The Use of Guided Metacognitive Strategy to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension

Mikhael Misa

Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris-Universitas Timor

Jl. El Tari Km. 9 Kel. SASI TTU Nusa Tenggara Timur 85613. Email: misamikhael@yahoo.com

Abstract: This research aims to identify the implementation of metacognitive strategy to improve EFL of students' reading comprehension of the English Department at University of Timor in an analytical exposition text. This research is Collaborative Classroom Action Research (CAR). The data were gained through field notes, students' reading achievement and interview guide. The results showed that the implementation of metacognitive strategy improved the students' skill in reading analytical expository text especially in determining topic sentence, main idea and supporting idea. The result also revealed that using metacognitive strategy could employ the significant improvement of the students' reading comprehension skills of analytical exposition texts.

Key Words: metacognitive strategy, reading comprehension, analytical expository text

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi pelaksanaan strategi metakognitif untuk meningkatkan EFL pemahaman bacaan oleh mahasiswa di Jurusan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Timor dalam teks eksposisi analitis. Penelitian ini menggunakan Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) Kolaboratif. Data yang diperoleh melalui catatan lapangan, prestasi membaca siswa dan pedoman wawancara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pelaksanaan strategi metakognitif meningkatkan keterampilan siswa dalam membaca analitis teks ekspositori terutama dalam menentukan topik kalimat, gagasan utama dan ide pendukung. Hasil penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa menggunakan strategi metakognitif dapat meningkatkan dengan signifikan keterampilan pemahaman bacaan oleh siswa tentang teks eksposisi analitis.

Kata kunci: strategi metakognitif, pemahaman bacaan, analisis teks ekspositori

Reading is an activity to get information from a text. When we read, we must understand the implicit and explicit meaning from the text. According to Braunger and Lewis (2001) reading is a complex, interactive process, using basic skills and advanced strategies to make meaning. It is obvious that in reading activities, we make a communication with the writer by activating our prior knowledge and drawing a conclusion of the writer's ideas into our own so that it will help us understand what the writer meant.

However, sometimes the writers face some difficulties in stating their thoughts or feelings through reading comprehension. Those difficulties are also faced by the English Department when they are assigned to reading an analytical exposition text. Based on the preliminary study, almost students had problems on determining the topic, main idea, and supporting ideas of analytical exposition text in reading comprehension. As the result, they got low achievement in reading task. Most of the students got below 70.00. Only eleven of twenty nine students (37.9%) had score above 70, and the eighteen students (62.1%) got lower than 70. To overcome the problems, metacognitive strategy is proposed to be applied in improving the students' reading comprehension skills. The use of metacognitive strategy covers planning, monitoring and evaluation to improve the students' reading comprehension skills.

Metacognition is one of the important strategies used to promote reading comprehension. Metacognitive strategies consist of connecting new information to former knowledge, selecting thinking strategies deliberately, planning, monitoring, and evaluating thinking processes (Brown, 1994). According to Anderson (2000), metacognitive strategies can simply be defined as thinking about thinking. Students who

are metacognitively aware and know what to do when they do not understand; that is they have strategies to find out or to figure out what they need to do. They will determine and select strategies to define a difficult situation and investigate alternative solutions. They will evaluate time and energy as well as determine how well they can solve the problem until the satisfaction is met. Therefore, the metacognitive activities vary according to the current cognitive processing task.

The analytical exposition text chosen as the genre based reading instruction in the research can, hopefully, stimulate the students curiosity and critical thinking in reading and helping them to develop their knowledge and way of thinking as the university students. It is therefore, very urgent to design metacognitive strategy based on analytical exposition text to aid the students overcome their practical problem in reading.

In previous studies there are some of statements related to the teaching by using metacognitive strategies should be an successful way to improve students' reading comprehension shown by an increase in their achievement. The significant improvement on the participants' score was probably because of continuous practice on strategies which made them develop their thinking process and be able to think metacognitively (Wichadee, 2011). And unskilled readers can become skilled readers if they are given instruction in effective strategies and taught to monitor and check their comprehension while reading (Anderson, 2000).

