



THE USE OF THINK-PAIR-SHARE IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION

A Case study of the English Teachers in SMKN 1 Randudongkal in the Academic Year of 2016/2017

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Abstract

This study was conducted to explore the English teachers' attitude toward the implementation of Think-Pair-Share in teaching reading comprehension. The aim was to describe the implementation of Think-Pair-Share in teaching reading comprehension by English teachers, reveal the difficulties faced by English teachers in teaching reading comprehension using Think-Pair-Share technique, and explain how the English teachers solve their problem in teaching reading comprehension using Think-Pair-Share technique. In this study, I used qualitative method. The participants of this research were all of the English teachers in SMKN 1 Randudongkal in the academic year of 2016/2017. In this research, I used questionnaire, interview, classroom observation and document analysis as data collection methods. The result revealed that the implementation of Think-Pair-Share in teaching reading comprehension was quite different for each teacher such as including all language skills, using game as variation, or implementing Think-Pair-Share with no variation. This study showed that there were two main problems faced by the English teachers: the lack of preparation and students' limited vocabulary. In conclusion, Think-Pair-Share was an interesting and helpful technique that helped English teachers in the teaching and learning process. Besides, it helped students to be actively engaged in the classroom activity.

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INTRODUCTION

Reading skill is considered as an essential skill as well as other three language skills. According to Alyousef (2006), reading can be seen as an “interactive” process between a reader and a text which leads to automaticity or (reading fluency). In this process, the reader interacts dynamically with the text as he/she tries to elicit the meaning and where various kinds of knowledge are being used: linguistic or systemic knowledge as well as schematic knowledge. In conclusion, the reader communicates with the text and tries to elicit the meaning of information that they got from it. We are not only reading the text, but also trying to understand what we are reading. Ability or skill of comprehending a message in the text is the goal of reading in a language instruction. Reading comprehension is the process of reconstructing meaning from text. Process of reconstructing meaning is the process of transform the information that is presented and illustrated how the readers can show they understand what they read (Sormin, 2011).

Reading is essential because through reading activity, the students can improve knowledge, information, news, attitudes, and wise in thinking (Listiani, 2014). Although reading is a familiar activity for students, this skill is still not easy to be mastered. In 2015, Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) revealed that the reading skill level of Indonesian Students is 69 from 76 countries which has been surveyed. This result was lower than Vietnam which has the level of 12 of all the surveyed countries (Natalia, 2016). It indicates that Indonesian students have very low average in reading comprehension. Comprehending the texts is not easy for students especially in English since they have to give all of their attention to the text. There may be some distractions that they face along the reading process.

Discovering the correct methods is an essential to help teachers in teaching reading comprehension to their students in order to make them interest in learning English with the result that the goal of teaching reading can be achieved and it will give impact on the improvement of students’ reading comprehension ability. In this study, I chose cooperative learning as an alternative in teaching reading comprehension. Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it (Kagan, 1994). Think-Pair-Share technique has many beneficial aspects for students. This kind of model could help students to improve their communicative skill by discussing with their classmates (Sugiarto, 2014).

This study is drawing from the theory of Bojovic (2010) as a reference about reading skill. Bojovic (2010) stated that “a reading skill is a cognitive ability a person is able to use when interacting with the written text”. Some students still find it difficult to master reading comprehension as Suparman (2012) explained that “the difficulties in comprehending the texts have been the main focused to find the solution” (as cited in Palupi, 2013). Shehu (2015) explained that “this difficulty in reading comprehension occurs for many reasons, the three most important ones are listed as follows: (1) Vocabulary. New words are seen by students as a great obstacle to comprehend a text. It is necessary for students to properly comprehend the words or the vocabulary of a written passage in order to be able to decode the message, thus comprehend a written text; (2) Working memory. The students often complain of the fact that they cannot recall the information they just read. They need to hold the information in working memory long enough for the information to be more extensively processed, and often some of them lack it; (3) Type of text. The type of text is another factor that influences a lot reading comprehension. It is considered to be one

major barrier. Some texts are easy to be perceived some others are very difficult.” To solve the problem, teachers need to provide appropriate method to help students.

