

IMPROVING EIGHTH GRADERS' FUNCTIONAL READING ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIC READING (CSR)

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were (1) to find out whether or not there was a significant difference in students' functional reading achievement before and after they were taught through Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) and (2) to find out whether or not there was a significant difference in functional reading achievement between the students who were taught through CSR and those who were not. This study was a quasi-experimental research method that applied non-equivalent control group research design. The population of this study was the eighth grade students of one of the junior high schools in Palembang in academic year 2015 - 2016 and the number of sample was 76 students, that was selected by using purposive sampling technique. The data of this study were collected by using a pre-test and a post-test and were analyzed statistically by using paired and independent sample *t*-test. The results of this study revealed that (1) there was a significant difference in students' functional reading achievement before and after they were taught through CSR (mean diff=18.87, and p -value=.000) and (2) there was a significant difference in functional reading achievement between the students who were taught through CSR and those who were not (mean diff=12.11, and p -value=.000). Therefore, it can be concluded that CSR is effective in improving the students' functional reading achievement.

Keywords: CSR, Functional Reading Achievement, Eighth Grade Students.

1. Introduction

Reading is one of the four language skills which are identified as paramount importance in the English teaching and learning process besides listening, speaking, and writing (Brown, 2001). Reading is important because the learners can gain the information through the reading text. It also influences the learners in improving their other language skills and language components, for instance, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. According to Harmer (2007), the good reading texts provide good models for writing, and provide opportunities to introduce new topics, to stimulate discussion, and to study language (e.g,

vocabulary, grammar, and idiom). As reading is an integral part of people's daily lives, taken very much for granted, and generally assumed to be something that everyone can do; therefore, getting students to read English text is an important part of teacher's job.

People have different perspective on reading purposes; some of them just think that reading as written words. According to Berardo (2006), reading has three main purposes; they are reading for survival, learning, and pleasure. In addition, Reynolds and Janzen (2007, p.1678) state that there are four typical general purposes of reading, corresponding to four basic types of reading. The four types of reading are developmental reading, studying, functional reading, and recreational reading.

One of the kinds of reading that people do essentially to function in the day to day world is functional reading (Rog, 2012). The examples of functional text that people usually read are directions, a recipe, a map or menu, the ingredients on a package, directories, forms to fill out, signs, and even public transportation schedules. Indeed, this type of reading activity is actually the kind least taught at schools (Rog, 2012). In Indonesia, the curriculum for English lesson of Junior High School has included functional text as one of reading materials for being learned and taught (School-Based Curriculum, 2006). Furthermore, based on Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia No.32 Tahun 2013 about National Standard of Education, English is one of the subjects which is included in the national examination, and reading is one of the skills that will be tested in this test. Since the students of Junior High School are examined in their reading ability, it is necessary for students to understand functional English texts.

However, reading in the national language is challenging for junior high school students of Palembang. As shown by the result of the study conducted by Diem, Purnomo, Ihsan, Sofendi, and Vianty (2015) which focused on functional reading in Bahasa Indonesia, the functional reading of junior high school students in Palembang was 57.20. On the other hand, for English as a foreign language, Yustika (2015), Azkarani (2015), Intan (2015),

Wicaksono (2015) who did the research in English functional reading of junior high schools in Palembang discovered that the students' score of functional reading achievement was below the standard of Indonesian National Education, which is 75.00. These results of studies show that the students' functional reading achievement both in Bahasa Indonesia and English in Palembang were low.

Problem in English reading was also faced by the students of SMP Negeri 10 Palembang. Based on the interview to the English teacher of SMP Negeri 10 Palembang, the teacher said that the problems of the students in learning English is the difficulty in understanding the text, lack of vocabulary, and less concentration. The writer also observed the teacher in the classroom, and found out that teaching of English reading mainly focused on reading passages and did exercises. The activity that was done in the classroom focused on the individual assignment. As a result, the students showed no enthusiasm in learning English.

