INCREASING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF REPORT TEXT THROUGH THE USE OF PROBLEM POSING METHOD AT MUHAMMADIYAH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract

This study attempts to describe how the students achieve reading ability progress using the Problem Posing Method (henceforth PPM). Based on the early observation stage, it is found that subjects to this study tended be difficult comprehending English texts particularly report text. The PPM was opted to renew the teaching method in the class since it emphasized that learning should be started by knowledge, experience, and then related to real concept. To solve the problems, Classroom Action Research (henceforth CAR) design by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998) was done, consisting of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The third year students at SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Malang consisting of twelve students are subject to this study. While the instruments of the study covered observation and test. The results of this study found that students' difficulty in reading report text could be drastically reduced within one cycle to meet the criteria of success.

Key words: Problem Posing, Reading Report Text.

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of the twenty first century suggests that literacy skills are paramount to students in all levels. Schools are attempting or even drilling students in order to be literate in texts, particularly in foreign language texts. As reading is a process of decoding written symbols, working from smaller units (individual letters) to larger ones (words, clauses and sentences) (Nunan, 1989), it closely deals with someone's comprehension where the readers should be able to manage every part of the text. Sometimes it is not easy to gain the comprehension in reading, especially in reading report text. The success of their study depends on the greater part of their ability to read. If their reading skill is poor they are very likely to fail in their study or at least they will have difficulty in making progress. On the other hand, if they have

a good ability in reading, they will have a better chance to succeed in their study. Situation like this may happen at any level of English learners and to be more particular that situation happened at the third year of SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Malang which only consists of twelve students.

Report text as its name suggests is a type of text that announce general information. Its common purpose is to inform reader information resulted from an investigation. To this text, at least there are two components of generic structures. They are general classification, and description. To the third year students of SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Malang, comprehending a big picture of report text as well as classifying which sentences belong to general classification and description is somehow difficult. Furthermore students are likely to do the reading activities and exercise

individually. They are given a text as well as its questions to answer. In a long term, situation like this may cause a frustrating type of learning.

Many education experts recommended some problem solving strategies. One of the strategies which is considered applicable and can be used to increase students' reading ability is Problem Posing Method (henceforth PPM). PPM basically is a kind of cooperative learning and refers to making questions by the students in certain way (Chotimah, 2009).

Problem-posing method is originally an approach developed by Paolo Freire (Freire 1970,1990) and then elaborated for foreign language learning (Crawford 1978), teacher training, and teaching English as a second language (Auerbach and Burgess 1985, Graman 1988, Wallerstein1983a, 1983b).

In fact, based on the preliminary study, I found many serious problems faced by the third year students of SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Malang. First, the method implemented did not attract students as expected. Second, the students read passively and consequently they did not get satisfaction score.

From the explanation above, I am interested in finding out *how problem-posing method is able to increase students' comprehension in reading report text* at the third year of SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Malang.

METHOD

This study was carried out by using the Classroom Action Research (CAR) preceded by preliminary study containing cycles in which each cycles consists of four steps: planning,

implementation, observing, and reflecting. In this study, the term 'acting' and 'implementing' are used interchangeably without reducing the meaning.

In this study I used the design by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998) to execute the process as it can be seen in the following picture.
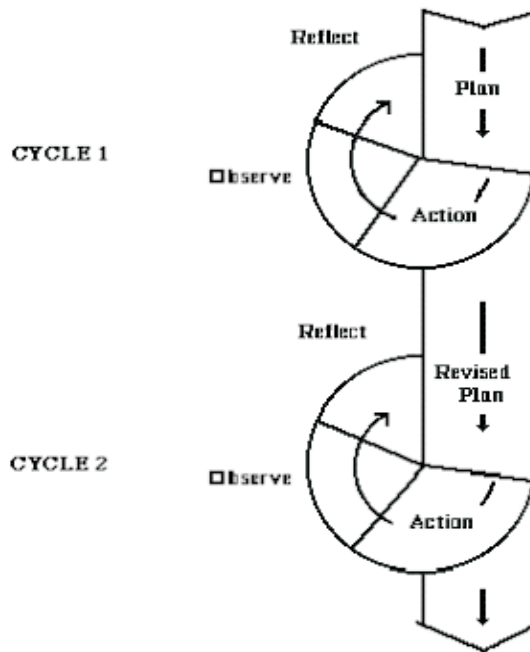
Picture 1. Classroom Action Research Design by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998)

Preliminary Study

Preliminary study was done before making planning of the research. The purpose of the preliminary study was to gain information about the classroom situation, what happened to the students, how they studied English, how the English teacher taught and what classroom problems both teacher and students faced.

