

Skimming Technique: Measuring The Increase in Students' Reading Ability

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out whether skimming technique can improve students' reading skills. The study was conducted at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa. The subjects were eleventh grade students of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa. The total number of subjects is 35 students. To get the research material, the researcher used a pre-test to find out the reading ability of the students. The average score of the pre-test is 3.9 . After the researcher receives the information, he examines the analysis and then decides to treat the student. The treatment was carried out in two periods. Each cycle includes two matches. A post-test was administered at each meeting. The research results show that skimming technique is a suitable technique to deal with English class, especially reading in of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa. This can be seen in the post-test results of each cycle. In the post-test, the students' highest scores are on average 5.03, 5.63, 6.3 and 7.00. This shows that students' grades increase after treatment.

Keywords: *reading, reading ability, skimming*

INTRODUCTION

English plays an important role in Indonesia today. English has become an international language. Therefore it is necessary to learn English. People encounter English anywhere in their life, for example at school, where English is included in the curriculum, in television programs or in cinemas, guidebooks, etc. As a developing country, Indonesia has been preoccupied with strong national development and survival. competition in the world of science and technology. Therefore, the Indonesian government recognizes the important role of English in accelerating the development process of the state and nation. English functions as an international language, as a result, many people in many countries around the world use it in every aspect of human life, such as communication, economy, education, science and technology.

For some people, learning English is really needed because they need to communicate with foreigners. This need

will be seen and felt when they go abroad or when their job requires them to use English. For students, especially in secondary schools, learning English is very important for communication skills and higher education. In Indonesia, English has been taught from elementary school to university. The aim of learning English at school is to develop students' ability to communicate in English in spoken and written form. Communication skills include listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four competencies are expected to prepare and equip students to continue on to a higher level of education or enter the world of work, especially in sectors that require English proficiency.

In this study, researchers will focus on students' reading skills. Reading activity is one of the important English skills, which must be mastered by students so that they can follow the teaching and learning process. If students have good reading skills they will definitely be able to read different texts, and understand them.

Students' ability to understand reading texts is likely to be influenced by students' knowledge, motivation, interest and attention. Reading is the key to students' acquisition of reading skills, linguistic competence, vocabulary, spelling and writing. In each subject, student learning activities involve reading. Reading is one of the complex ways of learning English. Reading is an activity to understand researchers' ideas or the way researchers communicate with readers through written or printed words. (2007, www.if.la.org).

The goal of teaching reading is to help students become better readers by understanding the text itself. Teachers want their students to be able to read, use reading effectively as a learning tool and enjoy proper reading. Reading is perhaps one of the most important tools for gaining knowledge. Through reading activities students will get a lot of information from various texts. It is important for students to develop their reading skills in order to be able to read material written in English efficiently, i.e. by using the right techniques and strategies to get a good understanding.

Currently there are many students who still have many problems in reading. For some students reading may be very difficult. Not because they do not like English lessons. They are usually able to read, but have great difficulty expressing their understanding. They cannot understand part of each paragraph in a text, so they have problems understanding the whole text and cannot answer questions related to the text. They still read word for word in every paragraph. It takes time and they can't complete the task given. In other words, they have difficulty finding the main idea in a paragraph or text.

The main idea is the core of the paragraph or more precisely what the researcher is trying to convey to the reader. In other words, the main idea is what the researcher wants the reader to know. So, the main idea is the important point that the

researcher develops throughout the paragraph. Then, the overall function of the paragraph is to explain, develop, and support the main idea.

In traditional Indonesian classes, teachers insist that students understand every word in the text to get a general idea for the purpose of finding the necessary information, and this makes students think if they don't understand every word they are somehow not completing it. task. This phenomenon reveals the practice of conventional teaching reading strategies.

Researchers assume that such a situation will not help students overcome the difficulties they face and will not improve their reading skills. Based on the researcher's experience, when the researcher became an apprentice teacher at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa, the researcher still found that most students had difficulty finding the main ideas of reading texts.

In this case, particular reading technique is needed. Not only to overcome student difficulties, but also to improve their reading ability especially the technique can help the student on how to comprehend the text and make their reading comprehension easy. The technique should represent the need of the student. So they can enjoy reading class without thinking the difficulties of reading. And the important is they can finish the task on time completely. This is the teacher responsibility to implementing an appropriate technique for the student on reading.