The strategy that is used by English teachers can also influence the learning outcome of students. In other words, the students may not be motivated to learn English if the materials and strategy that are used are monotone. According to Brown (2001), the role of teacher is to provide the creative materials and strategy for students to increase their motivation in order to make them become the successful learners. The writer chose the authentic materials as the teaching materials that were used during the treatment. Using authentic materials in teaching reading can give a lot of benefits for the students because the students will have more inspiration to use the language, and they have become accustomed to exposure the language in real communication (Anjani, 2014). In relation to the strategy in teaching reading, there are so many alternative strategies of which the teachers can apply, one of them is Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR).

In this study, the writer focused on using Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) to improve the students' functional reading achievement. According to Klingner & Vaughn (1998), Collaborative Strategic Reading, or

CSR, is one of the interactive approaches that function to help the students understand how to comprehend the text well while working cooperatively. It leads to gain in terms of student achievement, participation, and motivation. CSR consists of four comprehension strategies that students apply before, during, and after reading in small cooperative groups. These reading strategies are: (a) preview (before reading), (b) click and clunk (during reading), (c) get the gist (during reading), and (d) wrap-up (after reading). Therefore, the writer was interested in doing a research entitled “Improving Functional Reading Achievement of the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 10 Palembang through Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR).” Thus, the problems of this study were formulated in the following questions: 1) Was there any significant difference in students’ functional reading achievement before and after they were taught through Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR)? and 2) Was there any significant difference in functional reading achievement between the students who were taught through Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) and those who were not?.

2. Theoretical Background

According to Richards and Renandya (2002, p.276), in English teaching activity whether it is as a second language or foreign language, reading is one of language skills which receives a special focus. There are a number of reasons for this. First, many foreign language students often have reading as one of their most important goals. They want to be able to read for information and pleasure, for their career, and for study purposes. Second, written texts serve various pedagogical purposes. Extensive exposure to linguistically comprehension written texts can enhance the language acquisition. Good reading texts also provide good models for writing, and provide opportunities to introduce new topics, to stimulate discussion, and to study language (e.g, vocabulary, grammar, and idioms).

Functional text is one of the texts that should be learned by the students besides transactional text and genre text. According to Rog (2012), functional reading is a type of reading that people do essentially to function in the world, day to day. Reynolds and Janzen (2007) simply define functional reading as, “the reading that is required to accomplish some personal or social as opposed to instructional goal (p.1678).” In other words, functional reading is one form of reading that people usually do in daily life for their social purposes, arises from real-world needs, helps people out, and solves a problem in a (hopefully) straightforward way. Therefore, it is very important to learn functional reading because its goal is to prepare the students to survive in society by helping them to cope with everyday reading experiences.

Collaborative Strategic Reading was developed by Klingner and Vaughn in 1998. They define CSR as, “an excellent technique for teaching students reading comprehension and building vocabulary and also working together cooperatively (p.32).” It means that Collaborative Strategic Reading is a technique which can improve the students’ reading comprehension, increase their vocabularies, enhance cooperative skills, and enrich content area learning during the activity. As Klingner and Vaughn state that the goals of CSR are to improve reading comprehension, and increase conceptual learning in ways that maximize students' involvement.

Meanwhile, Bremer, Vaughn, Clapper, and Kim (2002, p.1) briefly define that CSR is a reading comprehension practice that combines two instructional elements: (a) modified reciprocal teaching, and (b) cooperative learning or students pairing. In reciprocal teaching, teachers and students are working together in understanding the text by concerning key features of text through summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting.

CSR consists of four comprehension strategies that students apply before, during, and after reading in small cooperative groups. Klingner and Vaughn (1998) describe the four strategies as follows:

- a. *Preview*: a strategy to activate students' prior knowledge, to facilitate their predictions about what they will read, and to generate interest. Preview consists of two activities: (a) brainstorming and (b) making predictions.
- b. *Click and clunk*: a strategy that teaches students to identify parts of a passage that are hard to understand during reading, then using four "fix-up" strategies when they realize their failure to understand text.
- c. *Get the gist*: a strategy to help students identify main ideas or the most important information in a passage during reading.
- d. *Wrap up*: a strategy that teaches students to generate questions and to review important ideas in the text they have read. Wrap up consists of two activities: (a) generating questions, and (b) reviewing.

