

IMPROVING READING ABILITY OF GRADE EIGHT STUDENTS THROUGH SNOWBALL THROWING STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to find out whether or not that using Snowball Throwing Strategy is effective in improving students ability in reading narrative text of the grade eight at SMP Negeri 1 Bunta. The researcher applied quasi experimental research design. The research sample was VIII^C as the control group consisted of 26 students, and VIII^E as the experimental group consisted of 28 students. The researcher employed cluster random sampling to choose the sample. The experimental group was treated by applying Snowball Throwing Strategy in teaching reading a narrative text, while the control group was taught using conventional method. The instrument of data collection was a test. The result of the data analysis shows that the mean scores of the experimental group on the pretest and the posttest were (50.86) and (74.29). The mean scores of the control group on the pretest and the posttest were (52.25) and (65.84). The researcher found that t-counted value was 2.74. By using 0,05 level of significant and 52 degree of freedom (df), the researcher found that the t-table value was 1.675. The t-counted was greater than the t-table; therefore the hypothesis was accepted. Based on the result, the researcher concludes that using Snowball Throwing Strategy gives significant influence on the students reading ability. It means that using Snowball Throwing Strategy is effective in improving reading ability of grade eight students at SMP Negeri 1 Bunta, especially in reading a narrative text.

Keywords: Improving; Reading Ability; Snowball Throwing Strategy

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bahwa Snowball Throwing Strategy dapat meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa kelas delapan SMP Negeri 1 Bunta atau tidak. Peneliti menggunakan penelitian quasi-experimental desain. Sampel dari penelitian ini yaitu siswa kelas VIII^C sebagai kelompok kontrol terdiri dari 26 siswa, dan kelas VIII^E sebagai kelompok eksperimen terdiri dari 28 siswa. Peneliti menggunakan cluster random sampling untuk memilih sample. Kelompok eksperimen diberi perlakuan dengan menerapkan Snowball Throwing Strategy dalam mengajar membaca teks naratif. Sementara itu kelompok kontrol diajar menggunakan metode konvensional. Instrumen pengumpulan data yaitu tes. Hasil dari analisis data menunjukkan bahwa dapat dilihat nilai rata-rata dari kelompok eksperimen pretest dan posttest adalah (50.86) dan (74.29). Nilai rata-rata kelompok kontrol dari pretest dan posttest adalah (52.25) dan (65.84). Peneliti menemukan bahwa nilai t-counted adalah 2.74. dengan 0,05 tingkat signifikansi dan 52 derajat kebebasan (df), peneliti menemukan bahwa nilai t-table adalah 1.674. T-counted lebih besar dari t-table; oleh karena itu hipotesis diterima. Berdasarkan hasil, peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa Snowball Throwing Strategy memberikan pengaruh penting pada kemampuan membaca siswa. Artinya Snowball Throwing Strategy berhasil dalam meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa kelas delapan di SMP Negeri 1 Bunta, khususnya dalam membaca teks naratif.

Kata Kunci: Meningkatkan, kemampuan berbicara, Snowball Throwing Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the basic language skills that should be mastered by the students at school. It is an essential factor that influences one's activity in communication between the writer and the reader. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Readers typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical

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knowledge, experience with the text and other strategies to help them understand written text.

According to curriculum 2013, the objective of learning reading is to improve the students ability in understanding a text, to help them organize their ideas, to conceive and create meaning, to communicate information and ideas of text, to develop their knowledge in reading text over time, and to make progress

their learning purpose in reading. There are various types of text, such as narrative, procedure, factual report, descriptive, and hortatory exposition. In this research, the researcher focuses on the narrative text only.

Narrative text is a story with complication or problematic events which tries to find the resolutions to solve the problems. An important part of a narrative text is the narrative mode, the set of methods used to communicate the narrative through a process of narration. The purpose of narrative text is to amuse or to entertain the reader with a story. A narrative text ends with a solution, either with a happy or sad ending.

