The Effect of Think-Pair-Share Strategy on the Eighth Grade Students' Descriptive Text Reading Comprehension Achievement at Junior High School

Agri Imandha Ruslen[1], Made Adi Andayani T.[2], Sudarsono[3]
(Email of corresponding author: agriimandha97@gmail.com)

[1,2,3] English Language Education Department
Jember University

Jln. Kalimantan 37, Jember 68121

Abstract: This research was aimed at finding whether there was an effect of the Think-Pair-Share Strategy on the eighth-grade students' descriptive text reading comprehension achievement at Junior High School. The design used was a quasi-experimental research with a post-test only. The experimental group was given the TPS strategy, while the control group was given the question and answer strategy as their teaching strategy. In the end, post-test was given to both groups and the data was analyzed using the independent sample t-test with a 5% significance level by using SPSS software. The sig (2-tailed) was 0.010 which is less than 0.05 with 95% of the significance level. The null hypothesis was rejected; thus, there was a significant effect of TPS strategy on students' reading comprehension. The English teachers were suggested to use the TPS strategy as the strategy in reading comprehension class since it could stimulate students to work together to understand the text better and to motivate them to be more active in the reading class.

Keywords: think-pair-share, teaching technique, reading class

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is a student's ability in understanding the text they have read, usually comes from the interaction between the written words and the student's previous knowledge (Rayner et al, 2001). Another definition for reading comprehension coming from Snow (2002) where she explained that reading comprehension is a process of simultaneously taking out and creating meaning through interaction and participation with the written language.

One of a text that regularly used in the English teaching process in the classroom is descriptive text. A descriptive text is a text which the writer tries to describe a particular thing/object, place, or person (Husna, 2017). The social function of a descriptive text is to describe a particular person, a thing, or a place at present. Dolon & Todoli (2008) explain the generic structures of a descriptive text: (a) identification: it is the introduction of a person, place, animal or object that will be described in the text; (b) descriptions: it is the description of something such as animal, things, place or person by describing its features, forms, colors, or anything related to what the writer describe.

In teaching descriptive text reading comprehension to the learners, the English teacher should support the students to work together to understand the lesson. That is why cooperative learning can be seen as a positive impact for the students to reach the goal or aim in learning the English language. As said by Chiu (2008), in cooperative learning students

will learn something cooperatively and they can maximize their friends' resources and skills .because they can ask for information given in the text to their friends, evaluating their ideas, and monitoring their work.

Cooperative learning theory constructed before World War II by social theorists Allport, Watson, Shaw, and Mead. They found out that group work was more effective and efficient than working alone in term of quantity, quality, and overall productivity (Ashman & Gillies, 2003). It was later found that people who work together for the same goals, were more effective in achieving the goals, than people who worked individually to complete the same goals (May & Doob, 1973).

There are five principles of cooperative learning to help the learners achieve the goals of learning in the classroom (Johnson *et al*, 1994): (1) Positive interdependence; (2) individual or group responsibility; (3) face to face communication; (4) to teach the students the required social or small group abilities; and (5) group processing. One example of cooperative learning that can be done in the classroom is "Think-pair-share proposed by Lyman (1981) where the students write down their thoughts or just brainstorming in his or her head about the solution for the problem proposed by the teacher, pair up with their friends and sharing his or her idea(s), and then share their ideas with the other pairs or the whole class.

TPS strategy has been paid much attention from researchers around the world. Raba (2017) found that the TPS strategy affected positively to the teaching and learning process. Another research was done by Jebur *et al.* (2012) found how the TPS strategy effectively affected 40 first-year English as a foreign language (EFL) students' classroom engagement. Ofodu & Lawal (2011) also conducted an experimental design and revealed that the TPS strategy provided the social support and scaffolding those students needed to develop their learning. Shih & Reynolds (2015) conducted a quasi-experimental research and discovered that the TPS strategy increased students' motivation than using a traditional approach.

Based on the interview with the English teacher at SMP Negeri 9 Jember, the English teacher at the school has never applied TPS strategy as the teaching strategy. Thus the research entitled. "The Effect of Think-Pair-Share Strategy on the Eighth Grade Students' Descriptive Text Reading Comprehension Achievement at a Junior High School" was conducted purposely to investigate the effect of think pair share strategy on reading comprehension on eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 9 Jember.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Cooperative Learning

In learning the English language, especially for the EFL learners, they need to be able to understand what they are going to learn and teacher have to be able to facilitate them to help themselves and other students to understand the subject. Cooperative learning is the answer to those problems. It is an educational method that its purposes are to organize classroom activities into academic and social learning practices (Gillies, 2016). Cooperative learning theory constructed before World War II by social theorists Allport, Watson, Shaw, and Mead. They found out that group work was more effective and efficient than working alone in term of quantity, quality, and overall productivity (Ashman & Gillies, 2003). It was later found that people who work together for the same goals, were more effective in achieving the goals, than people who worked individually to complete the same goals (May & Doob, 1973).