This study also used a theory from Kagan and High (2002). “In classrooms in which the Kagan Structures are used regularly, students for whom English is a second language learn both English and academic content far more quickly and far more thoroughly than when traditional instructional strategies are used. With the Kagan approach, rather than planning cooperative lessons, we make cooperative learning part of any lesson by including structures”. Cooperative learning is a well known method as a successful teaching strategy. Think-Pair-Share, one of the structures developed by Frank Lyman and his colleagues at the University of Maryland, can be one of the solutions for reading comprehension problem. This structure will be beneficial for students since it is one way to incorporate cooperative learning into a classroom in order to give students the opportunity to actively process and develop a meaningful understanding of class material (Sampsel, 2015).

Reading is a tool for human to be able to communicate with others in the way of written form. Unfortunately, since many students still find it difficult to master reading comprehension, perhaps the implementation of cooperative learning method will help to solve the problem. The use of Think-Pair-Share is expecting that the students will be motivated to improve their ability to read well in English. The success of this implementation will be reached if the teachers play their role as effective as it should be.

Various techniques are provided in cooperative learning to help teachers in teaching process. One of them is Think-Pair-Share. This technique can be one of the solutions not only to solve students' difficulties in reading comprehension but also to help teachers by providing appropriate technique to teach reading comprehension. There are many previous studies that discussed Think-Pair-Share in helping students improving their skills. For instance, Narzoles (2012) conducted his study on the academic performance of ESL students and the results revealed that the experimental group exposed to the Think-Pair-Share strategy had enhanced academic performance after the treatment with 15.59 mean over the 11.10 of the control group. Bataineh (2015) found that students taught using cooperative learning strategies (Co Op-Co Op and Think-Pair-Share) had mean gain scores significantly different from those students taught using traditional strategy in the delayed posttest which lead to the fact that using such strategies in teaching undergraduate students at university enhanced the memorization of the students. Then, Raba (2017) for his research focused on improving students' oral communication skills in EFL classrooms and he also found that TPS made teachers became more aware of the importance of TPS strategy in improving students' oral skills. Next, some researchers tried to find out the effectiveness of Think-Pair-Share in improving students' ability in reading comprehension such as Asl et al. (2010) and Khaghaninejad (2015). They focused on the achievement of the students in reading comprehension. Their study showed that the treatment meaningfully influenced learner's reading ability and helped them get higher scores.

Those examples above showed that Think-Pair-Share used by many researchers in various of skills improvement. However, few studies have been done focusing only on the improvement of students' skills. It means, the research only focused on the result of the implementation of Think-Pair-Share technique whether or not the technique gave impact on students' ability such as in reading or speaking. Many previous studies such as I have mentioned before only focused on the improvement of students' score to indicate the success of Think-Pair-Share technique implementation in a certain skill. Only a few revealed the process of cooperative learning implementation. Therefore, I conducted a research that focused on the English teachers' attitude toward the implementation of Think-Pair-Share in teaching reading comprehension. I emphasized on the process of the implementation of Think-Pair-Share in teaching reading comprehension by the English teachers. The process of implementing Think-Pair-Share in teaching reading comprehension

included how teachers implemented Think-Pair-Share technique in the classroom, what difficulties that they might face and how they solved the problems.

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

This research was a case study since the main purpose of this study is to describe the implementation of Think-Pair-Share strategy for teaching reading comprehension by English teachers. According to Bogdan and Taylor, qualitative method is a research method that produces a descriptive data, for example written words or spoken words from the respondents and their attitudes (as cited in Widiastuti, 2010). Case study is essentially heuristic; it reflects in the events portrayed features which may be construed as a manifestation of some general, abstract theoretical principle (Hammersley, 2000). The study was conducted in SMKN 1 Randudongkal. The participants of this study were all of the English teacherS in SMKN 1 Randudongkal. There were three English teachers; Mr. Budi, Mrs. Ida, and Mr. Toni (all are pseudonyms). The English teachers were practitioners of cooperative learning since they usually use the method in their teaching and learning process.

