CREATIVE TEACHING STRATEGY: AN ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION TO TEACHERS’ PROBLEM IN TEACHING READING ON DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

The dominant complexities of English Teaching at Junior High School in teaching reading are about failing on the design of teaching instruction especially on learning materials and teaching methods which still could not give feedback on students’ need (in particular how to acquire knowledge and select the most effective learning strategies). This paper is aimed at discussing the ways how to comprehend descriptive text through combining PLAN (Predict, Locate, Add, Note) and REAP (Read, Encode, Annotate, Ponder) Strategy. Through these strategies students are pushed to use a number of strategies such as relating text to prior knowledge, predict, questioning, summarizing, using imagery, and setting a purpose for reading. This way is an interesting alternative solution to teachers’ problem in teaching reading on descriptive text at Junior school. It should be understood by student in order that she/ he can comprehend a descriptive text completely. The student is not only demanded to identify information on the text but also is required to use their effort in how to work in group collaboration to achieve their goal. Furthermore, the student is also try to evaluate the messages given by the writer. For this purpose a reading teacher should be able to help a student to cope with this kind of strategies and they have to vary their ways in teaching reading. By using this strategy, it is expected that the students’ reading ability will increse and can motivate them in reading descriptive text.

Key words: PLAN, REAP, Descriptive Text

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text resulting in comprehension. In this process, the reader interact dynamically with the text as she or he tries to elicit the meaning and where various kinds of knowledge are being used. Moreover, reading is constructing meaning of obtaining from a word or cluster of word, when the students read a text, they should construct from word to word and group of words in order to know what the writer want to say through the written text.

In learning English, Reading is the most important skill for students because it is the chosen instrument to widen their knowledge. Various English printed materials are available for students to read while opportunities to speak, listen, and write are not common in their daily life. Besides, Reading is very essensials for students studying English as Foreign Language (EFL) because most text book and the sources of science knowledge and information on higher technology are published in English. As a result Reading is foundation of advanced studies which requires reading abilities to access both textbooks and other reading materials outside the classroom.

In this case, the students need comprehension in order to received the writer’s massage through reading text materials. Reading comprehension is the heart and goal of reading since the purpose of all reading is to gather meaning from the printed page. If a student says word in a pasasage without gathering their meaning one would
hesitate to call the reading. Comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading. Every student agrees that reading comprehension is not a simple matter of recognizing individual words or even of understanding each individual word as our eyes pass over it. It is not surprising that students have difficulties in this area.

Considering the importance of reading, reading is included in English curriculum at school. In Junior High school, reading is taught integratively with other skills. Students are required to achieve informational level of literacy in which they are expected to use language to get information in the form of genres. There are various of text that should be learn by the eight grade students at Junior High School, one of them is descriptive text.

Based on the fact happen in junior high school, descriptive text becomes one of the most difficult text to be comprehended by the students. In comprehending descriptive text, the students should consider many things such as they should focus on the topic when describes about something such as particular person, place or thing. However, the students cannot predict about the topic because they have lack of background knowledge about it. Most of them only waiting information from teacher’s explanation. The other problems is it’s hard for them to comprehend the main idea of the text, they face difficulties in getting point or ideas on descriptive text. As a result, most of them do not understand what they read and it makes they loose motivation in Reading. The laziness can be seen when the students do exercises. They like cheating with their friends. They do reading activity is only for fulfilling the reading test which is given by the teacher.

Next, having lack of vocabulary becomes one of crucial problems for students. The long reading text material and many descriptive words which is unfamiliar make them frustrated in reading descriptive text. Moreover, they also had less interesting in reading activity, especially in English Reading text material. The students said that reading English text especially descriptive text need more time to interpret the content of materials. They are more interesting to read fiction book in Indonesian language than Reading English book materials. This makes their English in reading comprehension cannot be improved yet.

This condition become more complicated when the teacher cannot give their maximum effort in conducting successful teaching and leaning process in Reading activity in the classroom. Teacher always use material which is displayed on the textbooks which seem uninteresting for students meanwhile teachers are demanded could find the material which is up to date related on the student’ need. In addition, teacher often use discovery learning strategy in teaching reading, Teacher distributes the text material to the student and they are required to think, analyze and find the general principles of something on the text material. After that the students have to answer the questions based on the text and discuss it together in the classroom. This strategy has lack of active reading activity and the students have less of interaction with their friends. Only smart students get participation in this activity. These activities are boring and could not motivate students’ enthusiasm in reading more.