Narrative text is a type of spoken and written text that tells the story of one character or more face is certain situations. According to Bosede (2016:273), "The main purpose of narrative texts is to tell a story, it has a beginning, middle and an end; characters, plot or conflict, and setting." The narrative texts could be categorized into the fictional narrative or imaginary, the non-fictional narrative, or combination of both. A fictional narrative presents an imaginary narrator's account of a story that happened in an imaginary world. It includes fairy tales, folklore or folktales, horror stories, fables, legends, myths, and sciences fictions. On the others hand, a non-fictional narrative (also functual narrative) presents a real-life person's account of a real-life story. It includes historical narrative, ballads, slice of life, and and personal experience. The generic structure of narrative text focuses on a series of stage that proposes to build a story. In traditional narrative the stages include (1) Orientation: the introduction of the characters who involve in the story, time and the place where the story take place. (2) Complication: a series of events in which the time character attempts to solve the problem (3) Resolution: the ending of the story containing the problem solution. There are some features that writers should recognize in writing a narrative text. These include: (1) Plot: What is going happen? (2) Setting: Where will the story take place? When will the story take place? (3) Charcterization: Who are the main charactres? What do they look like? (4) Structure: Who will the story begin? What will be the problem? How is the problem going to be resolved? (5) Theme: What is the theme/message the writer is attempting to communicate? (Duke and Carlisle:2011)

Reading is considered decoding speech written down, a skill will naturally be transfereed from a command of the oral skills which are the major focus on audio-lingual programs. The spoken and written forms of a language differ qualitatively, both in syntax and in vocabulary. According to Paulston and Bruder (2014), reading is the individuals' activity to get information excellently and unless there are contextual constraints on the teaching situation, such as lack of electricity at homes, there is no sense in wasting class time on actual reading. Nuttal (2005) states that reading is understood to interpret meaning sense. Besides, Harmer (2007) states that reading is not a passive skill. To do it successfully, we have to understand what the words mean, see the pictures the words are painting, understand the arguments and work out if we agree with them.

At the basic level, reading is the recognition of the words. In reading, there are several levels from lowest to highest which aim to guide the teachers in preparing reading assessment. The researcher limited this research on literal reading comprehension. In other words, The first level is literal. It is the most obvious ability. At this level, it involves surface meanings and the teacher ask students to find information and ideas that are explicitly stated in the text. In other words, literal level of ability is the direct level which one identified what the word say; it does not involve determining what the words beyond their literal meaning. The literal level focuses on reading the passages, hearing the words or viewing the images. It involves identifying the important and essential information. With guidance, students can distinguish between the important and less important ideas. The second level is interpretative or inferential. At the interpretive level, the focus shifts to reading between the lines, looking at what is implied by the material under study. The third is critical reading. At this level ideas and information are evaluated. The last level is creative reading. This level is the highest among the others. creative reading use different thinking skill to go beyond literal ability, inferential, and critical reading levels. In this level the students are expected to involve with new or alternative solutions to those presented bt the writer.

Students' ability and achievement are the important factors in determining students' success in teaching and learning process. It is

influenced by external and Internal factors. According to Slameto (2003), the external factors are family, school and society. The internal factors come from the students themselves.

Nuttal (2005) states that reading is an activity done to exact (to correct in every detail) meaning from writing. It is the way the reader gets message from a text by having interaction between perception of graphic symbols that represent language and the reader's language skills, cognitive skills and the knowledge of the world.

Moreover, Celce-Murcia (2014) states that reading is to learn unique thinking skill in which ESL/ EFL learners must have an ability to comprehend the material from a text by using their own ideas and contrast or cause and effect examples, following and argument in the text, choosing some relevant topics under the discussions.

Based on the definition above, that reading is a way to get information from something that was written. Reading involves the interaction between reader and the passage.

