

INFERENCE STRATEGY TO IMPROVE THE STUDENTS' LITERAL COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to find out the improvement of the students' comprehension in literal comprehension by using Inference Strategy at the second year students' of SMA YAPIP Sungguminasa Gowa. As has been stated on the previous chapter, the present research investigated the use of Inference Strategy to improve students' reading comprehension in literal and interpretative comprehension. The research employed pre-experimental design in SMA YAPIP Sungguminasa Gowa. Therefore, the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes as Inference Strategy can improve the students' reading comprehension in literal comprehension. It was proved by 74% of improvement which indicates that post-test value was higher than the pre-test while pre-test was 47, 73 and post-test 83, 22.

Keywords: *comprehension, literal, reading, inference strategy*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the most important skills we need in increasing our personal welfare and social progress. It is cannot be denied that language is an integral part of human life and society. It is used to communication. In order to express argument or opinion to one another. Without language we cannot develop our education, society tradition and culture, spread global information etc. Shortly, we cannot do anything without using the language (Grellet in Rani 2003: 4).

After doing observation at the school by the English Teacher said that the students is still low in reading comprehension. Many students think that reading is a boring activity. And based on my experience when I studied in senior high school, most of the students thought that answering reading test was a boring task. They feel bored and lazy to find the answer of reading text because they had to read more, especially if the answers were not explicitly stated on the text.

Inference strategy is one of the reading strategies, in which the readers try to comprehend and understand the reading text by drawing their personal meaning from the text. Here, the readers or students draw conclusions from their own prior



knowledge, their knowledge of pronouns and antecedents, and their knowledge of the relationship between explicitly stated information and implied information (Zweirs, 2005).

Making inferences is often described as making a logical guess or “reading between the lines”. Making an inference is a lot like the chemical process of forming a chemical compound – when two elements combine and form a new substance. Readers make inferences when they are able to take their own experiences and combine them with information they gather from what they read. The result is that they create new meaning or draw a conclusion that isn’t explicitly stated in the reading (Zweirs, 2005).

If readers use no other resources than their own background knowledge to create meaning, their comprehension of a subject is limited. On the other hand, using only text disallows the validity of their personal point of view, no connection is made, and only literal comprehension may result. When readers infer they are personally engaged with the text, are more of the author’s purpose, and are processing to deeper meaning (Zweirs, 2005).

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INFERENCE STRATEGY

Inference is drawing conclusions based on information that has been implied rather than directly stated and is an essential skill in reading comprehension. Inferring is the process of drawing personal meaning from a text. We ask students to draw conclusions from their own prior knowledge, their knowledge of pronouns and antecedents, and their knowledge of the relationship between explicitly stated information and implied information (Bailey, 2000).

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forming a chemical compound – when two elements combine and form a new substance. Readers make inferences when they are able to take their own experiences and combine them with information they gather from what they read. The result is that they create new meaning or draw a conclusion that isn't explicitly stated in the reading (Zweirs, 2005).

Inference in reading means that the reader uses knowledge and facts from the text and from earlier experiences as base or premises for their own logical conclusion. A text generally provides a large number of inferences, often quite different of character, depending on what premises will be used or active. Generally the teacher has an implicit opinion about how the text will be understood by the students, i.e. what inferences will be made, what is important with the reading itself, and what is the aim of the text. But the aim is not always made clear. This means that the teacher also has an idea about what in the text will be used as premises.

From the explanation above, so the researcher concludes that inference strategy is one of reading strategies in which the reader uses knowledge and facts from the text and from earlier experiences or their prior knowledge as base or premises for them to make their own logical conclusion.

Process of Inference

Prezler (2006) states that inference is a mental process by which we reach a conclusion based on specific evidence. Inferences are the stock and trade of detectives examining clues, of doctors diagnosing diseases, and of car mechanics repairing engine problems. We infer motives, purpose, and intentions.

Inference is essential to, and part of, being human. We engage in inference every day. We interpret actions to be examples of behavior characteristics, intents, or expressions of particular feelings. We infer it is raining when we see someone with an open umbrella. We infer people are thirsty if they ask for a glass of water. We infer that evidence in a text is authoritative when it is attributed to a scholar in the field.

Inferences are not random. While they may come about mysteriously with a sudden jump of recognition, a sense of "Ah ha!" inferences are very orderly.



Inferences may be guesses, but they are educated guesses based on supporting evidence. The evidence seems to require that we reach a specific conclusion.

