THE IMPLEMENTING OF THINK-PAIR-SHARE (TPS) STRATEGY IN TEACHING READING SKILLS

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Abstract

Nowadays, the learning process is believed to be less effective when the learning activities are dominated by the teacher commonly known as teacher oriented process. There are a lot of research reporting that most of students are passive in the class. This is an indication that students are not cognitively challenged to think. Students commonly rely on the material delivered by the teacher. This condition can be overcome through one cooperative learning strategy called Think Pair Share (TPS). This article a critical review toward previous research related to the Think-Pair-Share strategy with the aim to answer these questions: 1) how was the TPS strategy implemented? 2) how does the TPS affect learning of reading skills? and 3) how can the TPS make students more active in learning reading process?

Keywords: Think-Pair-Share, teaching, reading skills.

1. Introduction

Basically, Think-Pair-share (henceforth TPS) has been utilised as a teaching strategy in the educational world. TPS is found in not only English teaching but also in many other areas of teaching such as mathematics, or social science teaching. TPS challenges the students to be more enthusiastic, proactive and more lively in the learning process. This is because TPS is student-oriented with teachers functioning as a facilitator where their role is directing, facilitating, and guiding students.

The foundation of TPS is collaborative learning techniques (Major et al, 2005) in which exchanging information, ideas, and opinions is open and stimulating. Also, discussions lie at the heart of collaborative learning. In that way it is clear that discussions are the prototype teaching method to make the students posses eagerness or enthusiasm in learning process and at once they are one of the most valuable tools in teachers’ repertoire.
TPS was developed by Lyman in 1978 (McTighe & Lyman, 1988) for the first time. It has been observed through varied research on educational teaching from the basic to the university levels. This strategy is a part of cooperative learning. To make a case for collaborative learning seems easy. Research on learning in small groups exists than on any other instructional method, including lecturing. While most of this is credible and positive, it is dominated by research and investigation in higher education (Major et al, 2005: 3). There is a lot of research that involve some structures of cooperative learning: TPS, three-step-interview, round-robin-brainstorming, three-minutes-review, numbered heads, think-pair-solo, circle the sage and partners.

English as a compulsory subject at the English department of the university level requires four skills to be learnt, one of which is reading. Reading is one form of communication between writer and readers which is mediated through a written text (Sulistyo, 2011: 20). The behavioral psychology explains in a narrow term of stimulus-response theory that the development of reading comprehension has been investigated for two reasons: reading achievement and literacy. In this paper, the researcher only tries to focus on achievement of reading comprehension.

As Sulistyo (2011: 20) observes, people as social beings nowadays almost cannot escape from reading activities. Reading activities can be a wide variety of English reading materials ranging from those with highly academic materials such as textbooks, research reports, to official stuff such work reports, notes, official letters, or email messages, even newspapers, reports, novels etc. In short, people read for different reasons. People read differently according to their background, the place of origin, education, social group, generation, and even occupation. Sometimes we read for information and on another occasion, for enjoyment. Based on a number of sources, there are definitions on reading. According to Blachowicz & Olge (2008), reading comprehension is a complex process that demands skills and strategies. Reading comprehension is an evaluating process. Therefore, the readers are expected to be able to decide whether the information gained from reading is comprehended to
the objective of reading. Considering this, reading comprehension is needed to be taught to students.

The teaching English at the university level is aimed to equip students to comprehend literature and other reference sources written in English (Sulistyo, 2013:37) as is based on the degree no. 096/1967. Nowadays, we are at ASEAN Economic Community (MEA). In response to this, the government emphasizes English to be learnt nationally at schools as seen in the new set of the governments’ regulation on the national standard of education no. 19/2005. The focus of learning a language is to gain the ability to read, to write and to appraise literacy. (*Department Pendidikan Nasional, 2005:53*).

Reading may take some various types in terms of the genre for understanding. The patterns of organization based on the genre-based approach are as follows: report, descriptive, procedure, narrative, recount, news item, explanation, discussion, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, review, anecdote, and spoof (Sulistyo, 2011: 64). These various text types of reading are important types that may be realized in reading passages that students, particularly prospective English practitioners, must learn.

A number of researchers hold the assumption that TPS is appropriate to be applied in teaching English for students in schools or university levels as there has been a lot of research that shows the positive effect of TPS, mainly in reading skills. It can help the students to solve their problems in reading. Furthermore, they expect that by using this kind of model, the teaching-learning process will be more attractive, and the students can develop their knowledge rapidly.

2. **Theoretical Framework of Collaborative Learning**

This study is grounded on Major’s et al (2005) collaborative learning techniques. Collaborative learning techniques suggest that students can obtain mature thinking via observing how teachers and other experts approach learning tasks, and by practicing expert processes with the aid of coaching from teachers. The underlying rationale of collaborative learning techniques with research on cognition and the brain
confirms much of what we have learned about the effectiveness of peer interaction in promoting active learning. College teachers need not fear that by experimenting with collaborative learning, their classrooms will plunge them into uncharted territory.

The purpose of this study is to explore extensively literature on interactive group learning to glean from experiences and research information that is useful to college teachers in deciding whether collaborative learning techniques will be effective in accomplishing their teaching goals.

Furthermore, the study refers to the theoretical principle of communicative competence in the meaning of the capability to utilize language to convey and interpret meaning (Hymes, 1972). According to Canale and Swain (1980), in order to be competent in communication one should develop grammatical competence (learner’s knowledge of the vocabulary, phonology and rules of the language), discourse competence (learner’s ability to connect utterances into a meaningful whole), sociolinguistic competence (learner’s ability to use language appropriately) and strategic competence (learner’s ability to employ strategies to compensate for imperfect knowledge). Keeping in mind the aim of the study, the focus is placed more on strategic competence since strategic competence is the recommended fulcrum by which students can develop their speaking skills. Canale (1983: 23) and Canale and Swain (1980: 5) defined strategic competence as “the mastery of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies in L2 used when attempting to compensate for deficiencies in the grammatical and sociolinguistic competence or to enhance the effectiveness of communication.” In addition, in collaborative learning techniques as proposed by Major et al there are thirty techniques that are very useful for teaching subject and of them is TPS. TPS is the main focus of this study.

