

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENTS' VOCABULARY IN READING
COMPREHENSION USING DIRECT METHOD TECHNIQUE TO THE
SECOND SEMESTER STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF PGRI**

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Abstract: Language is a mean of communication. To understand the language, we have to invent the meaning of words as many as possible either in a sentence or in whole texts. Vocabulary is one of the most important elements in a language, and teaching vocabulary is clearly more than presenting new words. Reading comprehension depends on several interrelated skills: understanding oral language, decoding the printed words, reading fluently, and using strategies to increase comprehension. Understanding reading material needs a specific reading strategy. The strategy should facilitate the comprehension of the students who want to read effectively. One of the techniques which can be used is Direct Method. The idea of this technique was that foreign language teaching must be carried out in the same way people learn their mother tongue!

Key words: Language, Vocabulary, Reading comprehension,
Direct Method.

I. INTRODUCTION

English is one of the most important languages. We know that Indonesia is a developing country that needs to study English. Not only the technology, but also education is needed in developing country. We know about the fourth skill in studying English, they are: speaking, reading, writing and listening. Here, speaking is related to

listening, and reading is related to writing. All language English skills always include vocabulary in their activities.

Vocabulary is one of the most important elements in a language. Laflamme (1997) states Vocabulary knowledge is the single most important actor contributing to reading comprehension. By having a lot of

vocabularies, the students will be easier to understand the reading material. In fact, there is strong evidence to support providing vocabulary instruction not only to improve students' reading comprehension and writing quality, but also their listening vocabulary and their speaking vocabulary (Joshi, 2006; Kame'enui & Baumann, 2012). Vocabulary knowledge, including both oral and written vocabulary, is critically important for a child's success in school (Kamil et al., 2008).

Reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among: (1) the reader's existing knowledge; (2) the information suggested by the text being read; and (3) the context of the reading situation (Wixson, Peters, Weber, & Roeber, 1987, citing the new definition of reading for Michigan).

Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a complex skill requiring the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information (Anderson et al., 1985). It is related to what Ruddell (1993:86) states that reading by using an appropriate strategy will improve the student's reading comprehension achievement.

Based on Brown, H.D (2007), The Direct Method, also called *Natural Method*, was established in France around 1800 by Francois Gouin, and around 1900 by Charles Maximilian Berlitz. The idea was that foreign language teaching must be

carried out in the same way people learn their mother tongue!

Moreover, The Direct Method is based on the direct involvement of the student when speaking, and listening to, the foreign language in common everyday situations. Consequently, there is lots of oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation, and little if any analysis of grammar rules and syntax. The focus of the lessons is on good pronunciation, often introducing learners to phonetic symbols before they see standard writing examples.

Due to the description above, the writer would like to apply The Direct method technique in teaching reading comprehension to see the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of this technique in improving students' vocabulary in reading comprehension to the second semester students at University of PGRI.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Teaching Reading

Comprehension in improving vocabulary

Reading is the most important skill for students to learn, because their success or failure in school or in society depends on their ability to read. It is related to what Adam (1990) states that reading comprehension is a multifaceted process. A special skill is required to comprehend the text; the students need an awareness of print, which can be obtained through

multiple channels to facilitate word recognition. It means that a reader must be able to see a connection of some kinds between what he/she knows (prior knowledge) and what he/she reads in the text or book he/she is reading.

An active process on what they read was required to increase the student's' success in reading comprehension. To comprehend the text, the reader must be able to decode words or reorganize words and access text integration process to construct meaning and retain the content of the words long enough for it to stimulate their stores of related information in their long term memories (Cunningham & Stanovic, 1998).

Adler (2004) states that comprehension strategies are conscious plans — sets of steps that good readers use to make sense of a text. A comprehension strategy instruction helps students become purposeful, active readers who are in control of their own reading comprehension. Therefore, Cochran (1993:38) said that comprehension means the process of getting meaning of communication as in a personal letter, speech and sign language. Furthermore, reading comprehension is an active cognitive process of interacting with print and monitoring comprehension to various written symbols with existing knowledge.

