

THE USE OF POSSE STRATEGY TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF EIGHTH GRADERS AT MTS N 8 SLEMAN IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2017/2018

PENGGUNAAN STRATEGI POSSE UNTUK MENINGKATKAN KEMAMPUAN MEMBACA SISWA KELAS VIII MTS N 8 SLEMAN PADA TAHUN AJARAN 2017/2018

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to improve the students' reading comprehension of Grade VIII F of MTs N 8 Sleman through the use of POSSE strategy. The type of this research was classroom-based Action Research. The subjects of this research were 32 students of Grade VIII F. The data of this research were in the form of qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data were collected through classroom observation and interviews. The results of the qualitative data were in the form of field notes and interview transcript. Meanwhile, the quantitative data were obtained from pre-test and post-test and they were in the form of students' scores. With regard to the implementation of the two cycles, the use of POSSE strategy improves the students' reading comprehension ability, students' attitude towards reading, and the teaching and learning process of reading. The improvement of the students reading comprehension is also reflected in the students' scores which increase from 46.4 in the pre-test to 72.5 in the first post-test and 82.4 in the second post-test.

Keywords: reading, POSSE strategy, improvement

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa kelas VIII F di MTs N 8 Sleman melalui penggunaan strategi POSSE. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian tindakan kelas. Subjek penelitian adalah 32 siswa kelas VIII F. Data penelitian berupa kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Data kualitatif diperoleh dari observasi kelas dan wawancara. Hasil dari data kualitatif berupa catatan lapangan dan transkrip wawancara. Sementara itu, data kuantitatif diperoleh dari pre-test dan post-test berupa nilai. Berdasarkan implementasi strategi POSSE dalam dua siklus yang telah dilakukan, strategi ini meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa, perilaku siswa terhadap pembelajaran membaca, dan juga proses belajar mengajar di kelas. Peningkatan kemampuan membaca siswa juga dapat dilihat dari nilai siswa yang meningkat dari 46.4 di pre-test ke 72.5 di post-test 1 dan 82.4 di post-test 2.

Kata kunci: membaca, strategi POSSE, peningkatan

INTRODUCTION

English is considered as an international language, which has been broadly spoken by millions of people all over the world. People from different countries both as native and non-native speakers use English to communicate with others. English has also been playing a major role in every part of life such as communication, education, technology, and business. Therefore, people need to understand and master English due to globalization era.

In Indonesia, English is regarded as a compulsory subject learned by students. English is taught in almost every educational level from elementary school up to university. The teaching and learning of English itself includes four skills of English namely listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Reading is one of the four language skills that needs to be acquired by students in learning English. There is no doubt that reading is as important as the other three language skills. As stated by Carrel, Devine, and Eskey (1998),

reading plays a crucial role in language learning. For many students, reading is by far the most important of the four skills in a second language, particularly in English as a second or foreign language. It is through reading that the language learners access a large amount of information concerning the target language and culture. Furthermore, Mikulecky and Jeffries (2007) state that reading can improve the students' general language skills in English. Through reading, students learn about people, places, and events which are outside of their own experiences. They are taught about life, ideas, and beliefs about the world which is maybe different from those which surround them. Besides, it is said that reading can improve students' vocabulary. This is not very surprising since the more students read, the more their vocabulary grows (Cunningham & Zibulsky, 2013).

In the teaching and learning process of reading, most of the reading activities focus on reading for comprehension. As argued by Nunan (2003), reading for

comprehension is the main goal of reading. The students' skills in comprehending a text lead them to understand what they read. The students are always asked to comprehend a text by their teacher. The reason is because reading comprehension is used to measure students' achievement in English. For example, reading comprehension takes the biggest part in every English examination so that the students are expected to have a good ability in reading comprehension.

As a matter of fact, the researcher observed that students' reading comprehension ability of junior high school was still low. Based on the preliminary observation that had been conducted in MTs N 8 Sleman, the researcher found out that the students of grade VIII F still had some difficulties in reading comprehension. Those problems came from several factors. First, the students lacked the vocabulary mastery. Since they did not know the meaning of many words in the texts, they were not able to understand what they read. Second, the students had problems in comprehending the

content of the text. They still found it difficult to determine the topic of the text, the main idea, stated and unstated information, and references. Moreover, their motivation in learning reading was low that made them lacked reading practice. Third, the teaching and learning process was monotonous. The teacher did not use any appropriate strategy to help the students comprehend the text properly. Besides, the learning materials and learning media that were used in the teaching and learning of reading were insufficient.

Since reading becomes one of the important skills in learning English, teaching reading in the classroom should be conducive and supportive to improve students' reading skills. A teaching strategy needs to be implemented to overcome those problems. There are some ways that can be used by teachers in order to improve students' reading comprehension. One of them is by employing POSSE (Predict - Organize - Search - Summarize - Evaluate) strategy developed by Englert and Mariage (1991).

In relation to the teaching of reading, Englert and Mariage (1991) state that POSSE strategy can effectively increase students' reading comprehension. It can help them to activate their prior knowledge then link it with the new one. Furthermore, the strategy can also encourage them to organize their prior knowledge, then summarize and elaborate on the connections between what they already knew and what they have learned. Smith et al. (2007) state that the POSSE strategy utilizes a variety of reading strategies for comprehending material. It includes many reading practices that can aid reading comprehension, such as graphic organizers, text structures, stimulation of student background knowledge, and self-monitoring. In addition, students are highly motivated in the reading activities, especially in finding the topic, main idea, and supporting detail of the text since they are given a chance to be active in the teaching learning process.

