

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF READERS' THEATER IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION AT THE THIRD YEAR STUDENTS OF SMPMAHA PUTRA TELLO MAKASSAR

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ABSTRACT

This research discussed about the implementation of Readers' Theater in teaching reading comprehension. The objective of the research was to find out whether or not the Readers' Theater affects on the students' reading comprehension. This research applied pre-experimental method consisting of eight meetings. The students were given a pre-test, then they were treated by applying Readers' Theater, and finally, they were given a post-test. The data were collected through reading test. The result of the data analysis showed that there was difference between the students' score in pre-test and post-test. It was proved by the mean score in post-test (6.58) was higher than the mean score in the pre-test (5.5). Moreover, the result of test of significant analysis indicated that the implementation of Readers' Theater affected the students' reading comprehension.

Keywords: *Readers' Theater, Reading Comprehension*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas tentang implementasi Readers' Theater dalam mengajarkan kemampuan membaca. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apakah Readers' Theater berpengaruh pada kemampuan membaca siswa atau tidak. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode pre-eksperimental yang terdiri dari delapan pertemuan. Para siswa diberikan pre-test, kemudian mereka diajar dengan menerapkan Readers' Theater, dan akhirnya, mereka diberi post-test. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes membaca. Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa ada perbedaan antara skor siswa dalam pre-test dan post-test. Hal itu dibuktikan dengan nilai rata-rata di post-test (6,58) lebih tinggi dibandingkan nilai rata-rata di pre-test (5,5). Selain itu, hasil ujian analisis signifikan menunjukkan bahwa pelaksanaan Readers' Theater mempengaruhi kemampuan membaca siswa.

Kata Kunci: *Pembaca Theater, Komprehensi Membaca*

INTRODUCTION

This research based on some students' experiences when the researcher had a preliminary study in July 2013 in order to find out some problems usually faced by students in study English. Some students stated that they had no interest in reading because the reading texts make them

confused, sleepy and bored. They thought that the text is only paragraphs consisting of many words which are difficult to be understood.

There were many factors affecting the problem. First, the students felt bored and confused when they saw reading texts without pictures. Second, the teachers did not apply appropriate techniques. In this case, the teacher always asked each student to read text loudly and gave them questions to be answered. As the result, students have no interest. The lack of interest affected classroom reading activity. As Daves and Whitney in Hamid (2011) stated that reading comprehension was not only about understanding the meaning of the text but also appreciating its overall significance to the readers and their interest in reading it. When the students' interest was low, it affected the students' attention. Attention and focus were needed to gain comprehension when reading.

To solve the problems, researcher considered that teacher needs a creative way of teaching. It was hoped to make the classroom reading activity more interesting and enjoyable. There were many creative techniques that can be used to teach reading, for example jigsaw technique, herringbone technique, and so forth.

One of the teaching techniques which can be used in classroom reading activity was *Readers' Theater*. It is one kind of role playing practiced in front of the class by students while reading the text in scripts. This technique can help students to focus on the content of the text because they are modeling the text immediately. Therefore, this technique also made the students directly involve in classroom activity. By reading and modeling the text, student was easy to understand the text. This technique was effective to be applied in the classroom as Larkin in Farris (2004: 108) states that *Readers' Theater* is an authentic way of motivating children, developing fluency, and building comprehension through repeated reading. As addition, Daves and Whitney in Hamid (2011) state that reading comprehension occurs when there is an active engagement with the readers' cognitive and experience. Many theories showed that *Readers' Theater* was an alternative in teaching reading but still there was no research conducted to prove those theories.

Furthermore, the problem statement of this research was "does the *Readers' Theater* affect the students' reading comprehension?." Then, the research objective was to find out whether or not the *Readers' Theater* affects on the students' reading comprehension. In addition, this research was theoretically expected to strengthen and prove the other theories about the effectiveness of *Readers' Theater* in reading comprehension for students. This

research was also expected to give practical contribution to English teachers. They can implement *Readers' Theater* to teach reading in the class as one of teaching strategy variation in the class. Finally, this research focused on reading comprehension. It was divided into some fields but the comprehension was assessed based on the detail information, unstated information, and word reference of the narrative text.