The data in this study were taken from the questionnaire, the interviews, the classroom observations, and document analysis. The procedures of collecting data were as follows: (1) I gave the questionnaire as soon as I met the English teachers and asked them to write down their answer in the blank space; (2) After the questionnaires were done, I conducted the classroom observation. I asked the English teachers to use Think-Pair-Share in their class activity; (3) I did the interview after the classroom observation was done. The questions were the same as in the questionnaire (essay questions) but in addition to the prepared questions that I already had, I made other questions that I generated from classroom observations; (4) the document analysis was done throughout the study. The document that I analyzed was the lesson plan of the English teachers. Then, the procedures of analyzing data in this study were in three steps: (1) Data reduction, I collected all the data from questionnaire, interview, classroom observation, and document analysis. Then, I selected and simplified the data until it transformed into important data that I used for presenting the result; (2) Data display, the data display of this research was provided in the descriptive form. The findings were descriptively explained according to what had happened in the field. In this step, I organized all the data and described the answer of the problem statement, such as describing the implementation of Think-Pair-Share in teaching reading comprehension in SMK N 1 Randudongkal and describing the problem faced by the English teachers and how they solved them; (3) Conclusion drawing and verification, the conclusion was gained based on the data obtained.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The Use of Think-Pair-Share Technique in Teaching Reading Comprehension

The data were gathered from the questionnaires, the interviews, the classroom observations, and document analysis. In this research, there were three English teachers as research participants: Mr. Budi, Mrs. Ida, and Mr. Toni (all are pseudonyms). All of the English teachers implemented K-13 in their teaching and learning process. K-13 or the curriculum 2013 is a recent policy of the Ministry of Education in its efforts to continuously improve the quality of education in Indonesia. Every class in SMKN 1 Randudongkal used this curriculum according to the policy of the school. In this research, I observed all of the three English teachers. Since they had more than one classes, I decided to observe two classes for each teacher so I observed six classes in total. The classes were chosen randomly based on the schedule and the agreement of the English teachers and the

researcher. Since this research was a qualitative case study, the findings were presented in the form of descriptive explanation. Based on the data, I present the findings as follows:

The Implementation of Think-Pair-Share Technique in Teaching Reading Comprehension

I observed two classes of XII TKR (*Teknik Kendaraan Ringan*) they were XII TKR 2 and XII TKR 3. All of the students of XII TKR 2 are male while XII TKR 3 there are only three female students. From the document analysis, Mr. Budi did not make lesson plan for this meeting because both classes would only discuss the questions from examination sheet since they were preparing for their examination school. The lesson plan I got from Mr. Budi was the one which he used in the previous meeting when he taught the material for semester one such as factual report, offering services, giving news, and etc. Instead of English, the lesson plan still used Indonesian language. cooperative learning method was not stated in the lesson plan. Mr. Budi used some tools for supporting his teaching and learning process such as Laptop, LCD, and speaker. He implemented the technique in both classes with the right steps during the teaching and learning process. Mr. Budi and the students were discussing the reading section. First, students read the text by their own. Next, they were asked to answer the questions with their friends next to them. And then, they came in front of the class in pair to explain their answer. In the beginning of the lesson, Mr. Budi did not explain the procedure of Think-Pair-Share. He only told the definition to the students briefly. When he used Think-Pair-Share technique in his classes, the students were active and enthusiastic. The students were not afraid to ask question if there was something that they did not understand. Many students have to be chosen by the teacher in order to answer the question, yet there were some students who were brave enough rising their hand and coming forward to give their ideas about their answer. All language skills were included in Mr. Budi's class activities. For instance, writing skill when the students wrote some difficult words in the whiteboard and then speaking skill when the students came in front of class to present their answer with the reason. During the lesson, the teacher often used Indonesian even Javanese instead of English. He thought that the comprehension of the students were the first thing to be concerned in order to understand the material. Mr. Budi also gave variation in his teaching and learning process like involving the listening activity. For example, if there was a word which the students did not know the meaning, he would open the cambridge dictionary in his laptop and together with the students looked for the word. In terms of giving compliment, Mr. Budi always did so to those who could answer the question correctly but he did not blame those who could not. During the interview, Mr. Budi explained that there were some differences among classes he taught such as character and gender of the students. He explained that female students were more sensitive than male students so that he had to be careful of what he said. For instance, Mr. Budi sometimes used sarcasm as a joke to his male students, but he would not do so in a class full of female students. He was afraid if he would hurt their feelings (female students) and it would affect their interest in learning in his class.