Some teachers may assume that reading comprehension will develop

naturally without any direct teaching of comprehension (Denton & Fletcher, 2003). This line of reasoning places reading in the same developmental progression as oral language development.

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words and word meanings. As Steven Stahl (2005) puts it, "Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world." Vocabulary knowledge is not something that can ever be fully mastered; it is something that expands and deepens over the course of a lifetime. Instruction in vocabulary involves far more than looking up words in a dictionary and using the words in a sentence. Vocabulary is acquired incidentally through indirect exposure to words and intentionally through explicit instruction in specific words and word-learning strategies. According to Michael Graves (2000), there are four components of an effective vocabulary program:

1. wide or extensive independent reading to expand word knowledge
2. instruction in specific words to enhance comprehension of texts containing those words
3. instruction in independent word-learning strategies, and
4. word consciousness and word-play activities to motivate and enhance learning

2.2 Types of Learning and Teaching

Activities in Direct Method

The Direct Method (also known as the Natural Method) arose towards the end of the 19th century when, reacting against what they considered to be the shortcomings of the Grammar Translation Method.

Diane Larsen-Freeman (2000), in her book *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* provides expanded descriptions of some common/typical techniques closely associated with the Direct Method. The listing here is in summary form only:

- (1) Reading Aloud (Reading sections of passages, plays or dialogs out loud)
- (2) Question and Answer Exercise (Asking questions in the target language and having students answer in full sentences)
- (3) Student Self-Correction (Teacher facilitates opportunities for students to self-correct using follow-up questions, tone, etc)
- (4) Conversation Practice (Teacher asks students and students ask students questions using the target language)
- (5) Fill-in-the-blank Exercise (Items use target language only an inductive rather than explicit grammar rules)
- (6) Dictation (Teacher reads passage aloud various amount of times at various tempos, students writing down what they hear)

- (7) Paragraph Writing (Students write paragraphs in their own words using the target language and various models)

2.3 The Role of Teachers and students in Direct Method

The direct Method is based on observation of acquisition of mother tongue. As teachers became frustrated with the students inability to communicate orally, they began to experiment with new techniques. The idea was that foreign language teaching must be carried out in the same way people learn their mother tongue. Based on Moran and Hernandez (2014) cited on The teacher set on the instruments, the role of the teacher is to direct class activities, but students and teacher are partners in the learning process, and there is a large amount of Learner-Learner interaction.

Teacher's Role:

Teachers introduce the new language to the students exclusively in the target language, not in their mother tongue. Because in this method, they never translate: they demonstrate. (1) Teachers use pictures, realia or pantomime to demonstrate and communicate words or ideas in their classes. (2) Teachers emphasize interactions with the students, asking them questions and trying to use grammatical structures of the day in conversations, and using the new vocabulary. And (3) Teachers make students speak much, and he/she finds various

techniques to get the students to self-correction. The teacher makes emphasize in both speech and listening comprehension.

Learner's Role:

Students learn by self-correction, and they put into practice their oral communication skills. Students are active learners in every class they participate actively in the acquisition of the target language.

III. METHOD AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Method of Research

In doing this research, the writer used an experimental study. In her experimental method, the writer applied a Direct Method technique to the sample students. The sample students were divided into three groups. Group A (the experimental study) consists of teaching reading comprehension by using Direct method. Group B (the control group) consists of teaching reading comprehension by using reading conventional method. Group C (the moderator variable) consists of linguistic competence of the students' reading comprehension level (the advanced, intermediate, and beginner). And then to see the significant variance among the three variance groups, the result of their reading comprehension scores in their pretest and posttest was analyzed to find a significant variance from one-way ANOVA and post hoc tests with an assist of SPSS 15.

3.2 Operational Definition

To avoid ambiguity, it is necessary to define the terms used in this research. According to WordNet 3.0, Farlex Clipart Collection, 2003-2008 Princeton University, Farlex Inc., "Effectiveness" is defined as the ability of something to bring about the result intended in this study, i.e. the ability for the Direct Method to bring about better ability to students in reading comprehension achievements. It can be seen from different result of the test. If the P-output (the calculation result in significant variance from ANOVA and post hoc tests with an assist of SPSS) is lower than the mean significant difference at the 0.05 level, it means that Direct Method technique is effective to develop the students' vocabulary in reading comprehension achievement towards their linguistic competence in the advanced, intermediate, and beginner level.