Based on the explanations, this study aimed to implement metacognitive as strategy in teaching and learning of reading in order to improve the students' ability in reading analytical exposition text especially identifying topic, main idea and supporting idea in the text.

The result of this study is expected to be taken as a consideration in teaching reading especially for the English teachers and future researchers. For the English teachers who have similar problem, they implement metacognitive strategy as one of the alternatives use for improving students' reading comprehension. For the future researchers, they conduct the same research in other level of study with different subjects, setting and other text types to see whether metacognitive strategy is also applicable and successful to improve the students' reading comprehension.

METHOD

The research design is collaborative Classroom Action Research (CAR) where the researcher acted as the observer and the classroom English teacher conducted teaching and learning activities. In this research, the researcher conducted teaching and learning activities and the classroom teacher as the observer because the lesson plans that had been discussed collaboratively were designed as students-centered lesson plans so it was no matter who conducted the teaching and learning activities with a cyclical process that consists of planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting.

The subjects of the research were the second semester students of English Study Program at University of Timor in the academic year 2012/2013 which consisted of 29 students; 10 males and 19 females. The data were collected through a reading comprehension test, observation sheet, field notes and an interview guide during the teaching and learning process.

The Procedures of the Research in One Cycle

The implementation of the researcher and students relate to the process of how the teacher guided the students to take part in the teaching and learning process throughout the implementation of the metacognitive strategy which consists of three stages of instruction; pre-reading activities covered (planning), whilst-reading activities covered (monitoring and evaluation), and post-reading activities.

First, in pre-reading (planning) activity could be categorized as conveying learning objective, introducing the topic and activating the students' background knowledge. According to Grabe in Richard and Renandya (2002) activating schemata supports comprehension by calling up stable background knowledge representations that supports and interpret the text knowledge. Wainwright (2007) adds that by activating background knowledge and experience the students could easily understand the materials, because the broader this is, the more likely the students are to be able to tackle materials of greater difficulty drawn from a wider range of subject areas. Breadth of the scope breeds more breadth as well as greater depth of understanding. In short, eliciting the students' prior knowledge in advance will help them to comprehend the text easily.

The researcher showed students the topic to be discussed by using some picture and real object for such task, enabling them full attention to use the written language, Harmer (2004) enforces that pictures can enable the text, giving the readers (or students) an extra visual dimension to what they are reading, they have power to engage students. Then, the researcher gave some questions about the topics and a model of metacognitive strategy to make them understand how to apply it.

Second, in whilst-reading (monitoring and evaluation) activity, the researcher did some steps. The researcher also guides the students to form in groups (a group of four) and pointing student as a leader, recorder/secretary, checker and reporter. These ways could facilitate the students to focus their attention in understanding the content of the text. In line with this, Brown (2007) group work has at least four advantages, namely (1) generates interactive language, (2) offers an embracing effective climate, (3) promotes learner responsibility and autonomy, and (4) it is a step toward individualizing instruction. And then, they are 1) giving a text for each group, 2) guiding the students in reading fast and silently, according to Nation (2009) increasing silent expeditious reading speed can be done by skimming and scanning. In skimming the reader goes through a text quickly, not noting every word but trying to get main idea of what the text is about. Whereas scanning involve searching for a particular piece of intonation in a text, in line with Anderson (2001) argues that the readers were thinking when they used a particular symbol in the text, such techniques would allow detailed exploration of processing problems associated with particular features of text and the strategies that readers used to overcome such problems, in accordance with Garder (2005) states that finding the writer's main ideas and key supporting details that can help to understand the content of the course, demonstrate understanding and establish the ideas, it includes: read and trouble-shoot, according to Harmer (2004) troubleshooting is also needed by teacher when he or she monitors groups work activities, sees how well they are doing and deciding whether or not to go over and intervene, 3) guiding students to discuss how to do the task based on the passage that they have read. 4) Monitoring the students' activities and giving them assistance, 6) leading students to read the tasks individually. Lewis in Richard and Renandya (2002) emphasizes that the task is most specific type of small group activity in the language class. It can have a variety of goals, which students select depending on their level and interest.