In this research the researcher use skimming as a technique in teaching reading for the students to improve the students reading ability. Skimming is a specialized type of reading in which the reader reads quickly for a general understanding of Text and for the gist of a passage . In other word reading skimming is to get the basic overall idea, rather than concentrating on desorbing all the details. Skimming is a technique in looking over a text to get a quick idea of the gist of a text . By encouraging students glance their eyes

and take a short look at the text and searching for specific piece information, it will help them get the general understanding and detail information of the text itself.

The explanation above, including some of the points just mentioned, narrows down the issues raised in this study: Does skimming technique can improve the students reading ability of the eleventh grade students Universitas Tama Jagakarsa. It is also in line with the objective of this research which is want to see the implementing of skimming technique on improving the students reading ability.

There are many useful techniques on teaching reading, in this research, researcher limits his investigation only how on improving students reading ability through skimming technique of the eleventh grade of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa. Skimming technique is required in helping students in comprehending a text. Getting detail information and other reading task. Skimming is intended to help student in the senior high school curriculum in Indonesia or Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) year 2006, which is to understand the meaning of short functional text and simple easy in the form of report, narrative, analytical exposition in the context of everyday situation and also to access knowledge .

Trough skimming student can get the main ideas in a short time. When they do skim, they should not read the whole text. They only read the parts of text that will help them to get the clues about the main ideas from the text. Besides skimming technique is efficient for the students, skimming technique is also very helpful for students who have weaknesses in vocabulary. They do not need to interpret word by word to find a meaning to get the main ideas from a text. Teacher can teach them the strategies how to skimming.

Based on the researcher experience, when the researcher became a

training teacher at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa, there are some problems appears during the reading lesson, first, the eleventh grade students of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa Depok have difficulty to get the main idea from a text in reading. Second, their reading ability are low. Third, skimming techniques needed to improve the students reading ability.

Dealing with limitation of the problem, the researcher would like to formulate the problem: Does skimming technique can improve the students reading ability of the eleventh grade students Universitas Tama Jagakarsa Depok? Based on this problem above, the objective of this research is to see the implementing of skimming technique on improving the students reading ability.

The result of this research are hoped to give both theoretical and practically importance. Practically they are intended as imperative feedback to the students under research about how importance the mastery of reading which is will be thought by reading in this action research. Theoretically, they are expected to contribute some supports to the existing similar research findings. The findings of this action research are also intended to provide and give how teach reading to the students of SMK-Almuhtadin Depok.

METHOD

This research design was in the form of action research. Action research aims to develop new skills or approaches to problems or difficulties with the illumination of a particular area of research directly in practice. The research method used was action research class (Classroom Action Research), which aims to solve problems through direct application in the classroom or workplace.

The classroom action research is part of action research that can be viewed as a follow-up of descriptive and experimental research. This research was intended to improve the students' reading ability by using skimming technique. This

design consisted of 4 (four) phases namely: planning, action, observation and reflection. This action research was divided into two cycles. After conducting the two cycles it was hoped that there was an

Improvement on the students' achievement, and the target could be achieved. Mean of the group (in a row) number (number) is the total number of digits (numbers) existing, are divided by the number of digits (numbers) is . If we formulate in general, then:

$$M_x = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

M_x = Mean that we are looking
 $\sum fx$ = The sum of the multiplication between each of the scores with the frequency
 N = Number of case

The activity of teaching and learning process includes the planning, action, observation and reflection. To make it clear, the design of the present class action research can be depicted as the following:

Meeting 1	Pre-Test (IR)				
Meeting 2	Cycle1	P1	A1	O1	R1
Meeting 3		P2	A2	O1	R1
Meeting 4	Cycle2	P2	A2	O2	R2
Meeting 5		P2	A2	O2	R2
Meeting 6	Questionnaire				

For its procedure, this research used action research as method. The procedure in this action research consists of planning, action, observation, and reflection. It describe on figure 1:

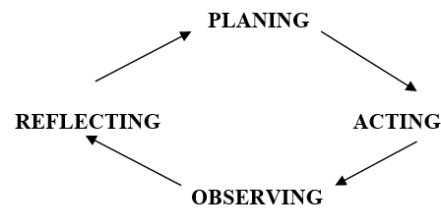


Figure 1: Basic Model of Class Action Research by Carr, W. & Kemmis, S. (1986)

Planning is one of crucial component in teaching English. Without good planning, any teaching and learning activities will be impossible to achieve the objectives of teaching and learning. In this research the researcher starts with designing and administering the pre-test on comprehension of text to the students to find out the students reading ability. Then, continued designing the teaching learning scenarios and the students' worksheet for the reading comprehension as a post test for the students.