Think-Pair-Share Strategy

Think-pair-share is a cooperative learning strategy proposed by Frank Lyman from the University of Maryland in 1981. TPS strategy is identified to use three steps in the teaching-learning process. The first step is thinking. In the thinking process, the teacher, as a facilitator, provides a problem or a question to the whole class. It is up to the teacher to give a time limit for their students to develop their solution or answer for the problem or question questioned by the teacher. The second step is pairing. In this process, the teacher asks students to pair themselves with the other student, usually their tablemate, to discuss their answer or solution to the problem given by the teacher before. The last step is sharing. In this step, students share their thoughts about the solution for the problem given by their teacher before and decide what the best solution is by making a decision about what should be added or what should be left out for their answer to be presented. If the time permits, the teacher can ask the pairs to present their answer to the whole class.

The Advantages of Think-Pair-Share Strategy

There are several advantages known from TPS strategy applied in the classroom (Kagan, 2009). First, students improved their response quality when given appropriate "think time". Second, students became more actively engaged in thinking. Third, students were more focused on thinking when discussed the question or problem with their friend. Fourth, students had a chance to discuss or reflect on the topic by using critical thinking after receiving the lesson. Fifth, students found it is easier to discuss the question or problem with their classmate rather than with a large group.

The Disadvantages of Think-Pair-Share Strategy

Along with the advantages of TPS strategy, it also has some disadvantages (Raba, 2017). First, most of the students that are accustomed to individual learning are facing difficulties to learn and share with their partner and prefer to work by themselves. To overcome this, the teacher should keep track of each pair and help the students that find difficulties in sharing their answer with their partner. Second, sometimes one student becomes dominant in the discussion and makes his/her partner become passive and clinging to the first student's answer. The teacher should monitor each pair and when they spotted a student that is more dominant in the sharing session the teacher should let the passive student share his/her opinion about the answer.

METHOD

The design for this research was quasi-experimental research with post-test only, the two out of seven classes were chosen as the experimental group and control group by considering the result of the homogeneity test. The experimental group was taught reading comprehension using think pair strategy, while the control group was given the question and answer strategy.

This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 9 Jember and the population for this research was seven classes of the eighth grade students (VIII A, VIII B, VIII C, VIII D, VIII E, VIII F, and VIII G) in the academic year 2019/2020. The homogeneity test was then conducted to determine whether the population is homogenous or not. There were 20 test items of reading in the form of multiple choices. The researcher provided 40 minutes for the

students to do the test. The results of the reading test were analyzed by using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result of the homogeneity test proved that the population of the research was homogenous. Therefore, the experimental and control groups were chosen by lottery in this research. Those classes were VIII E as the experimental group and VIII F as the control group. Data collection method was consisted of reading comprehension test, interview, and documentation.

The data collected from post-test from both control and experimental groups in this research was analyzed using the independent sample t-test with 5% significant level by using SPSS software. It was, therefore, to estimate whether there was a significant effect of TPS strategy on eighth-grade students' reading comprehension.   If the result from the test showed the value of significant (sig) 2-tailed $\geq$ 0.05, then null hypothesis was accepted. However, if the value of (sig) 2-tailed $\leq$ 0.05, then alternative hypothesis was accepted.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The total number of the post-test takers of the experimental group was 32 students and the control group was 32 students. The mean score of the post-test of the experimental group was 84.25 with the standard deviation 14.721. Then, the mean score of the post-test of the control group was 74.25 with the standard deviation 15.540. In this research, the experimental group has the lowest standard deviation means, while most of the numbers are close to the average. The control group has high standard deviation means that the numbers are not spread out.

Table 1.1 The Output of Independent Sample T-test of Reading Score

According to Larvene's test for equality of variances in table 4.3, F=0.002 and P=0.965 (>0.05) assumed equal variances, and in t-test with equal variances assumed, the value of t= 2.643 and p=0.010 (<0.05) showed a significant difference in the means between groups. The sample provides string enough evidence to conclude that the two groups (experimental and control group) means are different. To sum up everything that has been stated so far, there is a significant effect in the experimental group.

The result of the post-test showed the students' mean score of the experimental group was higher than the mean score of the students of the control group (84.25 > 74.25). Based on the analysis of the t-test, it showed that sig. (2-tailed) value p = 0.010 was lower than the significant level (<0.05). As the result, the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected while the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted. It means that there was a significant difference between the experimental and the control group after the students of the experimental group got the treatments.