In reading, teachers should concern about reading strategies used, teacher should be creative in designing the strategy that will be implemented in the class. Reading strategy is one of important factors in successful comprehension. Related on the problems above, combining PLAN (Predict, Locate, Add, and Note) and REAP (Read, Encode, Annotate and Ponder) strategies are assumed could help students read informational texts actively and strategically. There are several benefits of using PLAN in teaching reading as stated by Seagrave (2006) first, PLAN facilitate active reading. Students interact more with the text as they should create their predictions into a map. Then, it engages students’ background knowledge of the topic that simultaneously build their interest and motivation to read. This strategy also encourages students to take responsibility of their comprehension by requiring concrete evidence of their reading. Creating concept map helps students to visualize the ideas in the text that will monitor their comprehension.
It also helps students to recognize text construction easily. Meanwhile, REAP strategy is also give benefit in teaching reading as stated by Sejnost and Thiese (2010:66 read, encode, annotate, ponder strategy is after reading strategy that helps students check for understanding and clarify and synthesize their thinking.

Both of strategies can be implemented involved in before, during and after reading. Through combining these strategies students are pushed to use a number of strategies such as relating text to prior knowledge, predict, questioning, summarizing, using imagery, and setting a purpose for reading. The writer combine these strategies because both strategies have the similar indicator and same activities and if both strategies are combined, it will give more challenging activities and can develop students’ reading comprehension especially on Descriptive text.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. PLAN (Predict, Locate, Add, and Note) strategy

   Predict, Locate, Add, Note (PLAN) is a graphic organizer that help students to comprehend the text after that they discuss with their partner in class discussion. According to caverly, et.al in Barton & Jordan (2001:95) P.L.A.N is a study reading strategy for informational text that helps students read strategically. It also can be taught in pre reading, during reading and after reading. PLAN provides a structure to help students organize their reading and reflect on the text in short chunks. It means, that PLAN make the students can know how to arrange their reading ability and also can expand their comprehension about the text in short chunks (Klemp and McBridge 2007:96)

   Next, Cohen & Cowen (2008:219) say there are a four step strategy that use to increase comprehension of informational text such as nonfiction and textbooks. Thus, this strategy has four steps in applying in the class. In implementing strategy in teaching reading, there are four main steps to be followed. First, student predict the content of the text (predict step). The next step is locate. During this step, students place check marks next to topics that are known and question marks by topics that are unknown on the map (locate step). After that, students read the text to correct their predictions (add step). Finally, students demonstrate their comprehension by revising the concept map, writing summary, or completing some other relevant tasks (note step). This step is important because students use their comprehension to complete the learning task.

   Then, Urgehart (2012:139) states PLAN is a reading strategy to get information from the text that helps students read strategically. It means, this strategy helps the students to more understand about reading because if they have understand about reading they will easy to find information in the text. This strategy provides students with a way to illustrate the relationship between ideas and episodes in the text and to create a visual organizer they can use to take notes while reading.

2. REAP (Read, Encode, Annotate, and Ponder) strategy

   Read, Encode, Annotate, Ponder (REAP) strategy as a various strategy in reading teaching. In reap strategy the students learn to take the content of the text by four steps. The first one is reading whole text, second step is encode the author’s ideas into their own word. The next step is annotate in this step the students take a note about what the ideas in a piece of paper. The last step is pondering activities can be done by thinking by themselves or talking and discussion with member group. Futher understanding, some experts define the concept of read, encode, annotate, ponder strategy as follow:

   Allen (2004: 122) says that Read, encode, annotate, ponder strategy is a strategy for helping readers read and understand a text. reap is an acronym for Read, Encode, Annotate, Ponder. It means that this strategy, where the students go back to the text for each
stage, they will consider the text from a different perception. Each stage asks the students to analyze the text at a higher level to increase and deepen comprehension. In addition, Sejnost and Thiese (2010:66) state that read, encode, annotate, ponder strategy is after reading strategy that helps students check for understanding and clarify and synthesize their thinking. It emphasize that after the students finish their reading they can go beyond the author’s ideas to form personal apllications and connections to think more precisely and deeply about what they read.

Continuation, Sejnost and Thiese (2010:66) state that read, encode, annotate, ponder strategy is after reading strategy that helps students check for understanding and clarify and synthesize their thinking. It emphasizes that after the students finish their reading they can go beyond the author’s ideas to form personal applications and connections to think more precisely and deeply about what they read.

Based on explanation above, it can be concluded that both strategy (PLAN and REAP) guide the students to understand the text and make the connections about what they have read. In order strategy synthesize the students thinking to improve their comprehension for active reading. Those strategy more interesting if they are combined at same time.

3. Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a kind of the text that tells how some thing looks, smells, acts, tastes, sounds etc. Djuharie (2007: 24) states that descriptive text is describe about something a particular person, place, or thing that have characteristic that related to location, purposes, function, features, and proof and noun. Descriptive text is also the text that describes something in order the reader or listeners are able to get the same sense as what the reader experienced. Descriptive text gives more information about person, thing, and animals specifically. In line with this, Suryana (2007:13) states that description reproduces the ways things look, smell, fell or sound. It can be used to describe the appearance of people and also to tell about the traits of character of personality. An important thing about descriptive texts is the texts should describe what thing looks like not based on speaker opinion only.

