

THE USE OF SKIMMING TECHNIQUE IN STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

Rusmiati¹ and Arsyi Ghafura²

Abstract

Reading is a greatly necessary expertise to comprehend by English language learners. It is the ability to recognize the meaning from a text as intended by the writer. The reason for teaching reading to the students is because it belongs to the basic language skill in English. Students are expected to be able to read text book written in English because it is a foreign language for Indonesian students. It means that to understand the materials, the students must have the ability to look at and get the meaning of written text. Therefore, reading is very important to teach to students. This study aimed to find out whether the use of skimming technique in students' reading comprehension is effective. The population of the study was 26 students, so all of them were used as the sample. The study was quantitative method which applies statistical formula in analyzing the data. The finding showed that skimming technique improved students' reading comprehension. It can be seen from the result of t-test and t-table. The former is 12,087 and the latter is 2,06. As t-test was greater than t-table, it can be concluded that alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. H_a states that skimming technique improves students' reading comprehension.

Keywords: *reading comprehension, skimming technique*

¹ Rusmiati, STKIP Bina Bangsa Getsempena.

² Arsyi Ghafura, STKIP Bina Bangsa Getsempena.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an immensely necessary expertise to comprehend by English language learners. If the comprehension in reading fails, students will need to improve their comprehension. Moreover, the reason for teaching reading to the students is because it belongs to the basic language skill in English. Students are expected to be able to read text book written in English because it is a foreign language for Indonesian students. It means that to understand the materials, the students must have the ability to look at and get the meaning of written text that is called reading text.

Similarly, McDonough (2003:89) stated that reading is the most important foreign language skill, particularly in cases where students have to read English for their own specialist subject. Through reading, the readers can explore the world and gain the knowledge. Furthermore, it is also supported by another expert, Levine (2001:31) who explains that one of the prominent skills to be mastered by the university students and senior high school students is reading academic discourse as EFL learners. Therefore, reading is very important to teach to students.

Related to the explanation above, McWhorter (2004:2) defines that reading is thinking. It is an active process of identifying important ideas and comparing, evaluating, and applying them. While Nunan (2003:68) states that reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background to build meaning. In other words, reading is a process of thinking to get the meaning from the source by linking it to

the existing knowledge of the readers, so they can obtain the comprehension as intended by the writer.

However, teaching reading does not always run well due to some factors that cause the students' difficulties in learning. One of them is the application of the teaching learning method because an effective teaching English as a foreign language requires the use of effective learning method. In addition, it is a hard work to read in a foreign language. Students try to understand something from a passage or a text using a dictionary and translating word per word because they do not identify the logical and verbal relations in a given piece of writing which are necessary to interpret and translate a text. Some other obstacles come from the learners themselves and from the text such as the students are not accustomed to reading, lack of vocabulary, and do not have appropriate strategy in comprehending the text.

Due to the problems above, this research tries to use one of the strategies in reading, it is skimming technique. As stated by Harmer (2001:21), skimming is a technique in looking over a text to get a quick idea of the meaning of a text. Thus, skimming technique is required in helping students in comprehending a text, getting detailed information and other reading tasks. He also said that by encouraging the students to glance their eyes and take a short look at a text and searching for specific piece of information, it will help them get the general understanding and detail information of the text itself.

Nuttal (1996: 49) points out that skimming is glancing rapidly through a text to determine its gist. For example, in order to decide whether a research paper is relevant to our own work or to keep ourselves superficially informed about matters that are not of great importance of us. It is an activity which requires an overall view of the text in order to find the general contents and ideas of the written material. Also, skimming is going through the reading material quickly to find out how it is organized or to get the writer's idea. Thus, the skimming technique is a useful tool to help students extract from the text key words that permit them to infer the general sense of a text, which lets them interpret a text faster and advance in the reading process.

In the same way, Brown (2004: 213) states that skimming is a prediction strategy used to give a reader a sense of a topic and purpose of a text, the organization of the text, the perspective or point of view of the writer. It is a reading technique with high speed to look for things that are important or main idea of a reading. As a matter of fact, skimming technique has some advantages as what had been explained on Gerllet in Kartika (2010: 44) that it can help the students go through the reading material quickly in order to get gist of the text, can help students know the way the text is organized, can help students to get an idea of the tone or intonation of the writer.

The present study is intended to find out whether the students who were taught by using skimming technique improve their reading ability. Thus, the research question is

formulated as follows: Does using skimming technique improve students' reading ability?

From the research question above, hypothesis can be formulated as follows:

Alternative hypothesis (Ha) : Using skimming technique improves students' reading ability.

Null hypothesis (Ho) : Using skimming technique does not improve students' reading ability.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The recent study was an experimental research to find out the result of skimming technique. Arikunto (2006:12) states that quantitative research is a kind of research that requires the use of number, ranging from data collection, data interpretation, and the appearance of the result. The instructional activity was designed to teach reading skill by using skimming technique to students. They are tested to measure the effect that students get after treatment. The result of the test would be analyzed by using statistical computation.

This study was conducted by using one group pre-test and post-test design. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:268), in the single group pre-test and post-test design, one group of subject is given a pre-test, treatment, and a post-test. The success of the treatment is determined by comparing pre-test and post-test score. The aim of this research design was to find out the result of using skimming technique which was going to be implemented for second grade students of English Department in teaching reading. There were 26 students in this

academic year which all are used as the sample in this study.