Evidence is said to *imply*; readers *infer*. While this image suggests an intent or power on the part of evidence that does not exist—how, after all, can a fact compel a certain conclusion?—the image and resulting terminology are useful nonetheless. The sense of inevitability to the conclusion suggests that we did not jump to that conclusion or make it up on our own, but found it by reasoning from the evidence. Inferences are not achieved with mathematical rigor. Inferences do not have the certainty obtained with deductive reasoning.

METHODOLOGY

The research design was pre-experimental with one group pretest-posttest design. There are treatment between pretest and posttest. The treatment gave after gave the pretest. There are two variables in this research independent and dependent variables. The independent variable was implementation of using Inference Strategy. It was as the method used by the teacher when teaching the material. The dependent variable was the students' reading comprehension both in literal and interpretative. The population of this research was the second year students of SMA YAPIP Sungguminasa Gowa in academic year 2014/2015. The total number of population was 90 students. The sampling technique that used in the research was simple random sampling. It took from one class of the second year students of SMA YAPIP Sungguminasa Gowa. The class was XI.IPA 1 which consisted of 29 students. In this research, the researcher was employed research instrument to collect data. The instrument of the research are written test for pretest and posttest. It was aimed at found out the students' comprehension in reading narrative texts. The form of the test was essay. The procedures of collecting were the pretest was gave to the students before they got the treatment. It is intended to found out the prior comprehension of the students in reading. The pretest carried out. In this stage, the students read the narrative text given by the researcher and answered the questions. The students was given treatment by used Inference strategy. This treatment was conducted four times of meeting. After giving the treatment in terms of implementing the Inference strategy, the researcher administered the posttest. The content of the pretest and the posttest is



different but in a same design. The aimed of administering the post test is to found out students' achievement in reading comprehension after gave the treatment. The data collected through the test was analyzed quantitatively.

FINDINGS

To answer the research questions in the previous chapter, the researcher administered a test, which was given twice to the students. Firstly, pre-test was given before the treatment. Secondly, post-test was given after the treatment. The result of the students' literal reading comprehension was presented in the table, below:

Table 1. The Improvement of the Students' Literal Reading Comprehension

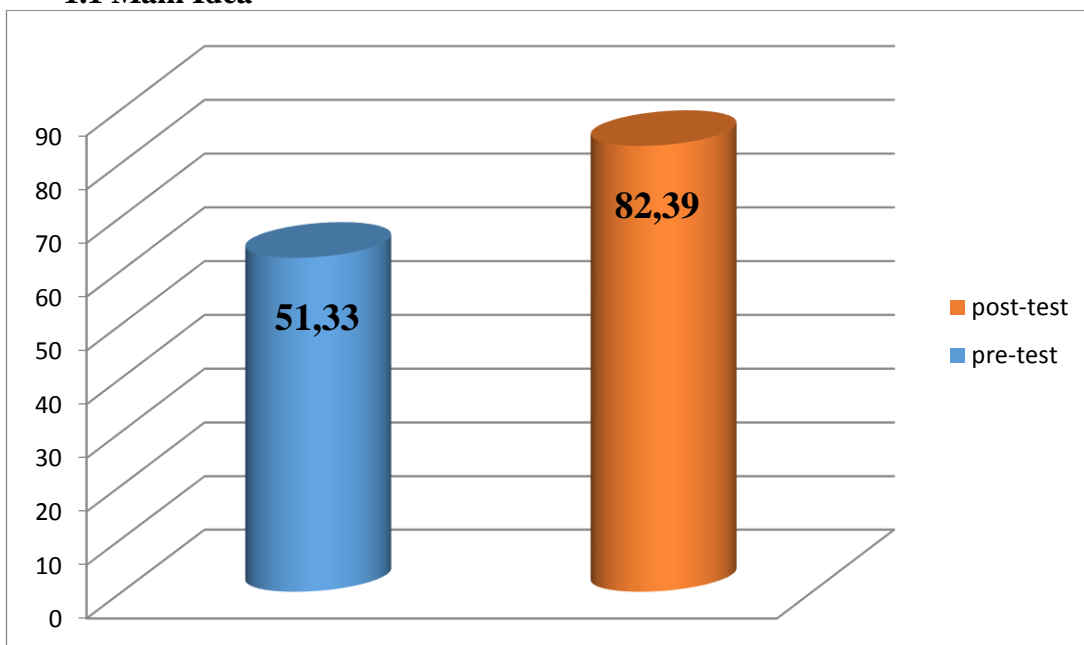
Indicator	Pre-test	Post-test	Improvement %
Main Idea	51,33	82,39	60%
Supporting Details	44,13	84,05	90%
Total	95,46	166,44	74%
Mean Score	47,73	83,22	74%