To comprehend the reading materials, the teacher gave students some questions dealing with the text in group. This activity aimed to measure the students' comprehension on the text they had read. The teacher monitored this activity by checking their works to ensure that they could follow the instruction. The teacher asked the volunteer of the groups to answer the questions and give the responses.

Third, post reading activity was the last stage of the procedure, this activity was aimed to guide students to make conclusion of lessons that they have learned and do reflection of learning process. The teacher assisted the students who got the difficulty in applying metacognitive strategy by leading with some questions. Thus, by conducting this activity the teacher could make evaluation of the learning process. This activity belongs to reflective teaching, according to Richard (2002) describes that reflecting teaching is an approach to teaching which is based on a belief that teachers can improve their understanding of teaching and the quality of their own teaching by reflecting critically on their teaching experiences and develop the skills of considering the teaching process thoughtfully, analytically, and objectively as a way of improving classroom practices.

RESULTS

Based on the result of reading comprehension test which was conducted in one cycle that consists of four meetings of the implementation of the metacognitive strategy was done on January 2013. And at the end of each meeting was administered comprehension test. This part also showed the result of the students' reading comprehension test, the result of observation sheets and field notes toward the students' involvement during the reading comprehension process. The description of the individual progress can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The students' Individual Score in Preliminary Study

No	Score range	Number of the Students	Percentage (%)
1.	80 - 100	5	0.17
2.	70 - 79	6	0.21
3.	69 - 69	11	0.38
4.	50 - 59	6	0.21
5.	0 - 49	1	0.03
Total		**29 Students**	**100%**

In Table 1 showed that the students' individual score of preliminary test were one out of 29 students (0.03%) got the score at the range of 0-49, 6 out of 29 students (0.21%) got score 50-59, 11 out of 29 students (0.38%) got the score at the range of 60-69, 6 out of 29 students (0.21%) got score 70-79, 5 out of 29 students (0.17%) got the range score of 80-100 *(See Appendix 2)*. In contrast to the students' individual score and the minimal passing grade score in the following Table 2.

Table 2 showed the improvement of the students' individual score of the meeting one test. Each range of score had achievement, no one (0%) achieved the score at the range of 0-49, no one out of 29 students (0%) achieved the score at the range of 50-59, 7 out of 29 students (0.24%) achieved score at the range score of 60-69, 11 out of 29 students (0.55%) achieved the score at the range of 70-79, and 9 out of 29 students (0.31%) achieved the score at the range of 80-100. The minimal passing grade were 16 out of 29 students (0.55%) achieved higher score, 12 out of 29 students (0.41%) achieved lower

than 76.00. The improvement of the first meeting also implied to the students' mean score, the detail progress is presented.

In Table 3 showed that the improvement of the students' individual score of the meeting one test. Each range of score had achievement, no one (0%) achieve the score at the range of 0-49, no one out of 29 students (0%) achieved the score at the range of 50-59, no one out of 29 students (0%) achieved score at the range score of 60-69, 13 out of 29 students (0.45%) achieved the score at the range of 70-79, and 14 out of 29 students (0.48%) achieved the score at the range of 80-100. The minimal passing grade were 21 out of 29 students (0.72%) achieved higher score, 8 out of 29 students (0.28%) achieved lower than 76.00. The improvement of the second meeting also implied to the students' mean score, the detail progress is presented.