Action referred to what the researcher did in the classroom and how the class conducted. Each of this research was related to what the researcher had planned in the lesson plan. In relation to improving the student reading ability of the second year of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa Depok, there were three main activities the researcher did as realization of the lesson plan stated in plan, namely: pre-activity, whilst-activity, and post-activity.

In pre-activity, the researcher focused on the students' interest by giving leading question related to the topic being discussed. And then reading text was given. In the whilst-activity, the researcher gives the reading text to the students and asked them to discuss and did the task either in pairs or group based on reading text given. In the post-activity the researcher give the post-test and ask them to do it individually.

One of the simple examples of the procedure which can be conducted to improve the student's reading ability through skimming technique is as the following:

No.	Procedure	Activity	Time
1	Pre-activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Greeting The teacher asks the students some questions related to the reading text 	10 min
2	Whilst activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher ask the students to work in pairs or in groups of four The teacher distributes the reading text and ask the students to read it carefully first The teacher distributes the question or exercises of the reading text and ask the students to research them The teacher asks the student to discuss the answer of the question or the exercises with their group The teacher monitors the class General discussion of the answer 	30 min
3	Post-activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Post-test. This test is individual test The teacher ends the class 	30 min

The length of time for each skimming activity depends on the reading text (the length of the text, degree of difficulty, type of reading exercises or assignment, etc).

Classroom activities had to be observed while doing the action in order to know the effectiveness of teaching learning process, whether or not the technique could improve the students' achievement. It was also determined if there was any change in the students' behaviour and activity in reading class and how far the action reached the target. After the researcher apply the skimming technique in teaching reading, the researcher observed the class to see the effectiveness of teaching reading trough skimming technique.

After doing the three steps in the action research, reflection was another important thing to do the result of which would be compared with the result of the observation. The finding in each meeting and the result of the test were used as an input to improve the next action in the next cycle.

The research had to find the reason why the treatment was no optimally successfully in solving the students' problem and the research had minimize and solve the problem faced by the students in order to get a better result in the future action.

In order to collect the intended data, this research was made using the following instrumentation:

Teaching Learning Scenario

The teacher's scenario was prepared in order to have a clear description to what action to be conducted in the classroom. It was a guideline for the teacher in conducting every step of the teaching allotment, the teacher's approach and the material used in the teaching and learning process.

Reading Text

There were several reading texts used in this research, all texts are completed with exercises and test, this includes pre-test and post-test. Pre-test was used to examine the students' ability in reading comprehension before the treatment was given. The result of pre-test was used as a reference for conducting the research. While Post-test were used to examine the effectiveness or the result of the action both in cycle 1 and 2. In other words, post-test was used in order to know the extent to which the technique can improve the students' reading comprehension.

Reading Test

To make this research more qualified, the researcher used five reading texts here, where one text was used as pre-test, the other were used as exercise and post-test in cycle 1 and 2. On this research, the pre-test was applied to know the students' ability in reading comprehension before pre-questioning was applied in teaching reading comprehension. Later, the researcher would use the result of this pre-test as a reference in conducting the research. Meanwhile the post-test was used to examine the effectiveness of pre-questioning treatments, both in cycle 1 and 2. It can also be said that the post-test were used to know how far the pre-questioning

was able improve the students' ability in reading comprehension.

Data Collection

In measuring the students' reading ability in this case their reading comprehension, the researcher used productive test, which was administered at the end of every session, the test was in the form of comprehension item test.