The data in the table above shows the students' improvement in literal comprehension score as the result of calculating of students' pre-test and post-test at the students' reading comprehension through Inference Strategy. Where the students' score in pre-test in main idea (**51, 33**) was different from the post-test (**82, 39**). It means that there was improvement (**60%**) of the students' reading comprehension in literal level through Inference Strategy. And the students' reading comprehension achievement focused in supporting detail showed that the pretest (**44, 13**) different from post-test (**84, 05**). It also showed that there was improvement (**90%**) the students' reading comprehension focused in supporting detail. It was more clearly shown in the graphic, below: It was more clearly shown in the graphic, below:



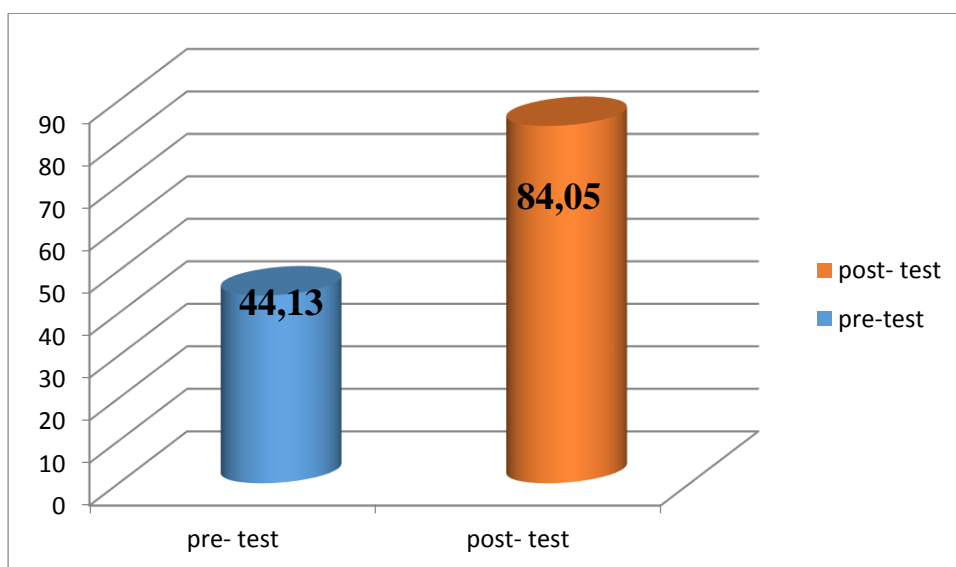
Graphic 1. The Improvement of the Students' Literal Reading Comprehension

1.1 Main Idea



The data in the graphic indicates that the score of post-test was higher than the score of pre-test. The percentage also indicates that it was high. It means that teaching reading comprehension through Inference Strategy was effective for the students.

1.2 Supporting Details



The data in the graphic focused on supporting detail indicates that the score of post-test was higher than the score of pre-test. The percentage also indicates that it was high. It means that teaching reading comprehension in which indicator supporting detail through Inference was effective for the students.

According to the research findings, the students' reading comprehension also meets the improvement by implementing Inference strategy in the teaching and learning. The improvement of the students' reading comprehension of the post-test with the mean score **43, 06** was good enough compared with the mean score gained in pre-test **79, 74** where its improvement reached **85%**. And It was supported by the value of t-test that was bigger than the value of t-table (**32,38 > 2.048**). Therefore, the Alternative Hypothesis was accepted and the Null hypothesis was rejected. Based on the result analysis, the researcher concluded that using Inference Strategy can improve the students' reading comprehension and using this strategy was effective in teaching Reading Skill.

1. The Implementation of Inference Strategy

Before giving treatment, the students' reading comprehension was categorized as very poor. After giving the treatment, their ability was significantly improved.

After teaching reading comprehension at SMA YAPIP Sungguminasa through Inference Strategy, the researcher found some advantages, for instance:

- 1) The students became more active in the classroom because the materials related more closely to the students' needs.
- 2) By using Inference Strategy, students feel more appreciated because they come asking opinion about the learning to be implemented.
- 3) Teaching by using Inference Strategy can support at students to be able to formulate their own hypothesis.

As discussed above, the researcher concludes that Inference strategy could improve the students' reading comprehension both literal (main idea and supporting details) and interpretative conclusion) at SMA YAPIP Sungguminasa.



CONCLUSIONS

As has been stated on the previous chapter, the present research investigated the use of Inference Strategy to improve students' reading comprehension in literal and interpretative comprehension. The research employed pre-experimental design in SMA YAPIP Sungguminasa Gowa. Therefore, the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes as Inference Strategy can improve the students' reading comprehension in literal comprehension. It was proved by 74% of improvement which indicates that post-test value was higher than the pre-test while pre-test was 47, 73 and post-test 83, 22.

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