In understanding the text, the reader should consider the components of the text itself. Moreover, there are two components descriptive text. The first component is a generic structure, and the second component is a language feature. There are components that should be known by the reader on descriptive text. Djuharie (2007:24) says the components of descriptive texts are: identification and description. Beside, in addition, Suryana also (2008: 13) states there are two generic structures of descriptive text. The first is identification. Identification use to identify the phenomenon of the place, person or thing to be described. The second is description. Description use to describe parts, qualities, characteristic, and the way to be done.

The other components of descriptive text that should be mastered by the students are language features. Suryana (2008:13) says there are four language features of descriptive text: First, focus on specific participants. Second, use attribute and identifying process. Third are frequent use of epithets and classifiers in nominal groups. Fourth, use simple present.

So, based on the statements above, it can be concluded that descriptive text is a text which describes the characteristics of a particular person, place or thing. It have a some elements: First, generic structure consists of description and identification. Second, language feature that consists of four points are focus on specific participants, use attribute and identifying process, frequent use of epithets and classifiers, and use simple present.

Procedure of Teaching Reading on Descriptive Text by Using Combining PLAN (Predict, Locate, Annotate and Note) strategy and REAP (Read, Encode, Annotate and Ponder) strategy.

PLAN (Predict, Locate, Annotate and Note) strategy and REAP (Read, Encode, Annotate and Ponder) strategy are interesting strategy which can help students to comprehend the reading text material especially in Descriptive text. These strategies
have similar indicators, if both strategies are combined, it will be more challenging activities for students. There are some procedures of Teaching Reading on Narrative Text by combining PLAN and REAP:

Student predict the content of the text (predict step).
Read and understand the author’s ideas.
After the students read the assigned text, have them discuss the contents of the text with partners, small group, or in a whole class discussion.
Locate the topics you know something about and which topics little about. Such as place an topics about which you already know something, and place a question mark by topics that are unfamiliar to you.
4 ). Encode the author’s words into their own word. Have the students put their own word what passage says. They should be able to do this without having to reread the materials as they talk about it. They should become familiar enough with the text to discuss it comfortably.
What is the main idea? What is the concept being presented? Can you explain what the authors say?
After that, student that, students read the text to correct their predictions (add step).

Annotate what they are reading prompt students with these questions:
a). What is the author’s opinion on the subject? how can you tell?
What is the problem being presented in the text? what are some possible solutions? What is the author’s purpose or intention. Pondering means that the students must think about what they have written. Does it make sense? Does it complement or differ from what was said in the text.
8) Finally, students demonstrate their comprehension by revising the concept map, writing summary, or completing some other relevant tasks (note step).

DISCUSSION
In teaching reading comprehension, teachers should prepare several preparation. First, lesson plan which can help teachers to organize the learning process. Second, the interesting and familiar material for the students. Third, media is to help students comprehend the text well. Last teachers should consider time allocation.

However, there are three stages in implementing combining PLAN and REAP strategies. First, Pre-teaching activity. In this part, teacher give brainstorming activity and review the previous lesson.
Second whilst-teaching activity, teacher shows the picture related to the topic of descriptive text and ask some question to the students to predict the content of the text that will be learned, then teacher give the text to the students and ask to read the text. After the students read the assigned text, have them discuss the contents of the text with partners, small group, or in a whole class discussion. Next, teacher ask to locate the familiar and unfamiliar information by adding the checkmarks for familiar information on the graphic organizer. Then, Encode the author’s words into their own word by having the students put their own word what passage says. They should be able to do this without having to reread the materials as they talk about it. They should become familiar enough with the text to discuss it comfortably. What is the main idea? What is the concept being presented? Can you explain what the authors say? . After that, teacher ask student to give or add word or phrase to explain familiar and unfamiliar information that are located before. Annotate what they are reading prompt students with these questions: What is the author’s opinion on the subject? how can you tell? What is the problem being presented? What is the problem being presented in the text? what are some possible solutions? What is the author’s purpose or intention. Pondering means that the students must think about what they have written. Does it make sense? Does it complement or differ from what was said in the text. Finally, students demonstrate their
comprehension by revising the concept map, writing summary, or completing some other relevant tasks.

The last stages is post teaching activities. In this part, the teacher give homework to evaluate and measure the students’ comprehension about the text. Next teacher concludes the material with the students.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on discussion above it can be concluded that combining PLAN (Predict, Locate, Annotate and Note) and REAP (Read, Enconde, annotate and Ponder) is a good strategy to foster students to be active as a critical reader. By using this strategy the students can be easy in learning reading because there are many intersting activity such as the students are helped by graphic organizer which is created by themselves and then teacher ask tem to predict what the text about by giving the picture related to the text and finally the students have to explore their ideas into a summary based on their understanding and it gives challenging activity for students. It can make students antushiasm while reading. In implementing this strategy it is suggested to use familiar topic of reading material. It is better to use topic that are close to students’ knowledge and environment, so students can use their background knowledge to invest in reding activity.

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