LITERATURE REVIEW

a. Reading

Tinker and Calloagh in Bahrayani(2012) state that reading is identification and recognition of printed or written built up through past experience. Haris in Afrilya (2012) defines reading as a process of meaning elaboration or thinking in relation to written symbols. The recognition and comprehension the written symbols are influenced by reader's perception, skill, experience, language background, mind set, and reasoning ability as they anticipate meaning on bases of what has been read.

In addition, Charles in Afrilya (2012) stated that reading is transmitting of information process of information process where the author tells all the readers about his idea or message. In conclusion, reading is an accepting written symbol process and decoding the symbol as information through thinking process.

b. The Purposes of Reading

Reading has different purposes. Readers' satisfaction is affected from what they read. They will be satisfied, when they read as they need. It indicates that the readers will have expectation before they read a text.

Grellet in Febriani (2011) states there are two purposes of reading. They are reading for pleasure and reading for information. Reading for pleasure means that the reader reads any literature to make them happy. Otherwise, reading for information means that the reader reads for getting information as they expected.

In addition, the purposes of reading according to Grabe and Stoller (2002) are classified into four purposes. The first is reading to look for simple information. Commonly, the readers scan the text to find out specific information or specific words. The second is reading to learn from text. It happens in academic context. It also requires remembering the word reference and supporting idea, and making a relation with the readers' knowledge. The next is reading to integrate information, write, and critique text. The last purpose is reading for general information.

Briefly, the purpose of reading is varies. The readers have some purposes to be achieved. One of the purposes is to comprehend. So, it is necessary to know about reading comprehension in order to reach the purpose.

c. Reading Comprehension

Comprehension is about understanding of something. Comprehension is a special kind of the thinking process. A reader comprehends by actively constructing meaning internally from interacting with the material that is read (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). Reading comprehension is the process of understanding the message that author is trying to convey. In addition, comprehending is making meaning from the text at hand (Farris, 2004).

According to Smith and Robinson in Febriani (2011), reading comprehension means the understanding, evaluating, and utilizing and idea gaining through interaction between reader and author. The interaction does not mean direct communication between reader and author. The interaction is a process when the reader received the message written by the author.

Comprehension can be seen in some ways in reading term. They are knowledge of word meaning, ability to select the appropriate meaning for a word or phrase in the light of its particular contextual setting, ability to follow the organization of a passage and to identify antecedents and references in it, ability to select the main thought of passage, ability to answer the questions that are especially answered in the passage, ability to answer the questions that are answered in the passage but not in the words in which the question is asked, ability to draw inferences from a passage about its contents, ability to recognize the literacy devices used in a passage and to determine its tone and mood, and ability to determine writer's purpose, intent, and point of view (Davis, 1994).

d. Skill in Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is an understanding process. Reader is considered to understand the text if they fulfill some indicators or skills. They are (1) the reader knows about the meaning of the words in the text. (2) The reader is able to select the appropriate meaning for a word or phrase in the lights of its particular contextual setting. (3) The reader is able to follow the organization of passage and to identify the antecedents and references in it. (4) The reader is able to select main thought of passage. (5) The reader is able to answer the questions that are especially answered in the passage. (6) The reader is able to answer the questions that are answered in the passage but not in the word in which the questions are asked. (7) The reader is able to

draw inferences from a passage about its contents. (8) The reader is able to recognize the literacy devices used in a passage and to determine its tone and mood. (9) The reader is able to determine writer's purpose, intent, and point of view (Davis, 1994).

There were three of some skills above which weretargeted by researcher. The first was ability of students to answer the detail information shown on the text. The second was ability to answer the questions that were answered in the passage but not in the words in which the question is asked. In the other words, the research targeted the students to be able to find out the unstated information on the passage. The third was ability to identify antecedents and references in it.

e. *Readers' Theater*

Sloyer in Patrick (2008) defines Readers' Theater as an oral presentation of drama, prose or poetry by two or more readers. Patrick adds that Readers' Theater is a form of group story telling in which performers read aloud a story using script.

