



The Effectiveness of Compensation Strategy in Improving Student's Reading Skills

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Abstract

This study aims to: 1) analyze the application of compensation strategy in teaching reading ; and 2) identify the student's achievement level in reading using compensation strategy to the second semester of Islamic Religious Department Students of STAI Ma'arif Magetan. The research method is descriptive qualitative research. The data are the teacher and students' interaction, and the students' achievement. The participants consist of 33 students, and the research was conducted in May 2023. The qualitative data were obtained by doing observation and taking field notes. The result from the test evaluation, the students got good marks. It means that the students understood the text. They can answer their test correctly. In the time, the use of compensation strategies can help the students to know the new words, in order to understand the texts when the lecture delivers the test. The research findings indicated that the compensation strategy improved the student's reading skill ability. However, if it is not addressed, the affective factor can hinder the student's effective use of compensation strategies.

Introduction

Reading English text is quite challenging for some Indonesian Students, (Suryanto, 2017). The reason lies in their potential vocabulary deficiency, which subsequently hinders their comprehension of the text; because of the lack of vocabulary they do not understand the meaning of the text, (Afzal, 2019). In addition, they might not be familiar with the topic of the text.

Reading stands as a crucial language skill that students must acquire, as it enables them to gain access to information, broaden their knowledge, and enhance their critical thinking abilities (Anaktototy & Lesnussa, 2022). However, many college students have difficulty in reading, especially reading texts in foreign languages. One of the factors that affect students' reading ability is the strategies used when reading. Reading strategies encompass the cognitive processes and actions employed by readers to comprehend the text they are perusing. Reading is a seamless endeavor where readers synthesize information from the text with their own background knowledge to construct meaning (Michelle Cates-Darnell, 2002), (Wong, 2016). The primary purpose of reading is comprehension. Reading strategies encompass the cognitive processes and actions employed by readers to comprehend the text they are perusing. Reading is a seamless endeavor where readers synthesize information from the text with their own background knowledge to construct meaning, (Olviyanti Ika, 2011), Reading is an interactive process combining top-down and bottom-up processing, (Toliver & Barnett, 1991); as a result, it is very important for the students to use appropriate reading approaches.

There are three categories of reading: academic reading, reading related to one's job, and personal reading, (Brown, 2003). Reading is an activity that involves verifying the specific subject matter and every shift in topic, relying on the readers' preexisting ideas about the subject and their language proficiency. Reading is also students' activities in finding information, messages and knowledge to answer the questions from the written text include finding out the writer background in writing the text. The final step in a reading process is decoding larger units of language (Brandt, 2012), (Pikulski & Chard, 2005), (Hsu et al., 2023).

Compensation strategies are one part of the Learning Strategies which is included in Direct Learning Strategies. According to Oxford (1990:47), compensation strategies refer to the techniques or resources that empower learners to employ a new language for both understanding and expression, even in cases where they have limited knowledge, (Ljungberg, 2011) . Learners utilize compensation strategies to aid in the comprehension of the target language when their knowledge of it is insufficient, (Ljungberg, 2011). These strategies make up for the deficiency in grammar and vocabulary. When learners do not know new words and expressions, they guess the meaning. A learner brings own life experience to interpret data by guessing.

Compensation strategies are designed to fill in the gaps of knowledge when engaging in activities such as listening, reading, speaking, or writing. For example, use gestures or body language (for speaking), rephrase (for speaking or writing), ask for help (for listening, reading, speaking, or writing) and make guesses based on the context (for listening and reading).

The concept of compensation has its origins in (Walczyk, 1994) The compensatory-encoding theory posits that having a limited level of literal skills does not necessarily hinder successful comprehension, as certain readers can compensate for their weak literal understanding by employing various mechanisms to bolster the reading process. However, the compensatory mechanisms elaborated by this theory, such as slow reading, re-reading specific sections and pausing, provide little explanation to the role of prior knowledge in compensation. A more appropriate interpretation is offered by (Stanovich, 1980), (Ismail et al., 2015) The interactive compensation theory suggests that compensatory processing can occur when a deficiency in a specific knowledge source leads to a heightened dependence on other sources. If one of the comprehension skills is lacking, other reading processes will exert more effort to compensate for its shortcomings. Thus, less skilled readers may compensate for their weak word recognition skills by using contextual information, (Simpson et al., 1983), (Nation & Snowling, 1998).

As stated by (Pasumbu Yuliana and Macora, 2018), (Razali & Razali, 2013) Reading comprehension compensation strategies are employed to make up for a deficiency in the suitable vocabulary. For instance, when learners encounter unfamiliar words in a text, they rely on the surrounding sentences and the context of the text to infer the meaning. These are compensation strategies used to comprehend the target language when their knowledge of the language is lacking, (Pasumbu Yuliana and Macora, 2018), (Çetinavcı, 2014).

The utilization of compensation strategies appears to be appropriate for EFL reading comprehension. These strategies offer students the opportunity to enhance their reading comprehension skills to the fullest extent of their capabilities. Rehearsal strategies, such as underlining the key ideas in the text, can assist students in internalizing the information presented in the text they are reading, (Hamilton, 2015). At the same time, Employing organizational strategies provides students with various methods to enhance their

understanding of a text by structuring the text's content in a manner they find most comprehensible. This may involve separating the main idea from supporting ideas or organizing factual information into tables, based on what they perceive as the easiest way to grasp the content, (Almutairi, 2018).