Furthermore, the result of data analysis proved that using the think-pair-share (TPS) strategy in teaching reading had a significant effect on the students' descriptive text reading comprehension achievement at SMPN 9 Jember.

In this research, the researcher formulated the alternative hypothesis as "There is a significant effect of using think-pair-share as a collaborative learning strategy for the junior high school students' descriptive text reading comprehension at SMP Negeri 9 Jember".

DISCUSSION

Based on the data analysis results, it was revealed that there was a significant effect of using the TPS strategy as the teaching technique on the eighth grade students' descriptive text reading comprehension achievement at Junior High School. Further, it was revealed from the mean score between the experimental group that is higher than the control group (84.25>74.25). This was a proof that the students of the experimental group who were taught reading comprehension by using the TPS strategy achieved higher scores than the control group who were only taught reading comprehension by using the question and answer technique.

The research finding showed that the TPS strategy could increase the students' descriptive text reading. Since the first meeting in the experimental group, the students were excited to learn reading comprehension using the TPS strategy. All the excitements were positively affected the classroom engagement since they were allowed to be able to gather their ideas first before discussing them with their partner. During the pairing process, the pair was engaged in critical thinking when discussing the solution to the problem exposed to the pair. Those cooperative learning advantages were in line with Kagan's (2009) although, they needed few meetings to adjust and organize their ideas in the thinking process.

Raba's (2017) previous study result had also supported the result of this research. TPS strategy enhanced the students' self-confidence. Meanwhile, they gradually spent less time in the thinking process since they started to learn how to organize their ideas before discussing them with their friends. This is also in line with the previous study done by Jebur et al. (2012). They found that the experimental group were dominated in the reading comprehension achievement and also encouraged them to think and discuss their opinions out loud.

This research finding supported the findings of the previous study conducted by Ofodu & Lawal (2011), they investigated that when the TPS strategy got applied to the experimental group in the classroom, the students with more experience and confidence were able to help other students, who are weaker in term of experience and confidence, to interpret and understand what is being read.

Different from the experimental group, the students in the control group were less motivated in the teaching and learning process since the researcher used the same strategy used by their English teacher. They were taught by using the question and answer strategy as their learning technique. During the lesson, for instance, the majority of students decided to do something unrelated to the lesson such as talking or doing other stuff. However, when they were asked about something they might find difficult in the teaching and learning process they chose to keep silent. This entire situation led them to get a lower score than the students in the experimental group as they were not fully participated in the classroom.

Although with all the positivity and benefits of the TPS strategy being applied in the classroom, there were also difficulties. For instance, few students did not respond well to the TPS activity, they mostly felt that discussing with their friend was only wasting their time and they could finish the assignment alone without discussing it with their friend. This is in line with the result of the research done by Shih & Reynolds (2015), they stated that a few students did not respond well to the TPS activity in the learning process.

Based on the explanation above, it could be stated that the use of the TPS strategy was effective in teaching reading comprehension since the mean score of the experimental group was higher than the control group. Moreover, the statistical value of the research showed that there was a significant effect of using the TPS strategy on the eighth grade students'

descriptive test reading comprehension achievement at SMPN 9 Jember in the 2019/2020 academic year.

The pedagogical implication of the research reflected from the research findings done by the researcher was covered in four steps: planning, implementing, observing, and reflection. Planning that based on the theories of assessment would make the assessment activity ran effectively. Implementing the strategies correctly could reduce the inconsistency between the teacher's beliefs and practices. Observing the practice of the TPS strategy in the classroom could help the teacher to spot any difficulties in the classroom practice of the strategy. Reflection from the difficulties they faced before in the classroom that can be used for future reference.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the result of the data analysis of t-test by using SPSS and the discussion in the previous chapters, it could be concluded that there was a significant effect of using think-pair-share strategy on the eighth grade students' descriptive text reading comprehension achievement.

Based on the result of this research, the researcher would like to give the some suggestions to the following persons: (1) The English teachers are expected to use the TPS strategy as the strategy in the teaching-learning process of reading comprehension since the strategy itself could give stimulus for the students to work with each other to understand the text easily and to give them motivation in the teaching-learning process of reading comprehension; (2) The future researchers can use the result of this research as a reference to conduct a further research dealing with the use of TPS strategy to teach reading comprehension by using the same or different research design like a descriptive research or a classroom action research, or with different language skills for different level of participants and schools.

REFERENCES

Ashman, A., & Gillies, R. (Eds.). (2003). *Cooperative Learning: The Social and Intellectual Outcomes of Learning in Groups*. Routledge.