The process of collecting data was as follow: firstly, before the teaching was carried out, the students were given pre-test. This was conducted in order to find the initial reflection (IR) as well as to see the problem they faced. They were tasted individually and suggested to answer the question based on the text given. Finally, at the end of every unit lesson, or after the students were given treatment that dealt with using skimming technique to improve the ability in reading comprehension, they were given a post-test to find out the result of the action.

Data Analysis

The data obtained for the present classroom action research was analysed descriptively so as to reveal the extent of the subjects' progress in increasing student reading ability. That was, the mean score obtained by the subjects in the IR (X_0) was compared with its corresponding mean scores in reflections or post-test for both cycle I and cycle II.

The score showing the subjects' positive changing behaviours were computed in the form of percentages, which referred to respective items on the questionnaire. To make it clear, the comparative corresponding means between IR and reflection scores were also presented in the form of block graphs. The grand mean of the cycle I and cycle II was finally computed and compared. The grand mean of both cycles, cycle I and cycle II was calculated by totalling the means of the scores in each cycle and then divided by two.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There are some of instruments used to collect the data of the present classroom action research; they were pre-test, post-test and questionnaires. Thus, the data required to answer the research question were gathered through administering pre-test, post-test and questionnaires to eleventh grade students of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa Depok.

Before this research begin, researcher, make an observation and identification of the problem situation and learning conditions at eleventh grade students of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa Depok. Based on the observations and identifications problem as follow: 1)

The eleventh grade students of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa Depok have difficulty to get the main idea from a text in reading; 2) Skimming techniques needed to improve the students reading ability.

Related to the research, the researcher gave the pre-test or IR (initial reflection) was administered to the subject under research to obtain their pre-existing ability in skimming, in pre-test the subject were asked to answer question to determine their ability in skimming.

Pre Test

The students' levels are different one to each other. It is reflected in their scores. The mean scores of their pre-test show that the most of the student have problem to comprehend a text in reading. For some students, they seem have problems to work individually. So, researcher decides to use group of work for the next session in every cycle as an exercise before the post-test given, to help them more confident. But still the target for this research is to improving the students reading ability as individual. Then the researcher decides to use the four strategies on skimming.

In this meeting researcher explains the skimming technique and the four strategies in skimming, skimming to get an

overall impression, skimming a text using first line of paragraphs, skimming a text using first and last paragraph of a text, and Skimming a Text Using Section Heading briefly. Then, researcher informs to the student that the next meeting they will discuss about how to skimming to get an overall impression. And ask the students to get information about the topic.

Figure 2
The data of the students score on Reading Comprehension Pre test

No	IR Score
1	2
2	2
3	2
4	2
5	2
6	4
7	4
8	3
9	3
10	6
11	4
12	3
13	4
14	3
15	4
16	6
17	6
18	5
19	4
20	3
21	3
22	4
23	4
24	3
25	6
26	4
27	4
28	5
29	5
30	4
31	5
32	5
33	6
34	4
35	4
Total Score	138
Mean Score	3.94

Action research study conducted in four stages, planning, action, observation and reflection. This first cycle made based on the reflection test before.

Planning

Planning in this stage was made based on the result of pre test before. Planning that is done on a cycle is: 1) Designing lesson plan with the topic skimming a text using first line of paragraphs; 2) Preparing reading text for students; 3) Planning the students worksheet for the reading comprehension; 4) Constructing post-test materials

Action

At this stage researcher will conduct classroom activities base on the lesson plans that have been prepared. After the researcher collects the data score from the pre-test, the treatment for students given. In

this first session researcher introduce the skimming to get an overall impression strategy.

Then, the researcher explains about skimming to get an Overall Impression as a first treatment for the students. And explains to the students how to survey a text to get a general idea of what it is about. Researcher assure to the students to ignore the details and look for the main ideas, main ideas are usually found in the first sentences of each paragraph and in the first and last paragraphs. To continue the treatment then, researcher divides the class in to small group to do some exercises related to the topic then discusses the result together.

Observation

In this session researcher saw some group have difficulties to express their idea as a team. It happens because in each group consists of different types or level and characteristic of the students. When the students doing their test the researcher observed that some students still confused to implementing the strategy given. But researcher believes this only a process for the students to achieve the better result latter.

