THE CORRELATION BETWEEN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMA N 5 PALEMBANG

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were to find out (1) whether or not there is a significant correlation between language learning strategies and reading comprehension achievements of the eleventh grade students, (2) whether or not there is a contribution from language learning strategies to reading comprehension achievements of the eleventh grade students. For the data collection, the strategy inventory language learning questionnaire and reading test were distributed to the 91 eleventh grade students of SMA N 5 Palembang. The result showed that (1) there was significant correlation between language learning strategies and reading achievement R 0.447. Categorically, from the six aspects of language learning strategies; memory, cognitive, compensation, affective and social have very weak correlation coefficient to the reading comprehension achievement. While metacognitive has fair correlation coefficient. But, there is significant correlation between all LLS' aspects and reading comprehension achievement, (2) language learning strategies contributed 20.0% to reading comprehension achievement, especially metacognitive contribute the most.

Key words: *language learning strategies, reading comprehension achievement*

Introduction

English has been recognized as the first international language in the world. Be a master in English is one of the guarantees to be successful (Juwita, 2009, p .9). Furthermore, Brown (2000, p. 232) says that English has four skills- reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Reading and listening are receptive, while speaking and writing are productive. Reading is very important in daily life and it has much role in learning language.

According to Collins and Collins (2002, p. 8), reading may be defined as recognizing words in print, combining the meanings of words with relevant prior knowledge, and thinking about the collective meaning of information.

However, Indonesian reading achievement is not satisfying yet. It is proven from the PISA (Programme for the International Student Assessment) reading score which is done every three years by OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development). Indonesian PISA reading score result in 2012 shows that Indonesia is number 64 from 65 countries in the world. It can be concluded that Indonesia reading is almost in the lowest position. Low reading achievement can happen because of some problems that occur in teaching and learning process. Nowadays, the problems of reading may also affect the quality of human resources since reading is to gain and exchange information in which the world has a great amount of knowledge to obtain.

Based on observation and informal interview with the teacher who teaches English and some of the eleventh grade students of SMA N 5 Palembang, the researcher found that the eleventh grade students had difficulties in reading text. The first difficulty in reading was students' ability to relate or to connect their experiences with the ideas presented in the text, determine the generic structure of the texts, and find out the main idea, cause-effect, detail information, and inference. However, they were actually able to read English words and sentences. The difficulties had made them unmotivated to read since they preconceived that the theme or the topic of reading was not interesting for them. Some of the students just read the text without trying to connect the presented ideas of text with their thinking patterns.

As stated in McNamara (2009, p. 36), "strategies are essential, not only to successful comprehension, but to overcoming reading problems and becoming a better reader and comprehension". The students will find the use of strategies enhances their ability to organize and retrieve the information, consequently

increasing learning efficiency (Richards, 2008). Effective strategies will produce an effective result.

Furthermore, Karlina (2014) did a research about the relationship among language learning styles, language learning strategies, and reading achievements. the result showed that aural was the most learning style used, while metacognitive was the most language learning strategy used. While there was a significant correlation between language learning strategies and reading achievement especially affective, cognitive, and compensation. Only language learning strategies contributes significantly to reading achievement, especially compensation and affective strategies. Therefore, it is important that learning strategies are involved in teaching and learning process to minimize the students in getting low achievement. Meanwhile, learning strategies are ways that are used by learners to learn something.

Phakiti (2003, p. 27) defines learning strategies are strategies that language learners purposefully use to enhance their language learning and acquisition. In reading process readers are required to involved their strategies when answering the questions or comprehending. The importance of language learning strategies is that they are steps that the learners take to manage their learning and achieve desired goals (Chang, 2011, p. 202).

Oxford (1990, p. 311) outlines language learning strategies into two main categories, direct and indirect strategies which are also subdivided into six classes. Direct strategies, which involved the new language directly, are divided into memory, cognitive and compensation strategies while indirect strategies include metacognitive, affective and social strategies.

Since, the students have different learning strategies, it is better for the teachers to know their students' characteristic well. It will be very useful for them to get better output. In conclusion, based on some reasons above, the researcher is interested in doing a research study entitles "the correlation between language

learning strategies and reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh grade students of SMA N 5 Palembang.