Reading is not an easy learning activity. Many factors can affect students' success in reading. In general, these factors can be identified, such as teachers, students, environmental conditions, subject matter and techniques to learn the lesson material. One of the most important aspects of teaching reading is the selection of the reading text. The reading selection should not contain marked dialect or slang features. The selection should have high interest value to the students and the simple ways of establishing this is by asking the students their opinions of the reading and then dominating low interest selections for features curricula. The content should not be contrast with the students' own cultural values.

Therefore, reading comprehension means understanding what has been read. It is an active process that depends not only comprehension skill, but also on readers' experiences and prior knowledge.

There are main ways in reading as follows:

1. Skimming

Skimming consists of quickly meaning one's eyes across a whole text (an essay, article, etc) for exam to get the gist. Skimming gives readers the advantage of being able to preview the purpose of the passage, the main topic or message and possibly someone developing or

supporting ideas. It is important that learners understand that there is no need to read every word when skimming, so often teachers set this as a timed task to encourage speed.

2. Scanning

The second in the "most valuable" category is scanning or quickly thing for some particular piece or pieces of information in a text.

3. Extensive reading

Reading longer texts, usually for one's own pleasure, mainly involve global understanding.

4. Intensive reading

Reading shorter texts to extract specific. This is more an accuracy activity involving reading for detail.

The purpose for reading and the type of text determine the specific knowledge, skills, and strategies that readers need to apply to achieve the comprehension of reading. Readingcomprehension is thus much more than decoding. Reading comprehension results when the reader knows which skills and strategies are appropriate for the type of text, and understands how to apply them to get the reading purpose.

Snowball Throwing Strategy was developed by Slavin in 2008. It has been proven that when students are taught using the strategy, their ability to answer questions correctly improves. According to Herdian (2009), Snowball Throwing Strategy can also help students negotiate standardized tests of reading ability in narrative text.

The purposes of Snowball Throwing Strategy are as follows:

1. Relating prior knowledge to new information to enhance comprehension,
2. Creating interest which stimulates discussion on the topic, and
3. Creating possibilities for integrating reading and writing instruction,
4. Helping students monitor their ability of the text,
5. Teaching students how to ask questions about their reading in narrative text and to find the answers of them,
6. Inspiring them to think creatively and work cooperatively while challenge them to use higher-level thinking skills,
7. Allowing students to assess their comprehension of the text,
8. Encouraging elaborative and critical thinking,
9. Helping refute the common misconception held by students that the text tells all.

In order to prove if Snowball Throwing Strategy could solve the problems above, the researcher intended to apply a teaching model called Snowball Throwing strategy. Snowball Throwing Strategy is learning strategy to train students to be more responsive to receive information and to convey the message in a group. By doing so, the students might become more involved and understand more detail. Considering those aspects above, the researcher believed that Snowball Throwing Strategy could improve the students reading ability.

Based on the researcher preliminary observation at SMP Negeri I Bunta in December 2018, it was found that there were some problems concerned with the students who were accustomed to reading narrative text with superficial understanding. They did not know the generic structure of narrative text (orientation, complication, and resolution). Also, they had difficulty in comprehending a narrative text because they did not have any pictures or illustrations to help them imagine the route of the story. Furthermore, the teaching method used in the class to teach reading was conventional teaching method. In this model, the activities were teacher-centered and the students did not have enough opportunities to share their ideas to others in the class. Students simply became the followers and depended on the instruction during the teaching and learning process.

It is mentioned in the background above that most students lacked of reading ability. There was not an innovation way for the students to read a text comprehensively. Therefore, the researcher aimed to apply Snowball Throwing Strategy to solve the students problems. The researcher formulated a research question as follow: “*Can using Snowball Throwing Strategy improve reading ability of grade eight students of SMP Negeri 1 Bunta?*”. The design of the research was quasi experimental research design. The aim of quasi experimental research is to compare something between groups. So, the objective of research should relate to the problem that is going to be solved. Thus, the purpose of this study was to prove Snowball Throwing Strategy in teaching reading improve students reading ability of grade eight students of SMP Negeri 1 Bunta.