Reflection

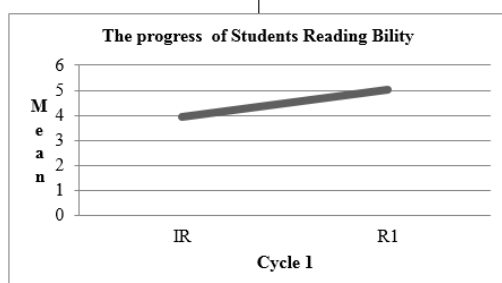
After the treatment given, then researcher gave the student an individual initial reflection (IR) or post-test to find out the effectiveness of the treatment. This post-test was the reflection from the pre-test before. The post test was a text with question that students must answer it based in the text given. Their score in the post test in session 1 showed that the mean score of the students increase than the pre-test mean score. From this result the researcher conclude that students can get the clue of skimming in reading and decide to continue the treatment for the next session with another strategy in skimming.

Figure 3

Tabulation of Data Showing the subjects' Progressing Scores in Reading Comprehension through Skimming Technique in first meeting

No	IR	S1			
1	2	5	17	6	5
2	2	4	18	5	6
3	2	4	19	4	5
4	2	4	20	3	5
5	2	4	21	3	4
6	4	5	22	4	5
7	4	5	23	4	6
8	3	4	24	3	6
9	3	4	25	6	6
10	6	6	26	4	6
11	4	4	27	4	6
12	3	3	28	5	6
13	4	4	29	5	5
14	3	4	30	4	6
15	4	6	31	5	5
16	6	6	32	5	6
			33	6	6
			34	4	5
			35	4	5
			Total Score	138	176
			Mean score	3.94	5.03

Figure 4
Graph depicting the subjects' progressing ability in reading Through skimming technique



CONCLUSION

Effective reading comprehension requires the ability to relate the text material to one's own knowledge. Because of the importance of the reading process, the teacher should improve the teaching of reading comprehension. In this case, skimming is considered the perfect technique to use in teaching reading comprehension. The survey needs less time for the reader to have a general idea of the text read. This would be effective when reading a long passage requiring readers to

answer comprehension questions related to the text.

In addition, skimming does not require a large vocabulary of the reader because readers only look for key words to get the main idea and some parts of the text to help them answer questions. Skimming can also be used to strengthen students' understanding of key ideas. However, it is not only about a general understanding of the text, but by browsing you can also find out the topic and purpose of the text, the order of the text, the point of view or perspective of the researcher, its ease or difficulty and/or its usefulness to the a reader.

Thus, it can be concluded that organizing is indeed a useful technique that must be developed and used in teaching and learning, especially to improve students' reading comprehension. The result of the discussions during this research can be finally summarized in this chapter as follows:

1. The data obtained in the study, showing the improvement of students' reading skills in the form of reading comprehension scores, were analyzed descriptively, i.e., the average scores obtained in the students' initial reflective scores (X0) were compared with their own corresponding mean scores. in their reflection or post-test;
2. The average of the primary reflection on reading comprehension is 3.9 . This average figure clearly showed that the reading ability, especially the reading ability, of the second year students of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa Depok is poor;
3. This study had two cycles and each cycle consisted of two sessions. The data analysis results for cycle I and cycle II analysis showed mean values: X1=5.03, X2=5.63, X3=6.3 , X =7.00. S1, S2, S3 and S . By calculating the sum of the average scores for each cycle, a high average result for cycles I and II is obtained.

Calculating the grand average resulted in 7.8 for cycle I and 9.8 for cycle II. These findings clearly indicated that the mean primary reading reflection score ($X_0 = 3.9$) was much lower than both the Cycle I mean and the Cycle II mean. The mean difference between cycles I and II was 2.00 (7.8 to 9.8). The results of this action research clearly showed that the second year students of Universitas Tama Jagakarsa improve their reading skills. Clearly, this action research showed the effectiveness of improving students' reading through the skimming technique.

Considering the results of this study, the researcher would like to propose the following: 1) The skimming technique is a useful technique to improve the reading ability of students, especially in reading, it can be used in group work or individually as an aid. students who had reading problems; 2) English language teachers are encouraged to be more active and creative in using and experimenting with different techniques, to improve students' reading skills in understanding what they read, because the use of versatile techniques can significantly increase students' motivation to do and intense and do versatile readings.

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