In Table 4 showed the improvement of the students' individual score of the meeting one test. Each range of score had achievement, no one (0%) achieved the score at the range of 0-49, no one out

Table 2. The Students' Individual Score in Meeting I

No	Score range	Number of the Students	Percentage (%)	Minimal Passing Grade (KKM) 76%	
				higher	lower
1.	80 - 100	9	0.31	16	12
2.	70 - 79	11	0.55		
3.	69 - 69	7	0.24		
4.	50 - 59	-	-		
5.	0 - 49	-	-		
	Total	**29 Students**	**100%**	**O,55**	**0,41**

Table 3. The Students' Individual Score in Meeting II

No	Score range	Number of the Students	Percentage (%)	Minimal Passing Grade (KKM) 76%	
				higher	lower
1.	80 - 100	14	0.48	21	8
2.	70 - 79	13	0.45		
3.	69 - 69	-	-		
4.	50 - 59	-	-		
5.	0 - 49	-	-		
	Total	**29 Students**	**100%**	**0,72**	**0,28**

Table 4. The Students' Individual Score in Meeting III

No	Score Range	Number of the Students	Percentage (%)	Minimal Passing Grade (KKM) 76%	
				higher	lower
1.	80 - 100	22	0.76	27	2
2.	70 - 79	7	0.24		
3.	69 - 69	-	-		
4.	50 - 59	-	-		
5.	0 - 49	-	-		
	Total	**29 Students**	**100%**	**0,93**	**0,07**

of 29 students (0%) achieved the score at the range of 50-59, no one out of 29 students (0%) achieved score at the range score of 60-69, 7 out of 29 students (0.24%) achieved the score at the range of 70-79, and 22 out of 29 students (0.76%) achieved the score at the range of 80-100. The minimal passing grade was 27 out of 29 students (0.93%) achieved higher score, 2 out of 29 students (0.07%) achieved lower than 76.00. The improvement of the third meeting also implied to the students' mean score, the detail progress is presented.

In Table 5 showed the improvement of the students' individual score of the meeting one test. Each range of score had achievement, no one (0% achieved the score at the range of 0 - 49, no one out of 29 students (0%) achieved the score at the range of 50-59, no one out of 29 students (0%) achieved score at the range score of 60-69, 11 out of 29 students (0.38%) achieved the score at the range of 70-79, and 18 out of 29 students (0.38%) achieved the score at the range of 80-100. The minimal passing grade was 29 students (100%) achieved higher score, no one students (0%) achieved lower than 76.00. The improvement of the meeting IV also implied to the

students' mean score, the detail progress is presented.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings and discussions, it revealed that the student's reading comprehension skills in reading analytical expository text was successfully improved. It was to say that the metacognitive strategy could improve the students' reading comprehension skill of analytical expository texts in the reading instruction of the second semester students of the English Department at University of Timor. It is also encouraged the students to be motivated in reading as well as built up their self-confidence in learning. The student's improvement in reading comprehension using the intended strategy in current research can be shown by the students' average scores obtained from the preliminary study until the test conducted after implementing metacognitive strategy as shown in Figure 1.

From the Figure 1, it is obvious that the students' average score of reading comprehension test in the preliminary study was 68.51% had successfully im-

