and it may be useful for them. First, the teachers are suggested to prepare everything they need in teaching reading skill by implementing *In My Head* strategy properly before entering the classroom. Second, teachers are suggested to be more creative in using this strategy and choose the interesting topic to be read by the students. Third, *In My Head* strategy can be implemented on the other English skills such as listening, speaking, and writing so that the teachers are suggested to use this strategy on all English skills. Fourth, *In My Head* strategy can be used in all of the genres of text so that it is also suggested for the teachers to implement this strategy to all genres of text.

Note: This article is written based on the writer's paper whose advisor is Yuli Tiarina, M.Pd.

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