3. Think-Pair-Share (TPS)

TPS is designed to differentiate instruction by providing students’ time and structure for thinking on a given topic that enables them to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas with a peer. In this strategy, a problem is posed; students have time to think about it individually; and then they work in pairs to solve the problem.
and *share* their ideas with the class. TPS is easy to use within a planned lesson, but is also an easy strategy to use for spur-of-the-moment discussions. This strategy can be used for a wide variety of daily classroom activities such as concept reviews, discussion questions, partner reading, brainstorming, quiz reviews, topic development, etc.

Some pertinent ideas in attempts to avoid misinterpretation, description of several terms employed in this research is classified as follows: First, academic content area refers to L2 reading with subject matters at the tertiary level of education and aims to help students acquiring content literacy in a specific academic field.

Second, reading comprehension refers to the score obtained from a reading comprehension text. This reflects students’ ability to decode meaning in the text through micro reading skills. To define reading in this part, it is essentially aimed at the understanding the text content. This is to say, the ultimate output of transacting business with written text is comprehension of the text. Gebhard as cited by Sulisty o (2011:24) states that reading includes discovering meaning in print and script, within a social context, thorough bottom-up and Top-down processing and the use of strategies and skills. In Sulisty o’s work (2011:20) the output of reading should be reflected in the success of negotiation of meanings or recreation of meaningful messages intended by the writer on the part of readers.

The basic foundation of TPS is to make the students more active in the teaching-learning process by discussing with their classmates. Moreover, the teaching-learning process will be more attractive and more fun (Kagan, 2009). So, it will give positive influence to students in understanding the material given by the teacher.

4. **Implementation of the Think-Pair-Share (TPS)**

TPS consists of some steps. Kagan (2009) states there are five steps in TPS. They are: (1) Organizing students into pairs by dividing the students into pairs randomly. The purpose of choosing randomly is to avoid the gap between high
students and low students. (2) Posing the topic or a question is posing a question or a topic to the students. This question should be in general and has many kinds of answers. It makes the students think deeper and deeper, and they can give their opinions in many aspects. (3) Giving time to students to think meanwhile the teacher should give the students several minutes to think an answer of the question given before. They should analyze the question and use their critical thinking to answer the question. (4) Asking students to discuss with their partner and share their thinking. In this section, each students share his or her own answer to his or her partner in pairs. They share their thinking and discuss each other to find the best answer. (5) Calling on a few students to share their ideas with the rest of the class. This last step is calling some students to share their ideas with the rest of the class. Some students give their answer, and the others can give their opinion or other answers. This improves not only the student’s knowledge but also their confidence.

5. Teaching scenario

In TPS, the teacher poses a challenging or open ended question and gives students a half to one minute to think about question. This is important because it gives a chance to start to formulate answers by retrieving information from their long term memory. Then, the students work in pairs in collaboration or with a neighbor sitting nearby and discuss their ideas about the question for several minutes. The teacher may wish to always have students pair with non collaboration group member expose them to more learning style. TPS gives all students the opportunity to discuss their idea. This is important because students start to construct their knowledge in this discussion and also to find out what they do not know. This active process is not normally available to them during traditional lectures.

After several minutes, the teacher solicits students or takes classroom “vote”. Students are much more willing to respond after they have a chance to discussing their ideas with a classmate because if the answer is wrong, the embarrassment is shared. Also, the response received are often more intellectually concise since students have a chance to reflect their ideas. TPS also enhances the student’s oral
communication skills as they discuss their ideas with the one another. This short “intermission” can also provide the teacher with a timely opportunity to mentally go over the next concept to be discussing.

One variation of this structure is to skip the whole-class discussion. Another variation is to have students write down their thoughts on note card and collect them. This gives the teacher an opportunity to see whether there are problems in comprehension.

The activities during procedure in applying TPS in teaching reading comprehension can be described in the figure as follows:

6. Conclusion and Suggestions
This paper is based on various sources about the effect of TPS in learning of reading skills. TPS has been utilized in many various learning and it is shown as an effective strategy in teaching process particularly in the reading subject. The findings indicate that there is a significant improvement in terms of students’ ability in reading English
after they are treated using TPS. However, this model requires a patient teacher to the students who has needed more attention.

TPS also becomes a solution for teaching and learning activities in Indonesian context, with big classes, which usually consists of 40-65 students each class. It is manifested from the feature of TPS, which provides every student a chance to think and share their ideas in the class at the same time so that it does not require a lot of time and job for the teachers. Fortunately, TPS as an example of cooperative learning is a part of excellence in Curriculum 2013, which emphasizes on the use of cooperative or collaborative learning.

Based on the finding as well as discussion above, the researchers provide suggestions as follows:

1. The teacher who is interested in implementing TPS should consider these steps: (a) The teacher should make a good plan before teaching. (b) The teacher should give clear instructions and explanation about the activities that students will do in the class. (c) The teacher should motivate and encourage his/her or her students to be active during teaching learning process. (d) The teacher should go around and monitor the students’ activities and give them some help when they get difficulties. (e) The teacher should guide and facilitate the students during the teaching-learning activities.

2. Other researchers who are interested in the implementation of TPS are suggested to develop TPS for teaching other skills such as speaking, listening, or writing. Moreover, they concern on students’ psychological development after being treated using TPS.

References


