

IMPROVING ENGLISH READING ABILITY THROUGH LOOK AND SAY TECHNIQUE

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Abstract: The objective of the research is to improve English reading ability through Look and Say Technique at SDIT AL MARJAN, BEKASI. This study used action research method which involved two cycles. The population of this research was 27 of third grade students of SDIT AL MARJAN. Based on the data from the pre test, it shows that the students' competencies in reading English is still low. After given treatment throughout the cycles (planning, acting, observing, and reflecting) in this study and the results of post tests, the student's ability in reading English had been improved. Qualitative data analysis shows that the students were interested during the process. They enjoyed the learning and they were active in each part of the process. The students read better after the treatment. The result of the analysis is strengthen by quantitative data analysis which shows in cycle I, $t_o = 5,2$, it means $2,06 < 5,2$ and in cycle II, $t_o = 7,0$ or $2,06 < 7,0$. (t table 5% = 2,06). Therefore, there is an improvement in English reading through look and say technique.

Keywords: ability, reading, look and say

INTRODUCTION

Reading skills become one of the important skills that every English language learners must have. Reading is also a skill that combines three other capabilities. In the education field, reading activities and assignments are important for gaining students' knowledge.

Related to reading skills, so every English language learners should be able to obtain and understand of information in the form of written text from various reading sources'. Iskandarwassid (2011) states reading is an activity to get the meaning of what is written in the text.

In accordance with the Ministerial of Education Regulation No.23 of 2006, concluded that the learning of English as local subject at the elementary level demanded the students to be able to use four senses and

cognitive function simultaneously. English Lesson at primary school level is necessary, because at this age, children are at the stage of development of language skills rapidly. Ammalia in the article entitled The Golden Age Language Learning stated that psychologically, primary school students aged 7-12 are in the middle childhood. This phase is a golden period for learning other language beside their mother tongue (first language). The condition of their brain is still plastic and flexural so that absorption of the language becomes easier.

At the initial stage, the reading activity begins with an introduction to pronunciation of English alphabet. Students at this stage are directed to understand the context of a passage. According to Kasihani (2008) general knowledge and vocabulary which has been owned as well as the use of images is expected to help your children understand the content of

a reading. This initial knowledge is a basic and can be a learning experience that gives a new knowledge.

In fact, the elementary school students have difficulty in reading English passage, they are confronted with how to read English properly and understand the purpose of the text. In addition, the opportunity to train students in reading has not been maximized.

Due to the importance of reading in the acquisition of knowledge, it needs methods and techniques of teaching in introducing the students to their reading skills. "Look and Say" technique teaches how to read words and phrases in English fundamentally.

In this technique, students require to proceed the way to see and read what the teacher says and then the students memorize the words spoken several times with a help of pictures and written media (flash card). This technique emphasizes the recognition of words that are commonly used so the words will often be heard, known and understood in the context. "Look and Say" technique also teaches the students to produce sound.

'Look and Say' technique focuses on learning how to read. It is expected that students of SDIT AL Marjan- Bekasi are able to recognize English text so that their reading abilities will increase. Based on this condition, the author conducted an action research on: "Improving English Reading Ability through Look and Say Technique".

1. Ability

Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) defines the ability as; ability and skill refers to the organized way of a common organized techniques would be a matter or issue. Competence and skills refer to organized modes of operation and generalized techniques for dealing with materials and problems. The abilities and skill objectives emphasizes the mental processes of organizing and

reorganizing material to achieve a particular purpose.

In the meaning, ability or skill is a basic knowledge about the language system-rules of grammar, vocabulary, the whole paraphernalia of language and how to use it solid.

Competence or ability is the knowledge that a person has both adults and children about language. Language is a mental image of a person. Language skills are generally divided into two categories, namely the productive and receptive. Which includes the productive capabilities are speaking and writing. While listening and reading are receptive capabilities.

2. Reading

Reading is physical and mental activities. Through reading the information and knowledge that is useful for life can be obtained. Patel and Praveen (2008) states reading is also an important activity because by reading someone can update their knowledge.

There are two approaches in reading competence, bottom up and top down. According to Nunan (1998) the core of bottom-up reading is essentially to a problem of encoding (decoding) a set of written symbols into their verbal equivalence. Instead, top down approach in reading is more emphasis on meaning rather than on the coding form. The interaction between the readers with a text is central to the process, and the reader brings their knowledge about its subject, their background knowledge and expectation about how language is enabled, motivations, interests and attitudes of the context of the text.