Concept of Language Learning Strategies

Chamot (2004, p. 14) states that learning strategies are the conscious thoughts and actions that learners take in order to achieve a learning goal. Oxford (2003, p. 8) shows that learning strategies are specific behaviors or thought processes that students use to enhance their own language learning. Learning strategies are important factors that influence the process and outcomes of learning, and specific actions taken by learners to make learning more efficient (Shi, 2011, p. 20).

Oxford (2003, p. 2) states that language learning strategies can be classified into six groups: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies.

Memory Strategy

Oxford (2003, p. 13) states that memory strategies help learners link one L2 item or concept with another but do not necessarily involve deep understanding. Memory strategy often used for memorizing vocabulary and structures in initial stages of language learning, but the learners needs such strategies much less when their arsenal of vocabulary and structures has become larger (Oxford, 2003, p. 13).

Cognitive Strategy

Brown (2007, p. 134) stated that cognitive strategies are more limited to specific learning task and they involved more direct manipulation of the learning material itself.

In addition, Oxford (2003, p.12) supports cognitive strategies enable the learners to manipulate the language material in direct ways, e. g. through reasoning, analysis, note taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information

to develop stronger schemas (knowledge structures), practicing in naturalistic settings, and practicing structures and sounds formally.

Compensation Strategy

Compensation strategy (e.g., guessing from the context in listening and reading; using synonyms and "talking around" the missing word to aid speaking and writing; and strictly for speaking, using gestures or pause words) help the learner make up for missing knowledge (Oxford, 2003, p. 13). In addition, Chang (2011, p. 202) states compensation strategy is compensating for knowledge gaps. They aim is to make up for a limited repertoire of grammar and, particularly vocabulary. When learners are confronted with unknown expressions, they make use of guessing strategies.

Metacognitive Strategy

Metacognition is the the process of analyzing our own comprehension processes, or "thinking about thinking" (Peregoy, 2008, p. 289). Metacognition involves active monitoring and consequent regulation and orchestration of cognitive processes to achieve cognitive goals.

Oxford (2003, p. 12) says that metacognitive strategies (e. g. identifying one's own learning style preferences and needs, planning for a language learning task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, and evaluating task success, and evaluating the success of any type of learning strategy are employed for managing the learning process overall.

Affective Strategy

According to Oxford (2003, p. 14), affective strategies, such as identifying one's mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance, and using deep breathing or positive selftalk. Chang (2011, p. 202)

supports affective strategies is identifying one's affective traits and knowing how to manage them.

Social Strategy

Oxford (2003, p. 14) states that social strategies (e.g. asking questions to get verification, asking for clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with a native-speaking conversation partner, and exploring cultural and social norms) help the learner work with others and understand the target culture as well as the language.

Concept of Reading Comprehension

Collins and Collins (2002, p. 8) state that reading is a mental process. Although the eyes are involved in sending information about print to the brain, the brain performs the real act of reading.

Wooley (2011, p. 15) states that reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. The goal, therefore, is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences. In addition, Ghelani, Sidhu, Jain, and Tannock (2004) say that reading comprehension is a very complex task that requires different cognitive processes and reading abilities over the life span.

Brown (2000, p. 306-308) also points out some principle strategies for reading comprehension :

1) Identify your purpose in reading text,

2) Apply spelling rules and conventions for bottom-up decoding,

3) Use lexical analysis (prefixes, roots, suffixes, etc) to determine meaning,

4) Guess at meaning (of words, idioms, etc) when you aren't certain,

5) Skim the text for the gist and main ideas,

6) Scan the text for specific information (names,dates,keywords),

7) Use silent reading techniques for rapid processing.

There are some predictors that influence reading achievement. Snow, Burns, and Griffins (1998) mention there are four aspects that influence it, they are (1) intellectual and sensory capacities, (2) positive expectations about and experiences with literacy from an early age, (3) support for reading-related activities and attitudes so that he or she is prepared to benefit from early literacy experiences and subsequent formal instruction in school, and (4) instructional environments conducive to learning.