Buzzeo (2011) in his article quotes some definitions of Readers' Theater. Flynn in Buzzeo (2011) states that Readers' Theater is a rehearsed group presentation of a script that is read aloud rather than memorized. Reinhart defines Readers' Theater as an interpretive activity in which children practice and perform for others a scripted reading. According to O'Neill, Readers' in Buzzeo (2011) Theater is dramatic oral expression that focuses on reading aloud rather than memorization. In addition, Martinez et al. in Buzzeo (2011) state that Readers' Theater is an interpretive reading activity in which readers use their voices to bring character to life.

Readers' Theater involved children in oral reading through reading parts in scripts. Unlike traditional theater, the emphasis is on the oral expression of the part. Readers' Theater is theater of imagination. It involved children in understanding their world, creating scripts, reading aloud, performing with a purpose, and bringing enjoyment to both themselves and their audiences.

Readers' theater is an example of a technique that uses several instructional forms shown to improve comprehension and fluency. Through this technique, students interest and motivation to read is also positively reinforced. Readers' Theater uses guidance, modeling, and independent student practice, while students rehearse a play, speech, poem, or other appropriate text. They rehearse until they are able to perform it. This is

different from other forms of theater because students are not expected to memorize or completely act out a reading.

Students orally read performance of a script which meaning is conveyed primarily through the readers' expressive and interpretive reading without movement, memorization, props, and costumes. This technique is enjoyable and motivating. It developed fluency and comprehension through repeated reading. When the students read the scripts more than one time, automatically their pronunciation will be better and the meaning of the text will be conveyed easily.

Besides reading comprehension, Readers' theater also requires creative writing and speech skill of the students. Reading, writing and speaking activities became more meaningful and fulfilling when taken out of the classroom and applied it directly in the class.

This technique requires many multiple intelligences and skill. In this research, the researcher focused only on reading comprehension. Thing to find out was how the Readers' Theater motivated the students' to read and how this technique affected the students' achievement in reading.

f. Steps of Readers' Theater

Readers' Theater consists of four steps. The first step is reading a story or piece from literature. In this case, the story read is narrative text. The second step is writing the script. From the story read, students make a script by making selective and analytical choices in order to transform the story. This is accomplished first, through discussion with the other reader and, second, through following specific guidelines which make the otherwise overwhelming task manageable even for fourth and fifth graders. The third step is formulating, practicing, and refining the reading performance of the script. The last step is performing the theater for audience. The students read aloud from hand-held script. Readers Theater originally began with the readers standing at lecterns with minimal gestures. However, over the years it has evolved to include elements of Stage Theater, such as interaction between players, expanded gestures, and sets and costumes. All of this depends upon the purposes and objectives of the teacher (Kelleher, 1997:6).

g. The Benefits of Readers' Theater

The use of Readers' Theater will give some benefits. The benefit will be got through the process of dramatization. Not only reading, but also speaking and listening skill will be developed by practicing Readers' Theater. Commonly, the use of this technique will develop fluency, word recognizing, and comprehension through emphasis on expressive reading

and repeated/ practiced reading. Furthermore, it is enjoyable because students directly practice and mimic the text. (Raskinski&Padak, 2010).

Readers' Theater also has benefit in social term. This technique will promote cooperative action and learning among students. Through the cooperation with peers, the shyest kids often bloom in Readers' Theater. It also encourages social interaction during reading time or practicing time (Buzzeo, 2011).

h. Choosing Text for Readers' Theater

Text for Readers' Theater at least has to fulfill some conditions. Fulfilling the conditions is expected to reach the aims of this technique. Text chosen has to be interesting for students. Commonly, the text used is narrative text. The text also has to include several characters. The characters will be dramatized by the students in group. So, the characters must be two or more. The important thing from the text is the dialogue. A text must consist of lots of dialogue in order to make fair the role of each student (Raskinski&Padak, 2010).

Almost any story can be scripted for Readers' Theater scripts. In general, it was better to look for stories that are simple and lively, with lots of dialog or action, and without too many scenes.

i. The Differences between Readers' Theater and Drama Stage

Readers' Theater is a script dramatization. Because this technique looks like drama, many people think that Readers' Theater is same as drama stage. These two kinds of dramatization are different.

There are three main differences between Readers' Theater and drama stage. First, Readers' Theater is performed using hand-held script. The script is read aloud and no memorization. Otherwise, the drama stage is performed using memorized script.