Reading has a different purpose for each person. Grellet (1986) mentions there are two main purposes in reading: reading for pleasure and reading for information. He adds reading can be done by (1) Skimming: reading text quickly and to get a glimpse of the main / core discussion. (2) Scanning: reading text rapidly

to obtain specific information. (3) Extensive reading: reading a long text, usually for pleasure. Extensive Reading is a skill activity and generally requires a thorough understanding. (4) Intensive reading: reading shorter text, to obtain specific information. Intensive reading requires an accuracy in obtaining more detailed information.

For elementary schools students' that called the EYL (English for Young Learner), reading skills can be done through the following activities: reading aloud a short discourse or silently; put a word or phrase by matching the image; matching questions with its answers; answer questions based on the text that has been read; complete the incomplete sentence. Reading skills are taught of words, phrases, and discourse with vocabulary from the easier to more difficult vocabulary, and a shorter discourse to a longer one that grammatically more diverse.

3. Look and Say

In language learning activity, especially reading there are two approaches, phonic approach and whole language approach. *Look and say* technique which included in the whole language approach is an approach that emphasizes learning the language in a meaningful context and nature.

Look and say technique is based on whole-word method, a method that teaches the word as a whole. This technique requires the reading skills by reading words and phrases in the English language as well as introducing the meaning associated with the word.

Scott and Ytreberg (1993) mentions that *look and say technique* based on words and phrases, as well as the use of flashcard- words written on the card, exemplified as follows:



By this technique, students can see and mention what teachers say and the students get to know how the words being spoken. The

pronunciation of words is done several times. The use of flash cards is also a supporter in the process of delivering meaning.

This technique gives children an opportunity to see and hear the words spoken by the teacher. A study that describes the situation of pre-reading experience constructed by Doman (1991). The use of cards (flash cards), which contains writings or words is shown to the children and then they are asked to say or read three times a day and this is done for five days. Every day the card is replaced with new words and the cards are shown in a different order. When children have already known a few words, then they are introduced to the source of the book where the words came from.

METHOD

Author used the action research as methodology for the research, by using the qualitative and quantitative approaches. The steps to be taken in this study were measured based on Kemmis and Mc Taggart model which includes: planning, action, observing, and reflecting. This study is conducted in two cycles.

The data source of this action research was III A grade of SDIT AL MARJAN BEKASI with 27 children included the researcher. Each cycle was consisted of three meetings for the action and one meeting for the test.

Quantitative data was implemented by t test with $\alpha = 0.05$ to find the difference in value between prior knowledge, the first cycle and the second cycle based on the data of test results obtained in the field. The research was analyzed with the results conducted by comparing achievement scores well with the comparison of the mean (average) as well as achievement scores each student on each test results conducted over several cycles.

While the qualitative data was shown by a description of the process and learning outcomes that had been arranged

systematically. It includes the situation to be observed, pre-class condition, field notes of all conditions associated of participants, a place of learning, the goals of learning, learning stages and the results achieved. Qualitatively the data was taken by observation and documents.

FINDINGS

Firstly, the researcher prepared all plans including set the schedule and the procedure of look and say technique in the class. There were three sessions for treatment and one session for the test after the process.

Before the treatment, the researcher gave pre - test to the students. It was given to recognize students' reading ability. And the result shows that the average of students score is 51.3 (in 100 scale). There are only 5 of 27 students get score > 70 (KKM is 70), the rest of them get < 70.

Some difficulties are faced by students in pre – test such as matching the words with similar sound, arranging the words into a sentence, filling out the blank sentences and understanding the words.

Based on this condition, the researcher arranged the treatment called look and say technique.

A. Cycle 1

In the first cycle of *look and say* technique, the researcher acted as the teacher. Previously, teacher prepared all the learning components, including the syllabus, lesson plan, material, media and evaluation instrument.

The teacher started the class by checking attendance and asking the students to sing English song and play games together. Then the teacher explained the purpose of learning. The students were divided into several small groups and they were given the text.

In the first meeting of cycle 1, students were asked to read the text loudly. When they got difficulties and wrong pronunciation, the teacher helped and revised them. They were also asked to follow after the teacher.

Look and say technique was applied by the teacher through reading some words while showing the flash card represented the words mentioned. The teacher produced the words in correct pronunciation and the students watched how the words pronounced. Then, the students were instructed to follow after the teacher as well as to look at the picture. At the end of the meeting, students arranged the words into a phrase or sentence as a task.

In the second meeting, students practiced to read the text and pronounced the words in similar sounds. The teacher helped the students by sticking some flash cards on the board. The flash cards represented the words which appeared in the text. Then the teacher read and pronounced some words while pointed the picture on the cards. For evaluating, they were asked to find the words with similar sounds.