Based on all of the data I obtained and analyzed, it was found that Mr. Budi implemented Think-Pair-Share technique in the same way in all classes that I have observed. He used the technique step by step appropriately. There was not so much variation, yet Mr. Budi was concerned more about including all language skills in the teaching and learning process such as reading, writing, listening and speaking skill as I have explained above. The use of aids for instance LCD and speaker also implemented during class activities.

The Implementation of Think-Pair-Share Technique in Teaching Reading Comprehension Exactly as its Procedure with No Variation

Two classes that I observed in Mrs. Ida's classes were X TPHP (*Teknologi Pengolahan Hasil Pertanian*) and X AK 2 (*Akuntansi*). These classes were the opposite of Mr. Budi's classes. Both classes were dominated by female students. Mrs. Ida did not make a lesson plan for her teaching and learning process. Instead, she used the lesson plan from the last year academic. In the lesson plan, cooperative learning method was not stated. The methods used were scientific learning, discussion and assignments. There was no specific technique that she would use in her classes. The same as Mr. Budi, Mrs. Ida used Indonesian for her lesson plan. During the observation, she did not use aids such as power point, video, LCD, laptop, etc while in the lesson plan it was written that she would use aids. Mrs. Ida did not explain the procedure of Think-Pair-Share to the students. In Mrs. Ida's class activities, there were included reading-speaking skill and reading-writing skill. There was no significant listening skill. There were no any variations in the used of Think-Pair-Share technique by Mrs. Ida. She implemented the technique as appropriate as its procedure. In the teaching and learning process, the teacher rarely gave compliment to the students. The students were less active and seldom spoke their mind. The teacher often should choose and enforce the students to answer the questions. Mrs. Ida also infrequently motivated the students to be brave to give their opinion.

Related to all of the data I had got, I found that the implementation of Think-Pair-Share technique in Mrs. Ida's classes aligned with its procedure. In the questionnaire, Mrs. Ida also wrote that she always followed the steps orderly. Each class received the same instructions. There was no variation when Mrs. Ida implemented the technique. Students stick to the text and then answered the questions which given by the teacher. Mrs. Ida also did not use any aids such as LCD, laptop or speaker to help her in the teaching and learning activities. She only relied on the handout (LKS) that she brought.

The Implementation of Think-Pair-Share Technique in Teaching Reading Comprehension Combined with Game

The last observation that I did was in Mr. Toni's classes. Two classes which I observed were XI AK 2 and XI AK 3. For both classes, Mr. Toni did not make a lesson plan to help him in the teaching process. The first class that I observed was XI AK 3. This class was dominated by female students. The procedure of Think-Pare-Share was not mentioned by Mr. Toni. He asked the students to read the text entitled "Cow" and then answer the questions with their seatmate. The students presented their answer in the written form. The second class was XI AK 2 and it was also dominated by female students. The material discussed was also report text but the teacher used variation in the teaching and learning process. For this class, Mr. Toni used a game which it is developed by himself. During the teaching and learning process, the students seemed active and enthusiastic to ask the group which came in front of class. Yet, the game took a lot of time because all students must find the paper; as a result, not all of the group could come forward in front of class to share their ideas.

From all of the data that I had got, I found that Mr. Toni implemented Think-Pair-Share technique differently in each class. Mr. Toni used a game as a variation in the teaching reading using Think-Pair-Share technique only in one class while the other class used the technique in the usual steps. Also, in the end of the game, the students presented their topic in group not in pairs which was contradictive with the procedure of Think-Pair-Share technique. The reason was to make it fast and encouraging students so that they brave enough to come forward in front of class and answered their friend's questions directly. In addition, Mr. Toni used aids in his teaching and learning process such as his laptop to input which group that already had come forward.