During CSR, the students are divided into small group consists of 4-6 students each group, and perform a different role. In this technique, role is an important aspect of CSR because cooperative learning seems to work best when all group members have been assigned in a meaningful task. Thus, students are assigned roles in CSR lesson that they must fulfill together.

In relation to teaching materials, the writer chose authentic materials as teaching materials during the treatment because authentic materials can increase the students' interest in reading class. Berardo (2006) states that one of the main reasons for using authentic materials in the classroom is that to introduce the students how the language is actually used. Language of authentic materials is not artificial because it is not made for classroom need, but the world use. In this case, the teacher serves as as a guide show the learners that authentic materials are the representative of the actual use of language spoken and written by native, and to give the awareness and necessary skills for students to understand how the language is used in the real situation.

3. Method

This study was a quasi-experimental research method that applied non-equivalent control group research design. According to Creswell (2012, p.309), “Quasi-experiments are experimental situations in which the researcher assigns, but not randomly, participants to groups. This is because the experimenter cannot artificially create groups for the experiment.” There were two groups in this study, the experimental group and the control group. Both the experimental group and the control group received the pre-test and post-test. Before having the post-test, the experimental group was given the treatment by using Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) for eighteen meetings, while the control group was not given. The population of this study was 470 students from all the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 10 Palembang in academic year of 2015/2016. The writer used purposive sampling technique because the samples of this study were selected based on the following criteria; the students were taught by the same English teacher, and they had the same reading level, level 3. The experimental group was 39 students from VIII. 2, while the control group was 37 students from VIII.1.

Before doing a try out to know whether the questions given are valid or not, the writer conducted the content validity check by having feedback from two validators. Then, the writer checked the validity and the reliability of the test before the reading test was given to the samples. The test was tried out to 39 non-sample students who were in the same grade. The validity of the test was measured by using Corrected–Item Total Correlation. After the result of the test was obtained, there were twenty three questions which were invalid. Those twenty three invalid questions were directly discarded. The result of the try out was also used to measure the reliability of the test. In order to know the reliability of the test, as Tavakol and Dennick (2011) states that the test will be reliable if the reliability coefficient is 0.70 and preferably higher. Then, the writer checked the reliability of the test by using Cronbach’s Alpha in SPSS version 22 for windows. Based on the calculation, the reliability coefficient

was 0.97, and it means that the test was considered reliable. Thus, there were 37 items for reading test to be given to the samples of this study.

After the valid and reliable questions were obtained, the writer gave a reading test as the pre-test and the post-test to the experimental and the control group. Then, to analyze the score of the tests, the writer used a standard formula t-test to compare the result of test between the two groups. The writer examined the data by using paired sample t-test to find out whether there was a significant difference in pre-test and post-test scores in the experimental group. Then, the writer used independent sample t-test to see the significance in the post-test scores between the experimental group and the control group. Before analyzing the data by using independent sample t-test and paired sample t-test, the writer had checked the normality and the homogeneity of test. The writer used SPSS 22 windows version to analyze the data.

4. Result and Discussion

The Distribution of the Functional Reading Achievement Score

The results of the reading test of the experimental group and the control group were distributed based on five categories: Excellent, Good, Average, Low, and Failed. The range of score is between 1-100.

Table 1
The Score Distribution for the Experimental Group and the Control Group (N=76)

Score Range	Category	Experimental Group				Control Group			
		Pre-test		Post-test		Pre-test		Post-test	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
86-100	Excellent	1	2.56	7	17.95	0	0	1	0.27
71-85	Good	7	17.95	29	74.36	10	27.03	14	37.84
56-70	Average	16	41.03	3	7.70	22	59.46	19	51.35
41-55	Poor	14	35.90	0	0	5	13.51	3	8.11
0-40	Failed	1	2.56	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		39	100	39	100	37	100	37	100

As shown in Table 1, based on the result of pre-test in the experimental group, there was only one student (2.56%) in the excellent category, and the result of post-test showed that seven students (17.95%) were in the excellent category, more than half of the students (74.36%) were in the good category, three students (7.70%) were in the average category, and none of students was in the poor and failed category anymore. While in the control group, the result of pre-test showed that more than half of the students (59.46%) were in the average category and none of students was in the excellent and failed categories. After doing the post-test, there were many students in the control group who were still in the average category and only one of them (0.27%) was in the excellent category.