In this stage of study, I employed an unsystematic observation and unstructured interview with both students and teachers. These were done to get more authentic data concerning the teaching of English in general and teaching

of reading in specific. I conducted an observation for the teaching of English in SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Malang with teachers of the third year student. In fact, English teaching and learning in the class tended to use a rather conventional approach which are characterized as follow: The method implemented did not attract students as expected, the teacher was somehow like 'the only determiner' of learning process, the students learned individually rather than in group, the students passively received knowledge (taking note, listening, reading and memorizing) without providing ideas in learning.

Based on the preliminary study above, I formulated the data more structurally as follow:

1). Teacher

    a. The method implemented did not attract students as expected

    b. Learning material mostly taught through lecture method in spite several times group discussion also occurred.

    c. Teaching reading was sometimes combined with teaching grammar.

    d. Teaching report text several times turned into student story telling for speaking practice

2). Student

    a. They took note, read, listened and memorized

    b. They paid less attention to learning

    c. They tended to be passive in asking questions

    d. They read text loudly

    e. They translated the text word by word

    f. They confused identifying present form in report text

    g. They confused identifying the generic structure of report text

Planning

Planning was the first step of the research procedure. This activity covered the problem identification (Latief, 2011). This was the most important step in conducting action research as by knowing the problems, I could find a good solution to solve the problem arose.

Here, English teacher and I made some preparation covering designing lesson plan, preparing instructional materials, and preparing the procedure of PSM, the technique and the instrument of collecting data and the criteria of success. The criteria of success would be quantitatively achieved if 75% of students gained 75 score of the test. While qualitatively, the criteria of success would be achieved if students learned more joyfully and more enthusiastically.

Implementing

The implementation was done by using the lesson plan which I made in the planning stage. The implementation of PPM was conducted in four meetings. In the first meeting, I gave a general explanation about Problem Posing Method. The first step in this approach was to identify topics of concern to students. Then students asked the entire group (A, B, C, D) constructed questions based on the report text given. The text or visual should not provide solutions, so that a discussion of the problem would encourage students to think of options and possibilities. The problems, which were posed should not be overwhelming or

unsolvable, and presentation of the problem should be sensitive to local culture and beliefs, so that students can consider steps they might take to address or resolve the problem.

I encouraged discussion of the text through questions which led students describe the situation, identify the problems, relate the problems to their own experiences, analyze the causes of the problems, and seek solutions. Through this question and answer, students generated vocabulary and used structures that the teacher later drew on to develop a series of exercises, practice opportunities, and application activities which made up the rest of an instructional unit. In the last meeting after the class ended, I distributed students worksheet to test them.

Observing

Observation is a usual step when a researcher is observing or assessing the decision of research during teaching learning process as the result of learning interaction among the learners (Classroom Action Research, PGSM team, 1999:39).

The observation was done at the same time with the implementation of teaching method. In this stage I had to observe all events or activities during the research. The observation could be classified into two categories. It included the students' progress (the students' score) and the students' performance (students' interest, class management). In short, in this phase, I elaborated kinds of data, the procedure of collecting data and instruments. It was important in order to collect accurate data.

All the data of the research were analyzed based on the form of the data themselves. Data analysis was done with quantitative and qualitative method. It meant that all what happened during the teaching learning process were observed directly. Meanwhile, the quantitative formulation used to know the improvement of reading comprehension by using Problem Posing Method was by searching the mean. It could be done by using the simple formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{X}{N}$$

With $\bar{X}$: Average value

X : Total score

N : Total number of students

Reflection

A reflection is an effort to inspect what has or has not been done, what has or not has not yet resulted after having an alternative action. The result of reflection is used to establish the next steps of the research. In other words, a reflection is the inspection effort on the success or the failure in reaching the temporary purposes in order to determine the alternative steps that are probably made to get the final goals of the research (Hopkins, 1993:48).

In this step, I reflected whether the 'acting' activity had resulted any progress, what progress happened, and also about the positives and negatives, and so on. In order to see whether the data had met the criteria, the data were compared to the criteria of success. Then the result of this reflection was used as the basic

consideration in revising the teaching learning activity in the next cycle to get a better result of learning activity.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This part presented the findings and discussion of the research in solving the students' reading problem through the implementation of PPM. The findings are presented in sequence based on the cycle. It covers planning of action, the implementation of the method, the observation and analysis and reflecting. The data are recorded and classified in the findings section using the researcher's interpretation derived from the data analysis and related to the theoritical reviews. This part also deals with the discussion in teaching reading text by using Problem Posing Method, the improvement of students' reading result, the students' participation through the PPM.