Table 5. The Students' Individual Score in Meeting IV

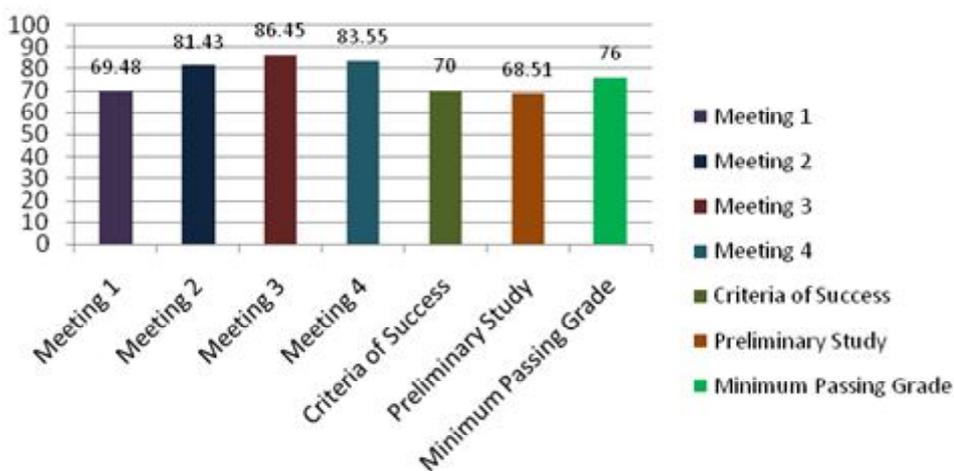| No	Score range	Number of the Students	Percentage (%)	Minimal Passing Grade (KKM) 76.00	
				higher	lower
1.	80 - 100	18	0.62	29	0
2.	70 - 79	11	0.38		
3.	69 - 69	-	-		
4.	50 - 59	-	-		
5.	0 - 49	-	-		
	Total	**29 Students**	**100%**	**100%**	**0%**

Figure 1. The Students Achievement' Score in each Meeting

proved after implementing the metacognitive strategy as shown in their average score in the test conducted after the action of each meeting that we can view from the first meeting was 69.48%, the second meeting was 81.43%, the third meeting was 86.45%, and the fourth meeting was 83.55%. Shortly, the Minimum Passing Grade (KKM) which had been set up in the planning of the action was 76.00. It had been achieved successfully in the test after the action. The determining of score 70.00 for the criteria of success is based on the reason that is stipulated by the researcher who considers the students' score before the action. The determining of the score 76.00 for students' reading achievement is based on the KKM stipulated by the school.

The use of the metacognitive strategy in the current classroom action research has shown to be a successful strategy to improve reading comprehension skills of analytical expository texts. Through the implementation of the strategy, the students were easy to identify topic, main idea and supporting detailed information in the text; and to recognize the source of information to answer the comprehension questions in the reading instruction. The metacognitive strategy also motivated them to link the author's opinion in the reading texts with their real life situation. Furthermore, it was easy for the students to identify the content of analytical expository texts, especially the topic, main idea and supporting ideas by employing the strategy in reading comprehension activities and it could improve their reading comprehension result as indicating of the improvement of their skills. Moreover, in the current study, the improvement of the students' comprehension in reading was also triggered by the teacher's modeling in applying metacognitive strategy in reading comprehension instruction. It is then modeling was really helpful to help the students understood how to apply the strategy in the reading process.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

In relation to the research findings and discussions of the implementation of metacognitive strategy previously, it is concluded that metacognitive strategy can improve the students' reading comprehension, especially in determining the topic, main idea, and supporting ideas of analytical exposition text. Besides, the improvement of the students' involvement or par-

ticipation in reading activities also existed. This study had been successful to make some improvement to the students.

Students' reading comprehension skills could achieve the minimum passing grade and the required scores as criteria of success. It meant that the criteria of success were successfully achieved in action research and the minimum passing grade which had been set up in the planning of the action had been achieved successfully in the test after the action. Furthermore, metacognitive strategy gives positive impact toward the students' reading comprehension skill in the instruction process in which metacognitive strategy implemented.

In implementation of the metacognitive strategy procedure covers planning, monitoring and evaluation. In the pre-reading (planning) phase: (1) conveying learning objective, (2) carrying out more actions and activating the students' background knowledge related to the topic by showing a picture and asking questions, and (3) introducing the topic. In the whist-reading (monitoring and evaluation) phase: First, in monitoring; (1) dividing the class into small groups (group of four) as a leader, recorder/secretary, checker and reporter and provides each of them with a reading text, (2) asking a student to read the text loudly, (3) asking the students to discuss the reading text and fill the main idea graphic organizer in their group, (4) identifying the reading text through the questions given (5) monitoring students and giving them assistance, Second, in evaluation; (1) asking the students to discuss the reading text and fill the cause and effect charts based on the result of their discussion/sharing in their group, (2) developing the students' understanding of the reading text by asking questions, (3) teacher sum up the information of the text by asking questions, (4) asking a representative students of each group to present what the group learned from the text. The last, post-reading phase, (1) asking the students if they have difficulties in comprehending the text by using metacognitive strategy and (2) guide students to take conclusion of the lessons that they have learned and do reflection of learning process and (3) giving them the next task or home task.