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of this research was quasi experimental research. According to Gay and

Airasian (2011), experimental research is the only type of the research that can test hypotheses to establish cause and effect relationship. Then, Cresswell (2008) states that experiment is you test an idea (practice or procedure) to determine whether it influences an outcome or dependent variable. The design of the research was *pretest* and *post test* design, which used two groups as a sample. In conducting the research, the grade eight students of SMP Negeri 1 Bunta were participants. The students were being administered by giving pre-test at the beginning in order to know their abilities in reading narrative text. After that they were given the treatment in the middle. At the end, they were given post-test. In this research, pre-test and post-test got compared in order to determine the improvement of the reading ability through snowball throwing strategy on grade eight students.

Population is a group of individual persons, objects, or items from which samples taken for measurement for example a population of presidents or professors, books or students. Parahoo (2014:218) defines, “Population as the number of units from which data can be collected, such as individual, even or organization.” The population of this research was grade eight students at SMP Negeri 1 Bunta which consisted of five classes. To make clear the number of the Population can be seen in the following table:

Table 1 The distribution on the students

No	Name of Class	Number of Students
1	A	29
2	B	28
3	C	26
4	D	27
5	E	28
Total		138

Sample is part of number and characteristics process by population. The samples of this research were chosen from the numbers of the population by applying Cluster Random Sampling. “Cluster Random Sampling is used when we have limited information of the sample (list of every member of the population), but we have an adequate information of the group itself” (Priyono, 2016:115). Meanwhile, the researcher provided

papers with the name of the classes and put them into a glass. The first paper grasped was VIII E as the experimental group, while the second paper was VIII C as the control group.

In this research, the researcher conducted the research with two variables. The first variable was dependent variable and the second was independent variable. The dependent variable was improving reading ability and the independent variable was snowball throwing strategy.

In collecting the data, the researcher used test as research instrument. The test consisted of pre-test and post-test. In the test, the researcher used fill in the blanks and reading questions in order to know the ability of the students in reading the text. "The use of questions is an integral aspect of such activities, and in our experiences as language teacher we have seen that will design questions help students interact with the text to create or construct meaning"(Day and Park, 2005:60).

There were two kinds of data collection such as pre-test and post-test. In this research, the researcher gave pre-test before the treatment.

Table 2 Scoring rubric of reading ability questions

Description	Score
Students locates and uses all relevant information stated directly in the text to answer questions, complete tasks, or otherwise demonstrate clear understanding.	4
Students locates and uses most relevant information stated directly in the text to answer questions, complete tasks, or otherwise demonstrate clear understanding.	3
Students locates and uses some relevant information stated directly in the text to answer questions, complete tasks, or otherwise demonstrate clear understanding.	2
Students locates and uses little relevant information stated directly in the text to answer questions, complete tasks, or otherwise demonstrate clear understanding.	1

Adopted from Aminlimpo(2012)

Table 3 Scoring rubric of fill in the blanks

No	Explanation	Score
1	Correct answer	1
2	Wrong answer	0
3	No answer	0

FINDINGS

In collecting the data, test was used as the instrument of the research. There were two kind of tests in this research; pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was administered before the treatment to find out the students' prior ability in reading. The post-test was administered after the treatment. The result of each test was compared to measure whether the snowball throwing strategy to improve students reading ability is effective or not. Having gained the students individual scores of the experimental and the control groups on the pretest and the posttest, the researcher then continued calculating the deviation scores between the pretest and the posttest followed by the squared deviation scores as follows.