Problems Faced by English Teachers and How They Solved Them

From the implementation of Think-Pair-Share in reading comprehension, English teachers found some problems. It was based on the questionnaire, the interviews and the classroom observations two main problems were identified.

Lack of Teacher's Preparation

Two of the English teachers agreed that Think-Pair-Share technique was easy to be implemented. Yet, one of them said that this technique rather difficult to be used because the teacher was lack of preparation. This problem seemed unpretentious yet it could obstruct the process of teaching and learning in class. This was the first main problem that I taught it could give impact in the teaching and learning activities. It was found by Mrs. Ida when she taught X TPHP class. When I did the interview, Mrs. Ida admitted that she was lack of preparation because she was too busy. At that time, Mrs. Ida should have provided some questions for students to be answered. Since Mrs. Ida had not make it yet, she had to make several questions right away in the class and it took time. It would be better if Mrs. Ida had already prepared the questions before the class began so that she would not be confused to think what question should be mentioned.

Based on that problem, the solution for the lack of teacher's preparation was made a good preparation. Teachers had to make sure that it was well-prepared for the teaching and learning process. English teachers could start to make a good preparation by making a good lesson plan. Moreover, as far as I know, teachers were obligated to make lesson plans to help them in teaching students. Lesson planning is an important process in teacher trainees' gaining experience since it forces them to reflect on what to teach, how to teach, and how to evaluate (quoted from Nesari & Mina, 2014). In the case of Mrs. Ida, for the next class she used the questions that she made in the previous class so that she did not have to think again what questions should be mentioned.

Students' Limited Vocabulary

The main problem that Mr. Budi, Mrs. Ida, and Mr. Toni mentioned was the lack of students' vocabulary. Not only from the interviews but also from the classroom observations that I did in six classes, it was true that many students had problem with their vocabulary. For instance, in one short passage which contained five to six lines students could find more than ten difficult words. To help students gained more vocabulary, there were some efforts from the English teachers to solve this problem.

Mr. Budi used an electric dictionary in his laptop to help students understood the difficult words that they found in any text. Mr. Budi would ask the students to write all the difficult words in the whiteboard so that all of students could see the word list and even could take a note in their book. Then, with the help of Mr. Budi, students looked for the meaning of the words together using an electric dictionary. The students would read the meaning of the difficult word in English sentence and they try to interpret it by them self with the directive of the teacher. Since it was explained in English, they would also know more words or phrases.

Mrs. Ida also used dictionary to solve the problem of students' vocabulary. Through the interview Mrs. Ida explained that she would ask the students to open their dictionary to help them in understanding the meaning of the difficult words. Students relied on their own dictionary to look for the meaning of the difficult word. Mrs. Ida would explain what the text was about after the students have done understanding the text by them self and then correct them if there any mistakes in interpreting the meaning.

Mr. Toni had another way to help the students to improve their vocabulary mastery. He said that he would ask the students to memorize some vocabulary and then test them. However, this kind of method was infrequently used by Mr. Toni, so that the result was insignificant. Another problem that faced by Mr. Toni was pronunciation of the students. He said that many students still did not

speak English correctly. To overcome that problem, Mr. Toni asked the students to often speak in English. If they were miss pronouncing, Mr. Toni would correct them.

Discussion

This study revealed that vocabulary was one of the reasons of difficulties in reading comprehension. Specifically, the findings of this research showed that from six classes I have observed, there were many students that still have problem in understanding new words they found in text. It was also revealed by Shehu (2015) that the reasons of difficulties in reading comprehension was vocabulary, working memory, and type of text.

Based on the research, we could see that the use of Think-Pair-Share technique could help English teachers in teaching reading comprehension. They stated that this technique was easy enough to be implemented on students. English teachers made Think-Pair-Share as a part of lesson activity in their class. This is related to the theory I used from Kagan and High (2002) about including structures to make cooperative learning as part of any lesson in English classes in order to improve students' achievement. Still, the success of teaching and learning process depends on how English teachers deliver the material to the students. It is related to the way English teachers communicate with their students. A good relationship between teachers and students is needed as it would be a key of successful learning. Astuti and Lammers (2017) also explained that teachers become one of the factors that influences the teaching and learning process especially in the implementation of cooperative learning. Teachers' understanding of cooperative learning, which is part of the rules component, may create systemic tensions in an activity system. Therefore, an effective implementation of cooperative learning (i.e., one that enhances learning) through the enactment of individual accountability requires support from its social environment, especially from the teachers and their understanding of cooperative learning (Astuti & Lammers, 2017).