Second, Readers' Theater emphasizes on spoken words and gestures. The important things in the performance are words said by the actors and the meaning of their gestures. In drama stage, stage action and stage movement are emphasized.

Third, Readers' Theater does not use scenery, costumes, and props. The setting exists in mind of audience. It develops the imagination of the audience. Otherwise, drama stage uses scenery, costumes, and props in the stage performance (Buzzeo, 2011).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Some of previous related research findings about reading comprehension were presented as follow: Sari (1995) conducted her research on the use of picture in teaching reading comprehension. She found out that the second year students of SMP Hikmah Ujung Pandang were fair in reading comprehension. It was proved by the mean score obtained from their reading text which was only 6.30 for text with pictures and 5.66 for text without pictures. Kurnia (2012) in her research entitled "Reading Comprehension through Reading Culture Oriented Material" concludes that there is improvement when she treated students with culture oriented Material. The result of pre-test and post test showed significant difference. The mean score in pre-test is 61.96 and the mean score in post-test is 92.27.

The improvement in reading comprehension is also shown in Muhlis's research (2012). He conducted a research about reading comprehension by using Top-Down Technique. Students' reading comprehension is improved and the result showed that none of the students got poor in post-test.

Mujahidin (2012) also conducted research about reading comprehension by using Quantum Reading Method. The method is effective in improving students' reading comprehension. In addition, the method also improves students' confidence and it makes students enjoy when they learn reading.

The researches above showed some findings about reading comprehension. Most of the findings showed improvement in students' comprehension by using different techniques and methods. This research also discussed about same field. But, the technique applied was *Readers' Theater*.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is Pre-Experimental. The class was given pre-test, treatment, and post-test. The design was presented as follows:



(Arikunto, 2002)

Figure 2. *Research Design*

The researcher found out the students' prior-knowledge by conducting a pre-test. The students were given narrative reading text to be read. After reading, they were asked to answer some questions related to the

text. After conducting the pre-test, the researcher conducted treatment in order to improve students' reading comprehension. Students were introduced to Readers' Theater and involved them to be a part of it. After giving a treatment, the researcher conducted a post-test. The post test's process was same as the pre-test.

There were two variables in the experiment research. First, the independent variable was the using of Readers' Theater in reading activity to the third year students of SMP MahaPutra Tello Makassar in the academic year 2013/2014. Second, the dependent variable was students' reading comprehension to the third year students of SMP Maha Putra Tello Makassar in the academic year 2013/2014. Dependent variable was affected by the independent variable. Through this research, it showed that the using of Readers' Theater in reading activity affects students' reading comprehension or not.

The population of the research was taken from the students at the third year students of SMP Maha Putra Tello Makassar 2013/2014 academic year. The population consisted of two classes with 35 students. The researcher chose this school after a preliminary study showing that many students were not interested in English lesson especially reading. Besides that, the teachers of the school wanted to help and cooperated with the researcher.

The techniquesampling used in this research was total sampling. The researcher used total sampling because the total of the population is few. Sugiono (2012) states that total sampling is used when the population is relatively few. The research was taken all of the classes of the third years students of Junior High School as sample.

The instrument used in this research was a test. The students firstly were given narrative texts to be read. After that, they answered the questions related to the passage. The test consisted of 15 questions; five questions dealing with detail information, five questions dealing with unstated information, and five questions dealing withword reference.

The research procedures were pre-test, treatment, and post-test. the procedures as follows:

1. *Pre-test*

The researcher informed and socialized to the students about the steps of the research. Then, the students read a narrative text "Danau Toba" and they were asked to answer the question related to the text.

2. *Treatment*

After giving the pre-test, the students were given a treatment for eight meetings. The treatment was divided into 3 sections. The first section was the first until the fourth meeting. In this section, the researcher explained about reading comprehension and practiced the Readers' Theater with the students. The second section was the fifth meeting. In this section, the researcher gave another test for the students to find out their improvement. The third section was the sixth until the eighth meeting. In this section, researcher gave reinforcement for the students in order to strengthen their comprehension about the material.