According to the explanation provided, this manuscript primarily concentrates on enhancing students' success in reading comprehension by implementing compensation strategies. This piece of writing aims at finding out whether or not compensation strategy effective in EFL reading skills improvement.

Method

This research is a descriptive qualitative, that aims to identify students' achievement level in reading skill of second semester students of STAI Ma'arif Magetan. The sources of data are the students and lecture activities during the teaching and learning process, and the students' level achievement documentations. In collecting data, the researchers observe the class by taking field note to find data of students and teacher activities in classroom while the lecture implemented the compensation in strategy teaching reading. Next, the researchers take the documentation of lesson plan and picture of students in classroom. Then, the researchers and the lecture evaluate the students to find out the students' reading level achievement by giving test. The data are analyzed descriptively, and then described and interpreted in sequential order.

Results and Discussion

While selecting the strategies to be instructed, Oxford's classification was taken as the basis. The researcher, and the lecture determined which strategies to be instructed taking the aim of the lesson and level of the students into consideration. The strategies taught in this context are categorized as ones deemed suitable for improving reading comprehension skills, (Oxford, 1992). As for the instructed compensation strategy, as Oxford in (Pasumbu Yuliana and Macora, 2018) titles it as "guessing intelligently". Although Oxford (1990) stated as cited by (Pasumbu Yuliana and Macora, 2018) within this strategy type, two distinct strategies, using linguistic clues and using other clues, were considered by the researcher to be interdependent steps. Consequently, they were taught together as a unified strategy under the label "guessing intelligently."

The texts used during the strategy instruction were selected from a course book titled as "Well Read" (Mickuley, Beatrice, 1997). Reading passages included in the first three chapters of the book were covered in the treatment process. Then, both sample strategy practices provided by the researcher and the strategy practices expected from the students were handled with the use of these on the entitled book Basic Reading Power.

The lecture ordered the students not to open the dictionary. She asked the students to do not open the dictionary to translate the meaning of the words. She asked the students to find the meaning of the word by helping the picture, and paid attention to the sentence around. She gave the example to guess the meaning of word. The lecture then asked the students to guess the other words them self and discuss them with the classmates.

As (Fazeli, 2011), (Sukyng, 2021) point out, LLSs can serve as an effective tool in the context of language learning. Under the framework of this study, cognitive and compensation strategies appear to be effective in terms of reading comprehension. In a similar direction, (Zamel, 1992), (Wrenn & Wrenn, 2009), (Lee & Francisco, 2022) put a strong emphasis on the integration of LLSs into reading lessons. Thus, it becomes apparent that the LLS training has certain advantages in the language learning process and the importance of using LLSs should be taken into consideration, (Nguyen & Terry, 2017).

To know student's Level of Achievement in reading, the lecture gave individual test for the students. It was about answer the question individually by following the strategies that used before. The students cannot open the dictionary and have to finish the test in 30 minutes. The researchers collected their answer sheets, and then the lecture and the students read and discuss the answer of questions together. Based on the average of student score that obtained from the test, it means that the students achievement was in level good because their score was or 70,6%. The results of the test are in the Table 1

Table 1. The Result of the Test

No	Students' initial name	Right answer	Score	Level
1.	NRSP	10	50	Less
2.	AS	18	90	Excellent
3.	ATS	19	95	Excellent
4.	BRA	9	45	Poor
5.	CL	18	90	Excellent
6.	DRA	19	95	Excellent
7.	EZW	19	95	Excellent
8.	H	16	80	Good
9.	IHA	16	80	Good
10.	INP	16	90	Excellent
11.	IN	17	70	Good
12.	ITM	19	95	Excellent
13.	IH	10	50	Less
14.	IBK	10	50	Less
15.	MNHAF	10	50	Less
16.	STN	16	80	Good
17.	UNN	16	80	Good
18.	AHN	18	90	Excellent
19.	MZA	10	50	Less
20.	WW	13	65	Fair
21.	AUB	16	80	Good
22.	MYE	16	80	Good
			1543	Good
			70,1	

The level of students' achievement and their percentage can be seen in the Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Students' Achievement Level

No	Interval	Frequency	Percentage	Level
1.	90-100	8	36,36%	Excellent
2.	70-89	7	31,81%	Good
3.	60-69	1	4,54%	Fair
4.	50-59	5	22,72%	Poor
5.	40-49	1	4,54%	Very Poor
Total		22	100	

Based on the Table 2, it can be seen that 8 students or 36,36% got 90-100 or in excellent level, 7 students or 31,81% got 70- 89 or in good level, 1 student or 4,54% got 60- 69 or in fair level, and 5 students in 22,72% or poor level, and 1 student in 4, 54% or got 40-49 or in very poor level.

Conclusion

From the result of the evaluation test, the students got good marks. It means that the students understood the text. They can answer the test properly. In the time, the use of compensation strategies can help the students in guessing difficult words, so when the teacher gave them the test, they understood how to answer it. The researchers concluded that compensation strategy through guessing intelligently is one of teaching aid that the students and the teacher need in order to maintain interest and motivation and increasing their understanding in reading skills.

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