Having considered the problems, and also POSSE as the strategy, the researcher attempted to

conduct classroom-based Action Research with the use of POSSE strategy in order to improve students' reading comprehension of eighth graders at MTs N 8 Sleman.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was classroom-based Action Research which included 32 students of Grade VIII F MTs N 8 Sleman as the participants and the English teacher as the collaborator. This study gathered two kinds of data which were qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data were obtained through interviews and observations in the classroom during the teaching and learning process. Besides, the results of the scores of students' reading tests became the quantitative data. The steps of the research used the action research model designed by Kemmis and McTaggart as cited in Burns (2010) consisting of planning, action, observation and reflection.

In collecting the data, the researcher used some research instruments. Each research instrument supported each other.

First, to gain the real situation and the condition of teaching and learning, some observations were carried out. During the observation process, observation checklists were needed to record the observation data. Second, to get deeper information related to the research, some interviews were conducted. The researcher interviewed some of the students and the English teacher using interview guideline. Next, reading tests were used to get information about students' reading skills. The pre-test was conducted before the implementation. It gave some information about the students' writing ability before the actions. Then, the post-test was utilized to measure the students' reading skills after the actions.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research were drawn from the students' scores, the interview transcripts, observation checklists and field notes. In Cycle 1, there were some improvements in their vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension

ability although it had not been maximal yet. Besides, the students' enthusiasm also improved. Some of the students were interested and actively engaged in the teaching and learning activity.

Meanwhile, in Cycle 2, most of the students could implement each step of the POSSE strategy well. Their vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension ability improved better than in the previous cycle. Furthermore, students' motivation towards the teaching and learning process of reading also increased.

This finding is in line with Englert and Mariage's. First, POSSE strategy helped the students to activate their background knowledge so that they could find the topic of the text by doing prediction activity. Second, the strategy helped the students to comprehend the text effectively by using graphic organizer.

Regarding the improvement in the teaching and learning process, the implementation of the POSSE strategy that was accompanied by various activities increased the

students' motivation and participation in learning reading. They enjoyed the process of teaching and learning. They actively got involved in the discussion and also paid attention to the teacher.

In order to support the findings, the quantitative data were obtained. To obtain the data, the pre-test and post-test were conducted. The students' reading comprehension was assessed by the researcher through the pre-test and post-test. The table and graph below show the improvement of students' mean scores from pre-test, post-test I, and post-test II.

Table 1: The Students' Mean Scores in Pre-test, Post-test I, and Post-test II

Test	Freq	Total Score	Average
Pre-test	32	1484	46.4
Post-test I	32	2320	72.5
Post-test II	32	2637	82.4

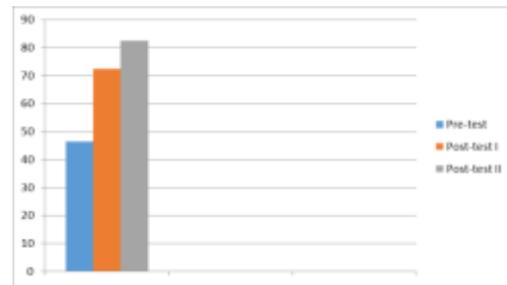


Figure 1: The Students' Improvement in Reading Comprehension Score

The mean score in the pre-test was 46.4 which was put in the poor category. Meanwhile, in post-test I and post-test II the mean score were 72.5 and 82.4 which were interpreted as good. In conclusion, the students' reading comprehension improved through the use of POSSE strategy which was integrated in the reading tasks and activities.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The objective of this action research was to improve students' reading comprehension of eighth graders through POSSE strategy. It was conducted in MTs Negeri 8 Sleman. The subjects of this research were the students of Grade VIII F. This research begun in February 2018 and ended in March 2018. The actions were carried out in two

cycles, the first of which consisted of four meetings and the second consisted of two meetings. The strategy consisted of the major activities of POSSE strategy which were predicting, organizing, searching, summarizing, and evaluating.

After the implementations of the POSSE strategy in the teaching and learning of reading, there were some improvements in the students' reading comprehension as well as in the teaching and learning process. The findings of this research are presented as follows.

The use of POSSE strategy helps students to enrich their vocabulary mastery. In the first step of the strategy which is predicting, the students predict as many ideas as possible related to the topic. Then, in the evaluating step they write the new vocabulary they found during the implementation of the strategy. The implementation of the POSSE strategy also improved students' reading comprehension. The students could find the topic, the main idea of each paragraph, and stated unstated information of the text by following

the steps of the strategy which were predicting, organizing, searching, summarizing, and, evaluating.

The interactions in the classroom also improved. Previously, the classroom interactions between the teacher and the students and among the students themselves were not optimal. The strategy provided a group discussion that allowed the students to interact and share ideas with their friends. Moreover, the interaction between the teacher and the students also improved through question answer activity during the teaching and learning process. The students also became more enthusiastic in the teaching and learning of reading due to the appropriate choice of materials, the fun activities, and the attractive media. They participated and were actively engaged in the activities.

The research findings also indicated that the students' mean scores in writing increased cycle by cycle. In conclusion, the research in using POSSE strategy to improve the students' reading comprehension could be considered successful.

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