The Preliminary Study

The data taken from the preliminary study had shown that the students' achievement was not really satisfying. The result of the preliminary study had also shown that most of the students got reading score under the minimum mastery criteria for reading at SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Malang.

Starting from the poor condition above, I implemented the Problem Posing Method to increase students' comprehension in reading text. I applied in group which is considered to be well-organized condition of the class.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

To increase the students' comprehension

in reading report text, I planned the cycle I in which there was four stages, namely: (1) Planning of action, (2) Implementation of of the method (3) Observation, (4) Reflection.

Cycle I was carried out in four meetings: three meetings were the implementation of PPM and another one was the test. Planning of the action, implementation of the PPM, analysis and observation, and reflection of this cycle are presented in this part.

Planning of Action

In this step, I prepared the research preparation they are:

a. Making lesson plan
b. Preparing the material of teaching learning process
c. Preparing the observation sheet and formatting score
d. Preparing the test / formative examination
e. Preparing the students' worksheet

The arrangement of action planning was intended to give guidance in conducting learning. The preparation of students' worksheet aimed at guiding student during the activity process. Evaluation instrument was in the form of short written texts. The format of learning observation was used to find out the appropriateness of learning implementation with learning stages.

Implementation of the Action

The implementation of the action in cycle I was conducted four times, (1) The first meeting was conducted for one hour thirty minutes started from 10.00 am until 11.30 am. The activity was giving the explanation about

PPM for about 15 minutes. After that, I implemented the PPM for about one hour fifteen minutes (2) The second and third meeting were conducted at the same lenght as the first meeting but with different materials for each (3) The fourth meeting was a test aiming at finding out the level of students' success in the process of teaching learning which had been conducted.

Explicitly the four meetings are explained as follow:

1. The First Meeting

The first meeting in cycle I was started by greeting the students and then followed by explaining the activities towards the students and the materials would be discussed. I also introduced PPM and how to play it to the students of XI grade SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Malang. The rules were as follow:

a. Students were grouped into four (A, B, C, D) consisting of three students in each.

b. Each students had to read the given text carefully

c. After reading a text, the group had to discuss the what the text was all aout. And then each student of the group had to construct a question based on the given text. Each of the member of the group had to make a different question. So, there would be three different questions within each group.

d. Each student wrote the questions as well as the answers in problem posing sheet.

e. The leader of group (for example A) had to come in front of the class to appoint the students who would answer questions from group A.

f. Group B, C and D had to be ready to answer the questions from group A

g. Each member of the groups had to ask her/his question to another groups

h. Student who could answer the question correctly from group A would get 10 point.

i. Student who could answer the question incorrectly from group A would not get point or zero (0). If none of the students could answer a question from group A, all the members of group A would get point.

In the first meeting at the first round, students were asked to make a group of four. This group would be a permanent group up to the fourth meeting. After they asked to make a group, they had to sit around with the members of the group.

At the second round, students introduced some Question-Word, which were needed to construct questions. They were What, Who, When, Where, Why, Which, Whose, With Whom, How and etc. Here I modified the method by also teaching them how to make a good question by using Question Words.

At the third round, students were given report text entitled "Dolphin". They were asked to practice constructing questions based on the text. After each of them had constructed the question as well as the answer, they practiced asking their questions to their friends in the class.

In the end of the first meeting, students were asked what difficulties they found in doing

the PPM. Most of them were not confused anymore. After all of them were ready to do PPM, I was also ready to conduct the PPM in the next meeting.

2. The Second Meeting

In the second meeting, students were ready to do Problem Posing Method. After greeting the students and doing brainstorming about report texts, I asked students to sit and team up with their groups. There were four groups in that class, which were ready to do PPM. In that meeting, it was the tasks for group A, B, C and D to construct and ask questions to their classmates. Each student constructed two questions and gave the answer in problem-posing sheet. Before doing problem-posing method, students were asked to read the text carefully. Then, students were guided to discuss the texts and the difficult vocabularies in the text.