Table 4 The Result of Score Deviation on Experimental Group

No	Initials	Score		Deviation ($x_2 - x_1$)	Square Deviation ($x_2 - x_1$) ²
		Pre- test (x_1)	Post- test (x_2)		
1	AHU	36	60	24	576
2	AY	52	56	4	16
3	AL	40	64	24	576
4	AHS	60	88	28	784
5	ARM	12	56	44	1936
6	DKL	28	68	40	1600
7	JH	52	60	8	64
8	JS	40	68	28	784
9	FW	32	60	28	784
10	MZK	52	72	20	400
11	MYP	60	80	20	400
12	MFR	56	60	4	16
13	MHU	16	52	36	1296
14	MAL	76	84	8	64
15	NL	28	88	60	3600
16	NAMF	64	76	12	144
17	NAM	80	84	4	16
18	NMA	76	92	16	256
19	SAS	68	88	20	400
20	SL	68	84	16	256
21	SAL	64	80	16	256
22	SSP	60	76	16	256
23	SB	44	84	40	1600
24	TAK	72	92	20	400
25	PWB	36	64	28	784
26	ZAA	20	68	48	2304
27	ZS	68	84	16	256
28	AU	64	92	28	784
Total Score		1424	2080	656	20608

Table 4 displays the deviation of the pretest and the posttest of the experimental group ranged from four to 60. It means, the students progress after receiving the treatment using Snowball Throwing Strategy varied. As a result, the value of squared deviation was also diverse. Similarly, the deviation score between the pretest and the posttest of the control group was various ranging from four to 48. The students progress appeared clearly although it was not as good as that of the experimental group. The following table was deviation and squared deviation scores of the students in the control group.

Table 5 Result of Pretest and Posttest of Control Group

No	Initials	Score		Deviation ($y_2 - y_1$)	Square Deviation ($(y_2 - y_1)^2$)
		Pre- test (y_1)	Post- test (y_2)		
1	AFB	56	60	4	16
2	ABN	76	80	4	16
3	AA	64	68	4	16
4	ARD	64	72	8	64
5	AM	56	64	8	64
6	COK	76	80	4	16
7	EN	52	56	4	16
8.	FA	36	52	16	256
9.	FH	24	52	28	784
10.	FP	44	52	8	64
11.	HSM	16	44	28	784
12.	HRR	72	76	4	16
13.	MW	44	72	28	784
14.	MFG	52	56	4	16
15.	MRB	56	64	8	64
16.	MRH	40	80	40	1600
17.	NS	76	80	4	16
18.	NR	52	88	36	1296
19.	PHN	44	56	12	144
20.	RB	56	68	12	144
21.	RFG	72	76	4	16
22.	RS	48	60	12	144
23.	SM	20	68	48	2304
24.	SSI	84	88	4	16
25.	TB	44	56	12	144
26.	THN	32	44	12	144
Total Score		1356	1712	356	8944

After computing the deviation and squared deviation scores of both groups, the researcher calculated the mean score deviation of the experimental and control groups. Therefore, the mean deviation of the experimental group was 23.42 and the control group was 13.69. Furthermore, before analyzing the data using t_{test} formula, the researcher computed the sum square deviation of experimental group was 5238.86 while the

sum square deviation of control group was 4069.54. To determine whether the hypothesis of this research is accepted or rejected, it should be justified by testing hypothesis. It is also used to find out whether the snowball throwing strategy as the treatment was carried out successfully or not. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted if the t_{counted} is higher than the t_{table} . In contrast, if the t_{counted} is lower than the t_{table} hypothesis is rejected. The researcher computed the t_{counted} value to find out the significant effect of the using Snowball Throwing Strategy on the students' ability in reading narrative text using t_{test} formula proposed by Arikunto (2010). The researcher found that the t_{counted} was 2.74. To find out the significant difference of the test, the researcher compared the value of the t_{counted} with the value of the t_{table} . The t_{table} value was obtained through applying the interpolation formula by Gujarati (2003). Therefore, df (52) of one-tailed test was 1.675.

DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher discusses about the finding of research. This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Bunta. The researcher took class VIII E as the experimental group and class VIII C as the control group of this research. Therefore, the researcher would like to discuss the process of conducting the pre-test, treatment, and the post-test.