The quality of the relationship that the students and teachers have with each other would influence some factors such as academic achievement and student motivation. Positive relationship improves student behavior and motivation to learn as well as their academic achievement (Yunus et al, 2011). However, enthusiasm and motivation of the students were somehow changeable. It could be seen from the classroom observations such as found in Mr. Budi's classes when students started to get bored. English teachers have to be clever enough in order to keep students involve in the lesson activity and reduce the gap between the high-motivated students and low-motivated students in the teaching and learning process. This problem was also proved by Widyaningsih (2014) in her study that the English teacher should also be creative in using interesting activities in order to attract the students' involvement in the teaching and learning process.

During the classroom observations, with the use of Think-Pair-Share technique, students' confident leveled up to some degree. For instance, students would rather come forward with their partner than stand alone in front of the class to speak their mind. In every class I have observed, the students hesitated to come forward voluntarily if they were alone. Yet, with partner, students would be brave enough to show their ideas to others. Related to the previous studies that I have reviewed before, Palupi (2013) also revealed that Think-Pair-Share technique made the students feel more confident in telling their ideas with their friends.

From the interview that I had done, it showed that Think-Pair-Share helped students to be active and creative. In this case, especially when students were given some questions, they would actively participate in the class activity. With their partner, students would seek the answers of the questions. Then, they would deliver their answer with their creativity to arrange sentences by their own interpretation. The same finding was mentioned by Raba (2017) and Darsana (2010) from their study where they found that Think-Pair-Share could make active and creative participation since Think-Pair-Share gave students opportunities to show their creativity.

Since the students actively involved in the learning process, the class become alive and fun. Students freely spoke their mind whether they wanted to ask something or answer the question or maybe gave their opinion about the topic being discussed. Those kind of situation was also found by Andik (2013), he explained that during the process of teaching learning using Think-Pair-Share, the students were active and enthusiastic. The class was enjoyable and interesting during the teaching and learning process.

From the explanation above, it could be stated that students prefer to work in groups rather than individually. Students like to share and discuss their idea with their partner. As the previous study done by Lange et al. (2016) explained that the participants of their research were more satisfied with Think-Pair-Share technique as they prefer group work that promotes equal participants. This 'share and discuss' activity could give many benefits for students in enhancing their ability. This task sharing allows students to be responsible for presenting what they learned (production of the target language) and paying attention to their peers' presentations. During peer interaction, which usually took place between two performances of individual accountability, learners provided vocabulary feedback to each other, which also means production of the target language (Astuti & Lammers, 2017). The alternation of information between students during peer interaction is essential for learners' language acquisition and development.

CONCLUSIONS

From this study, I can conclude that the use of Think-Pair-Share in Reading Comprehension was relatively easy to be implemented in the classroom activity. It showed that this technique was appropriate to teach students in reading comprehension. Think-Pair-Share was an interesting and helpful techniques as all the English teachers mentioned in the questionnaire and also in the interview.

Through this research some problems were revealed. The first problem was the lack of teacher's preparation. This problem was mentioned by Mrs. Ida through the interview. Secondly, one problem which all of the three English teachers mentioned in the interview was students' vocabulary mastery. From the classroom observations, it revealed that all of students did not have good mastery of English vocabulary.

The first problem was the lack of teacher's preparation. This problem was mentioned by Mrs. Ida. For this difficulty, Mrs. Ida tried to solve it by paying attention more about preparing the materials before she started the next class. Then, for students' vocabulary mastery problem, even though all of the three English teachers used dictionary to solve it, they had different version in their implementation. Mr. Budi used an electric dictionary in his laptop, Mrs. Ida let her students used their own dictionary, and Mr. Toni sometimes asked his students to memorize the vocabulary.

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