In research, instrument for collecting data is absolutely important. The accuracy of the result of research is mostly dependent on how accurate is the use of instrument. Before research is carried out, the instrument for the data collection should be well prepared. To specify, the instrument that is used in this research is test. Arikunto (2006:150) defines that a test is a procedure or instruments used to know or measure something (ability, attitude, achievement, and intelligence) with some particular roles. Another definition is also stated that test is a series of questions or other exercises, other tools used to measure the data about skill, knowledge, intelligence, or talent possessed of individual or group. (Arikunto, 2006: 150). In this case, the researcher gives the students reading test in using skimming technique. It was done twice: at the first

meeting as the pre-test and at the last meeting as the post-test.

The aims of using pre-test and post-test are to know the students' responses during the activities and to find out their abilities in reading comprehension and their progress. To gain the data in this experimental study, there were four meetings performed. At the first meeting, a test which consists of 20 multiple choice questions and 10 essay questions are given to the students. At the second and the third, they are taught about skimming which include theory and practice. While at the last meeting, another test which is similar to the previous test was done to students in order to see their improvement.

RESULT OF THE STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Result of the Study

After conducting the research, the data obtained from the pre-test and the post-test are previewed as follows:

No	Students	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain (d)	Xd (d-md)	X^2d
1	A	47,5	87,5	40	9,72	94,4784
2	B	50	87,5	37,5	7,22	52,1284
3	C	55	87,5	32,5	2,22	4,9284
4	D	35	87,5	52,5	22,22	493,7284
5	E	30	72,5	42,5	12,22	149,3284
6	F	47,5	97,5	50	19,72	388,8784
7	G	65	90	25	-5,28	27,8784
8	H	50	92,5	42,5	12,22	149,3284
9	I	62,5	80	17,5	-12,78	163,3284
10	J	67,5	75	7,5	-12,78	518,9284
11	K	42,5	82,4	40	9,72	94,4784
12	L	47,5	77,5	30	-0,28	0,0784
13	M	47,5	85	37,5	7,22	52,1284
14	N	70	90	20	-10,28	105,6784
15	O	57,5	72,5	15	-15,28	233,4784
16	P	65	82,5	17,5	-12,78	163,3284
17	Q	52,5	75	22,5	-7,78	60,5284
18	R	67,5	80	12,5	-17,78	316,1284

19	S	70	92,5	22,5	-7,78	60,5284
20	T	72,5	95	22,5	-7,78	60,5284
21	U	65	85	20	-10,28	105,6784
22	V	52,5	97,5	45	-14,72	216,6784
23	W	75	97,5	22,5	-7,78	60,5284
24	X	52,5	100	47,5	17,22	296,5284
25	Y	57,5	100	42,5	12,22	149,3284
26	Z	77,5	100	22,5	-7,78	60,5284
Total		1482,5	2270	787,5	-29,22	4079,044
Mean		57,02	87,31			

From the table above, it can be seen the students' score of both pre-test and post-test. To get the description of students ability in reading before and after treatment of skimming, the mean score of both tests could be compared. It can be noticed that the mean score of pre-test is 57,02. It is considered as a low score out of 100 in total. On contrary, the mean score increases significantly in post-test up to 87,31. From this notable rise, it could be assumed that the students reading ability improves after they are taught by using skimming technique. Furthermore, those scores would be more deeply analyzed by using statistical examination, that is t-test. This research uses t-score formula as suggested by Bungin (2005:191).

$$Md = \frac{\text{Score of post-test} - \text{Score of pre-test}}{\text{Number of sample}}$$

$$= \frac{2270 - 1482,5}{26}$$

$$= \frac{787,5}{26}$$

$$= 30,28$$

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}}$$

$$t = \frac{30,28}{\sqrt{\frac{4079,044}{26(26-1)}}}$$

$$t = \frac{30,28}{\sqrt{\frac{4079,044}{650}}}$$

$$t = \frac{30,28}{\sqrt{6,275}}$$

$$t = \frac{30,28}{2,505}$$

$$t = 12,087 = 12,09$$

$$t\text{-table} = 2,06 \quad Df = N-1 = 26-1 = 25$$

From the statistical analysis above, it can be seen that t-score is 12,09 and t-table is 2,06. It means that t-score is higher than t-table which indicates that Ha (hypothesis alternative) is accepted and Ho (hypothesis null) is rejected.

2. Discussion

This section discusses about the finding of this research. There are some points to show after analyzing the data of pre-test and post-test scores above. First, it can be clearly seen that there is a significant increase in post test score to pre-test score. The mean of pre-test score is 57,02, whereas that of post test score goes up sharply to 87,31. Thus, it can be described that students' ability in reading improve after they are treated with skimming technique.

Second, by obtaining t-score which is higher than t-table, it means that hypothesis alternative (H_a) is accepted and hypothesis null (H_0) is rejected. H_a states that using skimming technique in reading comprehension can improve their ability in reading. In other words, it can be summed up that applying skimming technique in reading comprehension to the second semester students of STKIP BBG is successful.

CONCLUSSION AND SUGGESTION

1. Conclusion

The result of this research deals with improving students reading comprehension skill. It can be concluded that the use of skimming technique in the classroom based on the criteria in this research is successful. It is if t-score is higher than t-table, H_a is accepted. The t-score obtained in this study is 12,087 and t-table is 2,06 which indicates that H_a is

accepted. It means that using skimming technique in reading class of second grade students of STKIP BBG Banda Aceh can improve their reading ability.

2. Suggestion

Based on the finding above, the researcher recommended some suggestions that are addressed to the English teachers to use skimming technique in teaching reading comprehension skill. First, it can be known from this study that the implementatiton of skimming in reading class can be an effective way to increase students reading ability.

Second, skimming technique can be applied in English language teaching because it can solve the problem that is found in teaching and learning process, for one of the appropriate technique to teach reading comprehension skill is skimming.

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