3. Post-test

After the treatment, the post-test conducted to find out the students' achievement and their progress. The test was same with the pre-test.

FINDING OF THE RESEARCH

The findings that the researcher reported in this chapter were based on the analysis of data collected by using tests; they were pre-test and post-test. The findings of the research deal with the students' score of the pre-test and post-test, the differences of mean between pre-test and post-test, the mean score and standard deviation of students' pre-test and post-test, and hypothesis testing. After the experiment and analyzing the data, it showed an improvement of the students' post-test result as the researcher explains it the following data.

Scoring Category of the Students' Pre-Test and Post-Test

In this category, the researcher presented the frequency and percentage of the students' pre-test and post-test. It showed the improvement of the students' reading by comparing the pre-test and post-test.

Table 1. *Frequency and percentage of students' pretest and posttest*

Category	Score	Pretest		Posttest	
		F	%	F	%
Very Good	9.0 – 10	0	0	6	24
Good	7.0 – 8.9	8	32	8	32
Average	5.0 – 6.9	11	44	5	20
Poor	3.0 – 4.9	5	20	5	20
Very Poor	1.0 – 2.9	1	4	1	4
Total		25	100	25	100

Table 1 shows that almost half of the students were classified into average in pretest (11 out of 25 students or 44% were in average category). 8 out of 25 students (32%) were classified into good category. 5 of 25 students (20%) were classified into poor category. Only one of 25 students was classified into very poor category and none of them were classified into very good category. In line with the pretest, frequency and percentage the result of post-test shown in Table 4.1 above there were 1 out of 25 students (4%) were classified into very poor category, 5 out of 25 students (20%) were classified into poor category, 5 out of 25 students (20%) were classified into average category, 8 out of 25 students (32%) were classified into good category and 6 out of 25 students (24%) were very good category.

The Difference of Mean Score between Pre-Test and Post-Test

The following table shows the difference of mean score students' pre-test and post-test.

Table 2. *The difference of mean score between pre-test and post-test*

Mean Score		Difference	Remarks
Pretest	Posttest		
5.5	6.58	1.08	Increase

Based on the data shown in table 2, the mean score pre-test and post-test increased. Students' mean score in pre-test was 5.5, while students' mean score in post-test was 6.58. Mean score in post-test was higher than mean score in pre-test ($6.58 > 5.5$). The difference of both mean score was 1.08. Specifically, the differences of pre-test and post-test in three aspects of scoring can be seen from this following table:

Table 3. *The differences of pre-test and post-test in three aspects of scoring*

Aspects	Mean Score		Remarks
	Pre-test	Post-test	
Detail Information	3.56	3.4	Decrease
Unstated Information	2.84	3.4	Increase
Word Reference	1.36	2.56	Increase

Based on the data shown in table 3 the mean score of two analytical aspects increased and one analytical aspect i.e., detail information decreased. The detail information aspect decreased -0.14. The two analytical aspects that increased were unstated information (0.56) and word reference (1.2). Overall, the mean score of all analytical aspects showed the positive differences on

1.08 point (table 2) which meant that the students' reading comprehension increased.

The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Students' Pre-Test and Post-Test

The result of the students' pre-test and post-test was indicated by the mean score and standard deviation. The analysis of the mean score was meant to know if there was a difference between the students' score in pre-test and post-test.

Table 4. *The mean score and standard deviation of students' pre-test and post-test*

Test	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre-test	5.5	0.33
Post-test	6.58	0.48

Table 4 shows that there was a difference between the mean score of pre-test and post-test. The mean score of post-test was higher than the mean score of pre-test ($6.58 > 5.5$). It means that there was an improvement after learning and teaching process. The standard deviation of post-test was 0.48 and the standard deviation of pre-test was 0.33. It means that the scores range of post-test was closer than the scores range of pre-test to the mean score.

Hypothesis Testing

The mean score of pre-test and post-test showed an improvement but to know whether or not the difference was statistically significant, the researcher applied the t-test formula. In this case, the pretest and posttest score were analyzed at the significant level 0.05. The significant level was the error probability made by the researcher (Hasan, 2010). The following table shows the t-test of students' pre-test and post-test by using inferential statistic through SPSS version 19.0.