Research Design

In this study, a correlational research in terms of explanatory research design was used to find out the correlation among variables and explain and interpret the results. The procedure would be that, first; the researcher identified the language learning strategies by using questionnaire. Second, by using reading test, the students' reading comprehension achievement were obtained. The third, the researcher found if there was the correlation between variables through SPSS based on the results of the questionnaire and students' reading test. The next step, the contribution of language learning strategies to the reading comprehension achievement was analyzed. Last, explanation and interpretation of the results were discussed. The research design was as follows:

$$\boxed{X} \longrightarrow \boxed{Y}$$

Where:
        X : Language Learning Strategies
        Y : Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement.
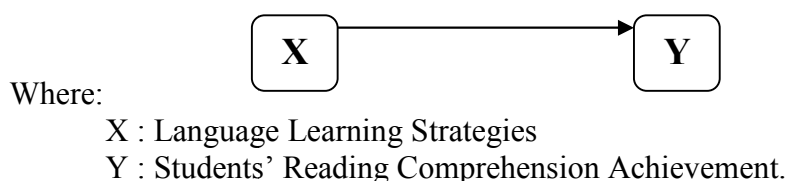
Subject of the Study

The population of this study was the eleventh grade students of SMA N 5 Palembang. The population of this study consisted of 254 students from nine classes.

To get the sample, convenience sampling technique was used. According to Fraenkel, et. al (2012, p. 99), convenience sampling is a group of individuals who

(conveniently) are available for study. The researcher used convenience sampling because these classes were recommended by the English teacher of the eleventh grade students of SMA N 5 Palembang. The teacher provided three classes (XI MIA 3, XI MIA 4 and XI MIA 5) with the total number of 91 students.

Finding and Discussion

Test Validity

In conducting this study, the researcher used four kinds of validity. Those are:

- **Construct Validity**

  According to Fraenkel, et. al. (2012, p.148), construct validity refers to the nature of the psychological construct or characteristic being measured by the instrument. After constructing the instruments related to some aspects measured, then it was consulted to achieve some experts judgement from at least three validators. The validators were Amalia Hasanah, as the first validator, the second validator was Eka sartika, M.Pd., and the third validator was Winny Agustia R, M.Pd to evaluate whether the components of the instruments were valid or not to be applied in research activities. In this part, the construct validity of the research instruments involved two types. They were questions for reading test and questionnaire.

- **Validity of Each Question Item**

  To know whether it is valid or not, the score of significance (r-output) should be compared with the score of "r-table" product moment. A question item is considered valid if "r-output" is higher than "r-table" (Basrowi, 2007, p. 24). In this case, the researcher tried out the research instruments to 34 students of XI MIA 1 of SMA N 5 Palembang. There were 60 questions. The correct answers were labeled 1.6 point, and the incorrect answers were labeled 0. Then, the analysis of validity test was done by using *Pearson Correlation Coefficient* in SPSS 20 program.

The result of significant score of Pearson Correlation was compared with r_{table} (0.339). It means that the item is valid. From *Pearson Correlation* formula, there were 42 questions considered valid.

- **Content Validity**

Fraenkel, et. al. (2012, p. 148) state that content validity refers to the content and format of the instrument. A content validity is very important since it is an accurate measure of what it is supposed to measure. In order to judge whether or not a test has content validity, a specification of the skills or structures should be made based on the curriculum and syllabus. The test specification table includes: objective of the test, test material, indicator, number of items, total, type of the test, answer key.

- **Validity of Questionnaire**

The response option is assigned values of 5 points to each response indicating always or almost always true of me, a value of 4 points for usually true of me, a value of 3 points for somewhat true of me, a value of 2 for usually not true of me, and the last value of 1 for never or almost never true of me. Those are for favorable statements. After distributing the questionnaire to the students to estimate the validity of the instrument, each question item on respondents' answer from the questionnaire was analyzed by using *Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient* in SPSS 20. The result of significant score of Pearson Correlation was compared with r_{table} (0.339), It means that the item was valid. From *Pearson Correlation* formula, all items of questionnaire were valid.