The Results of the Statistical Analyses

The normality of the test is to check whether the data are normally distributed or not. In determining the normality of the data, one sample of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z test was used.

Table 2
The Result of Normality Test (N=76)

Group	Pre-test				Post-test			
	Mean	Std. dev	Sig.(2-tailed)	KSZ	Mean	Std. dev	Sig.(2-tailed)	KSZ
Exp. Group	60.13	13.648	.200	.097	78.97	10.584	.077	.134
Control Group	64.59	10.584	.080	.136	66.86	10.315	.121	.129

Based on Table 2, the significance (2-tailed) of the pre-test of the experimental group was .200 and the post-test of the experimental group was .077. For control group, the significance (2-tailed) of the pre-test was .080 and

the post-test of the experimental group was .121. Since all of the values were higher than 0.05, it could be concluded that the data were normally distributed.

Homogeneity tests were done to know whether the sample groups from the population had similar variances. The writer used Levene's test to know the homogeneity in groups (experimental and control groups). The data were homogeneous if significance > 0.05, the results of the significance of the pre-test and post-test in the experimental group was (.542>0.05) and the results of the significance of the pre-test and post-test in the control group was (.118 >0.05), the results of the significance of the pre-test in the experimental and control groups was (.238>0.05), and the results of the significance of the post-test in the experimental and control groups was (.098>0.05). Therefore, it could be stated that data in experimental and control groups were homogeneous.

Paired sample t-test was used to check whether or not there was a significant difference in students' functional reading achievement before and after they were taught through Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR). The result of the test could be seen in the following table:

Table 3
The Result of Paired Sample T-Test

Group	Test	Mean	Mean Diff.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Experimental	Post-test	78.97	18.84	11.337	38	.000
	Pre-test	60.13				
Control	Post-test	66.86	2.27	1.637	36	.110
	Pre-test	64.59				

Based on the paired sample t-test of the experimental group, the mean score of the post-test (78.97) was higher than the mean score of the pre-test (60.13) with the mean difference 18.84. Since the significance (2-tailed) was lower than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, and the alternative

hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. Therefore, it could be stated that there was a significant difference in students' functional reading achievement before and after they were taught through Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR).

Second, in the control group, the mean score of the post-test (66.86) was higher than the mean score of the pre-test (64.59). Then, the mean difference between the post-test and the pre-test was 2.27 at the significance value (2-tailed) 0.05. Because the significance (0.110) was higher than 0.05, it indicated that there was no significant difference from the pre-test and the post-test of the control group.

Independent sample t-test was used to check whether or not there was a significant different in functional reading achievement between the students who were taught through Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) and those who were not. The result of the test could be seen in the following table:

Table 4
The Result of Independent Sample T-Test

Group	N	Pre-test				Post-test			
		Mean	Mean Diff.	Std Dev	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean	Mean Diff.	Std Dev	Sig.(2-tailed)
Exp. Group	39	60.13	4.46	13.648	0.116	78.97	12.11	5.838	.000
Control Group	37	64.59		10.584		66.86		10.315	

The result of independent sample t-test showed that the mean difference of pre-test in the control group was higher than in the experimental group ($64.59 > 60.13$) and the significance (2-tailed) was higher than 0.05 ($0.116 > 0.05$). Since p -value > 0.05 , it means that there was no significant difference in pretest of reading achievement of both experimental and control groups. Whereas, in the post-test, the mean difference of the control group and

the experimental group (12.11) was significantly different since the significance (2-tailed) was less than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). It could be concluded that the null hypothesis (H_02) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_12) was confirmed. In other words, there was a significant difference in functional reading achievement between the students who were taught through Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) and those who were not.