In the third meeting, teacher gave the text. Some students read it loudly. Then they were asked about the meaning and information they got from the text. Several students got problem to retell the information. Therefore the teacher applied look and say technique by showing them the flash cards containing the pictures and the words.

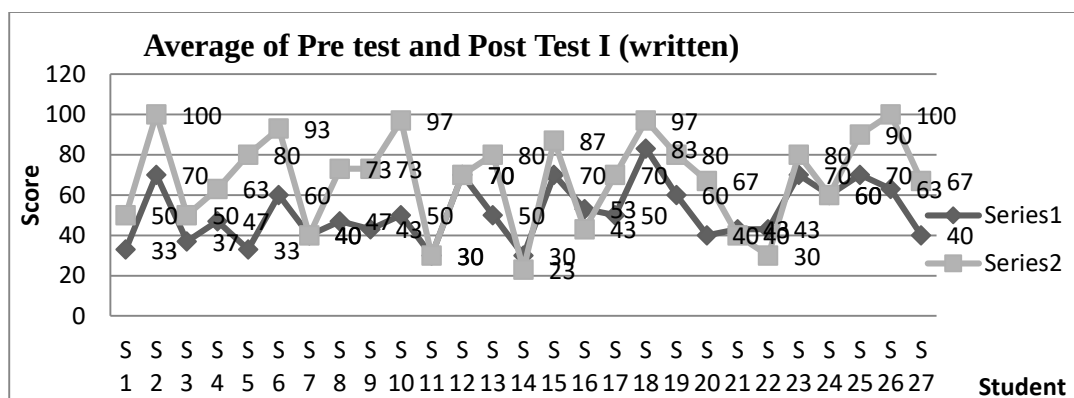
The next procedure of action research was observation. In the first cycle, all teaching material had been prepared well. The situation in the class was still tolerable. The process in the class ran well even there were number of students who made noisy. *Look and say technique* was applied by the teacher. Practicing how to read correctly, pronouncing the words, producing the similar sounds, looking at the picture on the flash card, arranging the words were the part of look and say technique in this cycle.

There were some problems in the first cycle faced by the students and the teacher. Previously, there wasn't a technique to teach students' reading. So, they got difficulties when they read the text and comprehend it. The lack of time was also being the problem faced by the teacher. There were some

1) Result from Cycle 1

situations when the teacher had to take more times for handling the class and giving instruction.

After data collection and processing, the obtained results in the in form of qualitative data that will be explained as below:



Graph 1: Average of Pre- test and Post Test I (written)

The graph shows the average of written pre-test and post- test 1. The average of pre-test is 51.3 and post-test is 67.9. There is rise 16.6. There are two students get 100 and the lowest score is 23. To determine the differences of technique used, then it tested with a "t test" by comparing the results on the initial test (pre-test) and final test from the first cycle,

T_0 result obtained was 5.2 with df or db = $N-1 = 27-1 = 26$, as shown in table of 2.06 t at the level of 5% and 2.78 at the level of 1%. Thus concluded that t_0 was greater than t table ($2.06 < 5.2 > 2.78$). It means that there is a difference between before and after using the technique.

There is also significant achievement in the average acquisition oral test students on this first cycle. In early tests averaged 3.1 after the action of the average to 3.7, which means there is an increase of 0.6.

After the observation and process of learning in the class, the researcher made reflection. It was noted that the utilization of media should be more interesting. It can be

more colorful and perceptible. The teacher (the researcher) should control the class effectively and persuade the students to involve the activities actively.

B. Cycle 2

The second cycle arranged after the researcher observed the result of cycle 1. Either note or record containing the drawback in cycle 1 became a review for next cycle.

All plans for cycle 2 had been made to equip the previous cycle. Here, the teacher would give more extra supervision for students' activities. They were still in groups but they had more responsibilities to manage their groups. The teacher emphasized for team work for all activities in this cycle. The teacher also made the smaller flash cards to all groups. It helped them to understand and look the picture and words more clearly.

In the first meeting of cycle 2, the teacher started the class and checked the attendance. Then she explained the students about the activities in this cycle. After the students listened to the explanation, they were divided into small groups and they gathered in their

groups. In this situation, they made some crowded but the teacher immediately controlled the class and gave them next instruction.

Then the teacher gave them a set of small flash card. Some students arranged the cards and read it, but some others were busy to make some noise. And the teacher warned them to focus in their activities. After the class was conducive, the teacher distributed the reading text. Some students were asked to read it. Some did it smoothly but the others still got problems.