Chiu, M. M. (2008). Flowing toward Correct Contributions during Group Problem Solving: A statistical Discourse Analysis. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences, 17*(3), 415-463. doi: 10.1080/10508400802224830

Cook, T. D. (2015). Quasi-Experimental Design. *Wiley Encyclopedia of Management,* 1–2. doi: 10.1002/9781118785317.weom110227

Creswell, J. W. 2012. *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research.* Boston: Pearson Education Inc.

Duffy, G. G. (2009). *Explaining Reading: A Resource for Teaching Concepts, Skills, and Strategies (second edition)*. London: Guilford Press.

Dolon, R., & Todoli, J. (2008). Analyzing Identifies in Discourse: Discourse Approaches to Politics. *Society and Culture.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins BV.

Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2011). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*. New York: McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages.

Gillies, R. M. (2016). Cooperative Learning: Review of Research and Practice. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 41*(3), 3. doi: 10.14221/ajte.2016v41n3.3

Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a Second Language: Moving from Theory to Practice*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.

Grellet, F. (1996). *Developing Reading Skills: A Practical Guide to Reading Comprehension Exercises*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Heaton, J. B. (1975). *Writing English Language Test*. England: Longman inc.

Hughes, A. (1989). *Testing for Language Teachers (Second Edition)*. Cambridge: The Press Syndicate of the Univeristy of Cambridge

Husna, L. (2017). An Analysis of Students' Writing Skill in Descriptive Text at Grade XI IPA 1 of MAN 2 Padang. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Scholastic, 1*(1), 16-28.

Jebur, A. I. M. S., Jasim, A. I. H. H., & Jaboori, A. I. H. R. (2013). The Effect of Using Think-pair-share Technique on EFL Students' Achievement in the Course of General English. مجلة كلية التربية الاساسية للعلوم التربوية والانسانية, *19*(80), 838-823.

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2009). An Educational Psychology Success Story: Social Interdependence Theory and Cooperative Learning. *Educational researcher, 38*(5), 365-379. doi: 10.3102/0013189x09339057

Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Holubec, E. J. (1994). *The Nuts and Bolts of Cooperative Learning*. Minnesota: Interaction Book Co.

Kagan, S. (2009). Kagan's Cooperative Learning. *San Clemente: Kagan Publishing*.

Lyman, F. T. (1981). The Responsive Classroom Discussion: The Inclusion of All Students. *Mainstreaming digest, 109*, 113.

May, M. A., & Doob, L. W. (1937). *Competition and Cooperation* (Vol. 25). Social Science Research Council.

Ofodu, G. O., & Lawal, R. A. (2011). Cooperative Instructional Strategies and Performance Levels of Students in Reading Comprehension. *International Journal of Educational Sciences, 3*(2), 103-107.

Pennington, M. (2009). Characteristics of Middle School Learners | Pennington Publishing Blog. Retrieved from http://blog.penningtonpublishing.com/reading/characteristics-of-middle-school-learners/

Perfetti, C. A., Landi, N., & Oakhill, J. (2005). The Acquisition of Reading Comprehension Skill. *The Science of Reading: A Handbook*, 227-247. doi: 10.1002/9780470757642.ch13

Raba, A. A. A. (2017). The Influence of Think-pair-share (TPS) on Improving Students' Oral Communication Skills in EFL Classrooms. *Creative Education, 8*(01), 12.

Rayner, K., Foorman, B. R., Perfetti, C. A., Pesetsky, D., & Seidenberg, M. S. (2001). How Psychological Science Informs the Teaching of Reading. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 2*(2), 31-74.

Roetheli, Alyssa. (2018). Disadvantages of Using Cooperative Learning in the Classroom. Retrieved from https://teachinginthefastlane.com/2018/05/disadvantages-of-cooperative-learning.html

Schul, J. E. (2011). Revisiting an Old Friend: The Practice and Promise of Cooperative Learning for the Twenty-first Century. *The Social Studies*, *102*(2), 88-93. doi: 10.1080/00377996.2010.509370

Shih, Y. C., & Reynolds, B. L. (2015). Teaching Adolescents EFL by Integrating Think-Pair-Share and Reading Strategy Instruction: A Quasi-experimental Study. *RELC Journal, 46*(3), 221-235.

Snow, C. (2002). *Reading for Understanding: Toward an R&D Program in Reading Comprehension*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

Sudjiono, A. (1998). *Pengantar Ilmu Pendidikan*. Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persaja.

Weaver, P. A. (1979). Improving Reading Comprehension: Effects of Sentence Organization Instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *15*(1), 129-146. doi: 10.2307/7474

Wingersky, J., Boerner, J. K., & Holguin-Balogh, D. (2008). *Writing Paragraphs and Essays: Integrating Reading, Writing, and Grammar Skills (Sixth Edition)*. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Wood, N. V. (1991). *Strategies for College Reading and Thinking*. New York: McGraw-Hill.