The researcher did the pretest to find out the students' prior knowledge in reading a narrative text. It was administered to experimental group. By giving the pretest the researcher also obtained the first data which can be used as comparison of the student's improvement after the treatment. Based on the result of the students' pretest, it can be seen that only four students of the experimental group got high score of the minimum passing grade (70) of the school. The highest score was 80 and the lowest score was 12. It means the students have problem in reading ability. When the students read a text they are lack on vocabulary and comprehend the text so it is difficult for them to remember the meaning of words, and to find the specific information in reading texts.

The researcher also administered pretest to the control group. The result of the students' pretest of control group showed that six students got high scores, they are greater or same score than the minimum passing grade

(70). Meanwhile, the rest of the students got lower score (below 70). The highest score was 84 and the lowest score was 16. It means the ability of students in control group is higher than the students in the experimental group in reading ability.

In doing the pretest, the researcher found that the students still got difficulties in the same case. They have lack of vocabulary. Most of the students only know the text without knowing what the content of the text is they fail to catch the meaning of the word in the text because many words have more than one meaning that make students confused to determine the meaning.

After getting the students' problems based on the result of the pretest, the researcher conducted treatments to the students in experimental group for six meetings. Each meeting consisted of 2 x 40 minutes. The researcher used snowball throwing strategy to teach reading narrative text to experimental group. Whereas the control group used conventional method.

In first meeting, the researcher introduced narrative text and the social function of this text. Moreover, the researcher divided the students into groups and called each leader of the group. The leader explained the material to the group and asked the several students to read the story. Then, the researcher asked the students about the topic from the stories and applied Snowball Throwing Strategy. In the meetings after the students read the stories, the students write down the questions in one sheet of paper and the students make a ball. Then, the students throw the snowball and find one to answer. Second until six meetings the researcher applied the same strategy but different topic and story.

After giving the treatment, the researcher administered the posttest to both experimental group and control group in order to find out the students progress after the treatment. The researcher did posttest for experimental and control group. In the posttest, the test was in the same form as the pretest but the questions were different. From the posttest to both experimental and control groups, the researcher found that mean score of experimental group after the treatment was done is 74.29, whereas the mean score of the control class after treatment is 65.84. Based on the result, it shows that both experimental and control groups have gotten progress but the

progress itself was different. It could be seen from the score of experimental group students which was higher than the control group. It indicates that the students reading ability of the experimental group has been improved.

After having the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group, the researcher found that the sum square deviation of the experimental group is 5238.86, whereas the sum square deviation of the control group is 4069.54. Based on the sum square deviation of each group, the result of the t-counted is 2.74 and the result of t-table is 1.675. The results of the experimental group that used Snowball Throwing Strategy outperformed better than control group that did not use Snowball Throwing Strategy. This means that the Snowball Throwing Strategy has a strong influence to reading ability.

Finally, the researcher comes to conclusion that the hypothesis of this research is accepted. The data analysis shows that the students of experimental group had an increase, grade-wise, from the pretest to the posttest. To put it another way, improving reading ability of grade eight students at SMP Negeri 1 Bunta through Snowball Throwing Strategy is effective.

CONCLUSION

After discussing and analyzing all of the data, the researcher eventually concludes that the Snowball Throwing Strategy could help the students improve their reading ability, especially the students of grade eight of SMP Negeri 1 Bunta. It was proved by the result of the data above. The data shows that the t_{counted} (2.74) is greater than t_{table} (1.675). By looking at the result of the t_{counted} and the t_{table} , it could be concluded by the researcher that there is a significant improvement of the students' ability in reading narrative text. This could answers the research question that using Snowball Throwing Strategy can improve reading ability of grade eight students of SMP Negeri 1 Bunta. This strategy also encourages the students to be more participative in the classroom. It was because they were put in small groups which pushed them to be more active. It also enabled them to collaboratively work with their friends in group and to share their knowledge to the other same group members. Although initially the students were not interested, once the game was begun, the competitiveness in themselves was brought out.

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