Based on the statistical analyses, the writer attempted to describe some interpretations. First, statistically the students in the experimental group showed progress in their reading achievement after the treatment. The result showed that there was a significant difference in their reading achievement after they were exposed through CSR. The data analysis showed that the mean score of pre-test and post-test of experimental group increased, and the p -value of paired sample t-test was less than 0.05. The improvement itself could happen because after the experimental group was assigned pretest, the writer gave them the treatment for one month.

Second, the writer compared the total of the mean difference in the experimental group to the mean difference of control group to know which one was more significant on reading achievement. It was found that there was also a significant difference in the mean score of the post results in the experimental and control group. The reason is that functional reading achievement in control group is not significantly improved. However, both control and experimental groups started at the same reading level that was third level. During the teaching and learning activity, the students in control group also learned about functional texts, and the teacher just explained the materials briefly, and then asked the students to do the assignment individually which could make the students not enthusiastic during teaching and learning activity. Therefore, it could be stated that the strategy, which was used in this study, could help the students to improve their reading achievement, especially to help the students who had difficulties in understanding functional texts.

The improvement could also be seen from the score distribution of the pre-test and the post-test. In the experimental group, there were five categories:

excellent, good, average, poor, and failed. After the treatment, their reading achievement was in excellent, good, and average categories. None of the students was in the poor and failed categories anymore. While in the pre-test of the control group, the students' performances were in good, average, and poor categories. Then, in the post-test of the control group, the students were divided into four categories: excellent, good, average, and poor categories. It means that even there were some students in experimental group which were in poor and failed categories, but they could improve their score in the post-test result after they were taught through CSR. Whereas in the control group, there was only one student which was in the excellent category, and each category did not change significantly. This was the reason why there was a significant difference between post-test of experimental and control group.

Thus, it could be assumed that Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) can be an alternative strategy to improve functional reading achievement of the students at SMP Negeri 10 Palembang because CSR helped the students to improve their functional reading achievement. As Klingner and Vaughn (1998) state that the goal of CSR are to improve reading comprehension, and increase conceptual learning in ways that maximize the students' involvement. The result of this study is in line with the findings of Rosalina (2014) and Prawati (2013) who applied this strategy in their reading class with the different type of texts. Rosalina (2014) applied CSR technique for improving reading comprehension achievement of narrative text in SMA PGRI 109 Kota Tangerang while Prawati (2013) applied Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in improving reading expository texts in SMAN 2 Bangkinang - Kampar Regency, Riau Province. The results of their studies showed that CSR is an effective strategy in improving the students' reading comprehension achievement. In addition, the use of authentic materials such as magazine, newspaper, and brochure during the treatment gave positive impact to the students, the writer found out the students were more enthusiastic when they were taught by using authentic materials because they were never taught by using those materials before. They were motivated because they directly could

see English newspaper or magazine, and feel the atmosphere like they were in the real life not in the classroom. As Berardo (2006) states that using authentic materials can increase the students' interest in reading. This statement was also supported by the result study of Putri (2015) that showed using authentic materials as a means of teaching reading comprehension to the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 9 Palembang was an effective way to improve their reading comprehension achievement. In summary, the strategy and the teaching materials that were used in this study could help the students to improve their functional reading achievement and make them motivated in learning English.

5. Conclusion and Remark

Based on the findings and interpretations of this study, the use of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) could be applied in teaching reading especially functional texts for the eighth grade students in junior high school level. CSR could also help the students to improve their functional reading achievement. It could be seen from the students' functional reading achievement after given the treatment by applying Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR). There was also a significant difference in functional reading achievement between the students who were taught through Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) and those who were not. Then, using authentic materials as the teaching materials made the students motivated in learning English.

This study offers some suggestions. First, the teachers who teach reading in English should apply strategies that can help students to improve their reading achievement. Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) can also serve as the alternative strategy in teaching English reading. It is effective to improve the students' reading achievement and recommended to the teachers who teach English in the classroom. In this case, the use of various reading material sources such as authentic materials can be done by English teachers to provide the students with different learning materials that most English teachers only focus on the use of textbook. Before giving the students the authentic texts, the

teacher should consider about the students' reading level in order to get good implementation of the authentic texts. It means that the teacher should check the readability level of the text.

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