After ten minutes conducting Problem Posing Method, group A got first turn to do this activity. The leader of group A came in front of the class and was ready to ask her question and appointed her classmate to answer the questions. After she asked her questions to her classmate, she gave chances to her members at group A to ask their question to their classmates. When group A asked questions to its classmates, there were many students raised their hands to answer questions from group A. The class was so noisy at the time. Most of them said *"me…me…me…"* wanted the leader of group A to appoint them to answer the questions. The class was so active at the time. This activity of asking and answering questions conducted repeatedly until group D

got turn to ask and answer the questions. Moreover, the active class in which most students raised their hands happened up to group D performance. They were so enthusiastic to answer the question.

3. The Third Meeting

In the third meeting of conducting PPM, the students were more interested in doing Problem Posing Method. It happened because in the third meeting they had to work hard to compete with the other group. The third meeting was the meeting in which class would determine which group would get the highest and the low score. Moreover, these meeting determined the highest and the lowest score of each group. When the teacher entered the class, students had already sat with their group. After greeting, students were asked to do Problem Posing Method. In that meeting, students gave a report text entitled *"Human Body Energy"*. The students were experienced enough in doing problem-posing method. That was why without any instruction they had done it. After all of the texts had been finished to read and discuss, group C had the first turn to do this activity. Like the previous meeting, all of the group could construct a question which the other group could not answer. The question was *"what kinds of the chemical substance can keep our body healty?"*, constructed by Novi, the leader of group C. The activity of asking and answering questions conducted repeatedly until entire group got turn to ask and answer questions.

After all of the groups had finished doing Problem-Posing Method, I compiled all notes of observation during the three-meeting of

teaching.

4. The Fourth Meeting

The last meeting was the test. The students were given formative test aiming at finding out the level of students' success in the process of teaching learning which had been conducted. I distributed paper reading test and ordered students to answer the question corectly based on the text. The Students spent one hour to analyze the text and give the answer. The test was both essay and multiple choice.

Observation

The data used quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative data covered the students' progress (the students' score) while the qualitative data comprised students' interest, class management. I stopped the cycle when 75% of the students had reached 75 assessments. However, if the students could not reach the target of the criteria reference after several cycle, the precentage criteria should be decreased a little bit more or revising the teaching activity in next cycle.

Reflection

Based on the observation, the I reflected concerning the implementation of Problem Posing Method in reading comprehension in cycle I.

First, the students participated in the implementation of Problem Posing Method. It was proved that they responded the activity very actively. Most of them become more active when they practiced the Problem Posing Method to give questions for another group. And they were so enthusiastic in answering questions in order to get score. They built a solid group which could cooperate well in doing Problem Posing Method. It could be said that by implementing the problem posing method, the students could be more active and the teaching learning process was not boring.

Secondly, by constructing the questions and getting the answer from another group, it let them make a good question and cooperation with the whole class. This situation helped students increase their comprehension in reading report text. It was clear that by implementing PPM, the students were motivated to comprehend a text.

Based on the explanation above, there were some considerations related to the implementation of problem posing method, (1) The English teacher ought to consider the classroom management. It means the teacher should make the class become more active and interactive. (2) The teacher should be a facilitator in teaching learning process, so the learning concerns with the students center not the teacher center.

Finally, the students' performance had the target of the criteria of success. It was proved that the average result of reading test was 70,83. And the other one was that the students' involvement in teaching learning process based on the observation, students' response and observation sheet. Considering this action had produced the expected outcome and the criteria of success had fulfilled, so the next cycle was unnecessary. Therefore, this action stopped in cycle I because the criteria of sucess had been

fulfilled.

Meanwhile, findings during the implementation of problem posing method in cycle I was as follow:

1. Most of the students felt very happy and were motivated to learn by leaning conducted by teacher. However, there were two students who were less serious in learning.

2. The students' comprehension of the text increased

3. The students become more active

4. The teaching learning process is not boring

5. From the result of the observation, they found new experience in getting material

From the result of the research finding, I do not need to revise the plan and go to the next cycle because the criteria of success had been fulfilled.

CONCLUSION

After problem posing is implemented and developed through one cycle, it can be concluded that problem posing method can be implemented in teaching reading. The success of the implementation can be seen from the explanations. Problem Posing Method could be well implemented in reading class, students interacted very well during the implementation of PPM. All students were involved in the implementation of Problem Posing Method. Most of students liked the implementation of PPM, and the last the result of this study revealed that the test scores was good. It was

shown by result reached by students. The average score of test in cycle I is 83.33%. It means that both quantitatively and qualitatively students reading ability improved better.

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