Table 5. *The t-test of the students' pre-test and post-test*

Variable	Alpha (α)	Probability Value
Pretest and Posttest	0.05	0.025

Table 5 indicated that the statistical hypothesis was based on statistic test of pretest and posttest in probability value (significant 2-tailed) where the probability value was lower than alpha ($0.025 < 0.05$). It means that there was statistically significant difference between students' achievement in pretest and posttest.

DISCUSSION

This section, the researcher explained the chronologies of collecting data included the matters found with the matters analysis. In the previous chapter, it had been described about the analyzing students' reading comprehension. In these following points, the researcher analyzed the matters found during the research in reading comprehension in three aspects of reading comprehension.

Detail Information

The measuring of detail information means the researcher analyzed the ability of students in answering the question that were especially answer in the passage. According to Davis (1994), finding the detail information is one of eight essential aspects in reading comprehension skills.

In the test conducted by the researcher, there were five questions dealing with detail information. Some students achieved all the answers correct in the pre-test, so did in the post-test. Findings showed that the mean score decreased but total of students who achieved the correct answer increase. It was caused by the students' concentration which was interrupted by students' extracurricular activity.

The students easily got the information from the text because they directly involved to model the reading text. They wrote the script, did some practices and worked in a group to understand every line they performed. In short, Readers' Theater gave them motivation to read and re-read the text to be able to perform well in front of the class.

Unstated Information

The measuring of unstated information means the researcher analyzed the ability of students in answering the question that were answered in the passage but not in the word in which the questions were asked. Davis (1994) also classified that finding the unstated information was one of eight aspects in reading comprehension skills. This section was more challenging than finding the detail information because the answers were not shown directly in the passage.

In the test conducted by the researcher, there were five questions dealing with detail information. There was no students achieved the all answers correct in pre-test but there was improvement in the post-test. Findings showed that the mean score increased and total of students who achieved the correct answer increase.

Readers' Theater is not only about reading a script but also acting it out with proper expressions. To know how to express a line, the students should have a deep understanding about the text. They needed to read it carefully to know what character they acted, what expression they should wore, or why the character did something in the story. By understanding the character, they knew the essence of the story eventhough it was not written in the text.

Word References

The measuring of word references means the researcher analyzed the ability of students in identifying the antecedents and references in the passage. Word references related to the pronoun and characters understanding in the passage (Thompson, 2014). It was also a part of reading comprehension skill (Davis, 1994).

In the test conducted by the researcher, this section was the hardest part of all. Almost the whole class did not achieve the right answers in the pre-test. The students did not understand about the word references and the main point of it. The students did not try to find the antecedents of the pronoun marked. They thought that they were asked about the character who said the line. Findings showed that the mean score totally increase even none of students who achieved all answers correct.

Before conducting the post-test, the researcher gave an explanation about word reference to the students. The explanation was helped by the Readers' theater. While reading the script, the students modelled every pronoun in the passage by pointing the reference, for example; when the students mentioned "he", they pointed the boy character as the references. The dramatization involved in Readers' Theater helped the students understand about the word references.

This research showed that Readers' Theater affected in teaching reading comprehension in fluency and comprehending. It was in line with Farris (2004) that Readers' Theater is a way to enchance students' oral fluency and to improve students' ability to decode and comprehend. This technique also motivated students to read the narrative text because the form of the text transformed into a script. Besides that, the students saw the character in the real life because they dramatized it directly in group.

Readers' Theater was an efficient technique. Teacher can apply it in the class easily because Readers' Theater did not use any scenery, costumes, and props. So, it will be a good alternative in teaching reading comprehension.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, the researcher puts forward conclusion as follows:

1. The implementation of Readers' Theater can improve the students' reading comprehension. The reading comprehension of students after being taught by using Readers' Theater and before treatment had significant difference. Therefore, it could be concluded that the third grade students of SMP Maha Putra TelloMakassar in academic year 2013/2014 have better writing ability by applying Readers' Theater.
2. One component in reading comprehension by implementing Readers' Theater namely detail information decreased, while two components namely unstated information and word reference improved. The mean score of overall analytical aspects shown the positive differences on 1.08 point which meant that the students' reading comprehension increased.

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