Suggestion

Based on the research findings, and discussions, some valuable suggestions are offered to the English reading teachers, lecturers and future researchers.

For the English reading teachers and lecturers, it is suggested that metacognitive strategy implemented in this study is a guided strategy to improve the students' reading comprehension skills in reading interaction in the classroom since it is a successful strategy to improve the students' skill in reading and enable the students to identify the topic, main idea and supporting ideas of the texts accurately. In implementing the metacognitive strategy in teaching reading instruction, the teacher should initially model the strategy to the students in order to help them easily use the strategy in reading activities. After that, learners should be able to use their own strategy without the teacher's guidance. Moreover, the teacher should also directly guide the students when they have the problem in utilizing the strategy during the reading activities. In order to develop the students' motivation in reading the teacher should focus the instruction on comprehension rather than on the form of the language. It is marked that when the instruction focuses on the content, the students' motivation in turn taking in the discussion is highly settled.

For future researchers, the findings of this research can become a good reference when they want to conduct similar research. The implementation of metacognitive strategy can be used to teach not only analytical exposition text but also for another text types. It is also suggested to conduct the same research about the implementation of metacognitve strategy in teaching reading comprehension with different setting and subject for the improvement of the students' reading ability in other level of study to see whether metacognitive strategy is applicable and successful to improve the students' reading comprehension achievement.

REFERENCES

Anderson, J.R. 2000. *Learning and Memory: An Integrated Approach* (2nd ed.). New York: John Willey & Sons.

Anderson, J.C. 2001. *Assessing Reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, H. D. 1994. *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Brown, H.D. 2007. *Teaching by Principle: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (3th edition). White Plains: Pearson Education.

Braunger, J., & Lewis, J.P. 2001. *Building Knowledge Based in Reading*. Second Edition. Delaware: International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English.

Cubukcu, F. 2008. *Enhancing Vocabulary Development and Reading Comprehension through Metacognitive Strategies*. Issues in Educational Research (Online), 18(1), (available on http://www.iier.org.au/iier18/cubukcu.pdf, accessed on April 18th 2012).

Cahyono, B.Y., & Widiati, U. 2006. *The Teaching of EFL Reading in Indonesian Context:* the State of the Art. TEFLIN Journal, 17 (1): 37-60.

Carr, W. & Kemmis, S. 1986. *Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research*, (Online), (http://www.enquirylearning.net/ELU/Issues/Research/Res1Ch4.html, accessed on April 20th 2013).

Harmer, J. 2004. *The Practice of English Language teaching*. (4th edition). Essex: Peason Education.

Iwai Yuko. 2011. *The Effects of Metacognitive Reading Strategies: Pedagogical Implications for EFL/ESL Teachers*, (Online), The Reading Matrix © 2011 Volume 11, Number 2, April 2011, (http://www.readingmatrix.com/articles/april_2011/iwai.pdf, accessed on April 18th 2012).

Kuhn, D. 2000. *Metacognitive Development, Current Directions in Psychological Science.*

Nation. 2009. *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J.C,. & Renandya, W.A. 2002. *Methodology in Language Teaching, An Antology of Current Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wainwroght, G. 2007. *How to Read Faster and Recall More. Learn the art of Speeding Reading with Maximum*. Begbrocke: How to Books.

Wichadee, S. 2011. The Effects of Metacognitive Strategy Instruction on EFL Thai Students' Reading Comprehension Ability. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning*, (Online), Volume 8, Number 5, (http://journals.cluteonline.com/index.php/TLC/article/view/4255/4348, accessed on October 9th 2012).