The term "Direct Method" is defined by *Wikipedia English - The Free Encyclopedia* as one of the method, which is sometimes called the natural method, and is often (but not exclusively) used in teaching foreign languages, refrains from using the learner's' native language and uses only the target language.

A person's vocabulary is the set of words within a language that are familiar to that person. A vocabulary usually develops with age, and serves as a useful and fundamental tool for communication and acquiring knowledge. Acquiring an

extensive vocabulary is one of the largest challenges in learning a second language.

Vocabulary is defined by *Wikipedia English - The Free Encyclopedia* as "all the words known and used by a particular person". *Knowing* a word, however, is not as simple as merely being able to recognize or use it. There are several aspects of word knowledge that are used to measure word knowledge.

As defined by *Partnership for Reading* (2005), "Reading comprehension" is understanding a text that is read, or the process of "constructing meaning" from a text. Comprehension is a "construction process" because it involves all of the elements of the reading process working together as a text is read to create a representation of the text in the reader's mind.

3.3 Research Variables

There are two variables related to this study. They are independent and dependent variables, McMillan (1992:22) states that the independent variable is the variable that proceeds, influences, or predicts another variable. In this study, the independent variable is *Direct Method*. However, dependent variable is defined as the variable which is affected or predicted to be affected by the independent variable (McMillan, 1992:22). In this case, the dependent variables are *vocabulary and reading comprehension*. Besides the study which was considered, linguistic

competence from the advanced, intermediate, beginner level was used as the moderator variables.

3.5 Students' Reading Comprehension Levels

In this study, the writer used a reading comprehension test for estimating students' reading levels with the guidelines given by Bormuth (1967:291). He divides students' reading comprehension into three levels. When the students' score is in the level of 0-37, their reading comprehension level is frustration. And when the scores' levels are around 38-59, their level is instructional. Meanwhile, when their scores' level are between 70-100, they are called independent. It was found upper level with range score 51 – 60. In middle level, the range scores 40 - 50. And then, in beginner level, the students' range scores 0 – 39.

3.6 The Experimental Group: The Implementation of Teaching Reading Comprehension by Applying the Direct Method Technique

An experiment refers to any action or process designed to find out that something is effective, workable and valid. The writer herself had done the experiment class for twelve meetings in the experimental class by applying *Direct Method* technique to the sample.

IV. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Data Distribution of Reading Tests

The data obtained from the pretest and posttest of the students' reading comprehension was classified into two groups. Experimental group⁷ consisted of the pretest and posttest scores of reading comprehension of the students who were taught reading by using Direct Method technique. And Control group consisted of the pretest and posttest scores of reading comprehension by using the conventional reading method.

4.2 Interpretations

Based on the finding result, Direct Method technique helped students improve their reading comprehension. During the treatments in the experimental group, students showed their active participation in joining the teaching and learning process.

From the t-test calculation for equality of means, it was found that the p-output was 0.969. It means that the teaching of reading comprehension by using Direct Method technique was not significant since the p-output was higher than the mean significant difference at the 0.025 level. From the calculation result, it can be interpreted that the teaching of vocabulary in reading comprehension by using Direct Method technique was effective to be taught to all level. It means that there was no

difference in teaching reading comprehension by using Direct Method technique to the students' score level.

Although the finding of this study showed that there was significant difference between the students' reading achievement in the posttest, but the difference is not too high. It might happened because of the limited time used in the treatment as Killen (1983:3) said that the successful in the process of reading comprehension is influenced by the amount of the time that the students mostly spend.

It implies that for further study more meetings or longer time in the treatment using Direct Method technique, students' vocabulary in reading comprehension achievement might improve far better.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings and the interpretations of this study, it can be concluded that the teaching vocabulary in reading comprehension by using Direct Method technique to the second semester of PGRI University was proved more effective to be taught in all levels since the p-output was higher than the mean significant difference at the 0.025 level.

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