Test Reliability

To know the reliability of the test, *Cronbach Alpha* technique in SPSS 20 was used to find out the internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire, and reading test by applying *Split Half* technique.

The scores of reliability are obtained from tryout analysis which was done once using the instruments test. The school where the tryout was conducted was the same school where the research study was conducted. It was SMA N 5 Palembang on Friday, 29th of January 2016 at 08.15 – 09.45 a.m. Therefore, split-half test method was used to obtain the scores of tryout analysis. The test indicated reliable whenever the p-output was higher than 0.70.

Having measured the reliability test by using *split half* method, it was found that the p-output of Guman Split-half Coefficient is 0.778 from the score. It can be stated that the reliability of reading test items was reliable since the p-output was higher than r-table (0.70) with sample (N) 34 students. While for the questionnaire, it was found that p-output of cronbach's Alpha was 0.917.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2012, p. 163) state that the score is considered reliable if the score of significance is at least or preferably higher than 0.70. Since the score was higher than 0.70. So, it can be assumed that the questionnaire and reading test were considered reliable for this study.

Normality Test

The data can be classfied into normal when the p-output is higher than 0.05 level (Basrowi, 2007, p. 85). In analyzing the normality test, *1-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test* was used.

It was found that the p-output from SILL questionnaire score was 0.868, and reading comprehension achievement score was 0.223. From the result of the p-output, it can be stated that the SILL questionnaire score and reading comprehension achievement were normal.

Linearity Test

The statistics was found that the (F) 0.937 was lower than F-table (F=1.57), and the significance level was (Sig.) 0.591. The distribution showed that the

significance level was higher than 0.05. It means that the variables were linear. The linearity found whenever the p-output was higher than 0.05, and F-value was lower than F-table. From the result of the significance level, it can be assumed that the data from SILL questionnaire and reading comprehension achievement were linear.

Result of Correlation between Students' LLS and Reading Comprehension Achievement

The correlation coefficient is found whenever the p-output is lower than 0.05 as suggested by Pallant (2005, p. 127). Based on the statistical analysis, it was found that the correlation coefficient of LLS and reading comprehension achievement was (r) 0.447.It indicates that there was fair correlation between the variables. It was also found that there was significant correlation between students' LLS and reading comprehension achievement at Sig. 0.000. Since the p-output was lower than 0.05. This indicates that the first hypothesis is accepted.

Categorically, memory, cognitive, compensation, affective and social strategy have very weak correlations to the reading comprehension achievement since the correlation coefficients (memory: 0.302, cognitive: 0.333, compensation: 0.289, affective: 0.302, social: 0.283) are between 0.00 – 0.34. While metacognitive has fair correlations since the correlation coefficient (metacognitive: 0.433) is between 0.41 – 0.64 (Johnson and Christenson, 2012, p. 340). Therefore, the significant correlations happen between all the language learning strategies aspects and reading comprehension achievement.

Result of language learning strategies' contribution to the reading comprehension achievement

The regression in this study was intended to support the correlation between two variables. The R-Square was 0. 200. This meant that language learning strategies contribute 20.0% to the students' reading comprehension achievement.

In order to see how much influence each of the independent variables or combinations of independent variables to reading comprehension achievement, stepwise multiple regression analysis was applied. It shows that not all independent variables items contribute to reading comprehension achievement. Only metacognitive strategy which contributes significantly to reading comprehension achievement. It contributes 18.8% to reading comprehension achievement.

Conclusion

Based on the descriptions and discussions in the previous chapter, some conclusions are drawn.

First, there is a significant correlation between language learning strategies and reading achievement. Categorically, the correlation coefficients from the six aspects of language learning strategies, memory, cognitive, compensation, affective and social were very weak. While metacognitive has fair correlation coefficient. But, there is significant correlation between all LLS' aspects and reading comprehension achievement.

Second, there is evidence that language learning strategies influence toward reading comprehension achievement. Categorically, metacognitive contributes the most.

Third, the most language learning strategies used by the eleventh grade students of SMA N 5 Palembang is metacognitive, followed by social, cognitive, compensation, affective, and memory.

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