The teacher assisted them by applying look and say technique. She showed the students the cards at the same time she read the text on the card. The students took part by following her. Then they were instructed to read the text. It was better. At the end the teacher attracted them to do a game. For the groups who can arrange the sentences correctly they would be the winner.

The second meeting, the students were gathered in the same groups. They recognized their members by looking at the note on the previous flash cards that were given before. In this part, the teacher gave them some news pictures (flash cards), then she mentioned some words. The students were asked to repeat the words and find the pictures on them. They were very enthusiastic.

Next on, the teacher shared the reading text. They read it loudly. When they got mispronunciation, the teacher revised them and showed the picture represented the words mentioned. They were also repeated the words after the teacher.

In this session, they learned the words with similar sounds. The teacher sounds some words then they found the words with similar sounds on the pictures (flash card) with their groups.

The third meeting, the students practiced how to understand the meaning in sentences.

They placed themselves in the groups with the flash cards and reading text. The teacher asked them to read the text, revised the incorrect reading, and showed the cards.

After that, they played a game, finding the words which mentioned by the teacher. As soon as they got the words on the cards, they read it. Then they did another game, which is compiling the words or pictures into a sentence. The teacher wrote the sentence then they looked for the pictures / cards, set the words, and read the text. The last task the students should complete the blank sentences. Before the class was over the teacher informed for next meeting post- test.

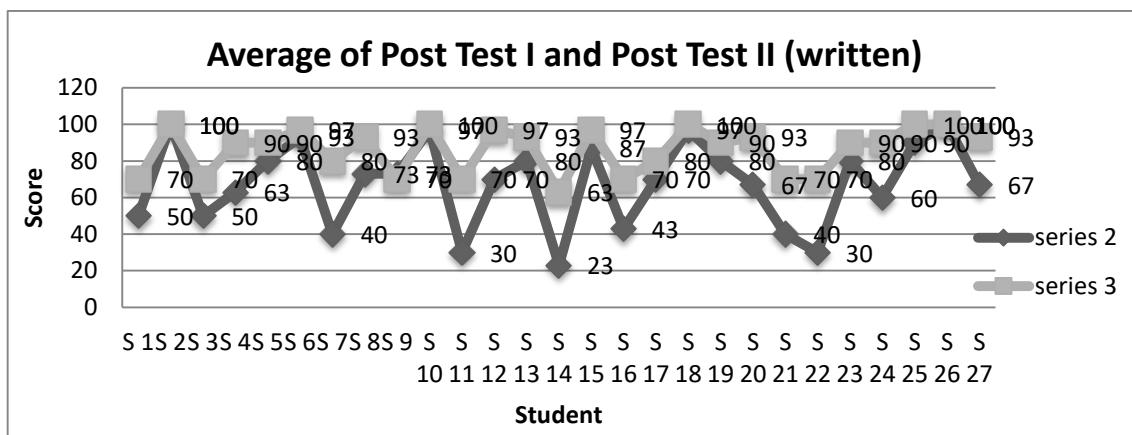
During the second cycle, the researcher could assume the process in second cycle was going better. Observation for all components in this process encompassed the design of learning, the process, and situation in the class. The design in second cycle was an improvement from the first cycle. Evaluation for all components such as lesson plan, media, and instrument was revised to complete the weakness of cycle 1.

During the learning process, the teacher gave more time for team work role. It made the class was more controlled. The students competed to be the best group. It could be seen through the process of learning. The students got involved in the whole activities and they felt very happy and enthusiastic. They tried to read the texts and played the games. A set of flash card also helped them either to understand the words or do the tasks.

In second cycle reflection, it could be stated that the process of this cycle was better. The students' reading ability got some improvement. They could read better and were more active along the process.

The score in written and oral test can be seen in following description:

2) The result of cycle 2



Graph 2: Average of Post Test I and Post Test II (written)

The graph shows the average of post- test cycle 1 and II. The students who gets score 100 are 5 students. And the lowest score is 63. There is increase 18.3 from 67.9 to 86.1. The second cycle result was obtained t_o of 7.0 with df or $db = N-1 = 27-1 = 26$, shows a table of 2.06 t at the level of 5% and 2.78 at the level of 1%. It can be concluded that t_o was greater than t table ($2.06 < 7.0 > 2.78$). It means that in the second cycle there are differences between cycles or upgrading of unity with the second cycle also.

The increase also occurred in the oral test students in the second cycle. The average verbal ability in the post test I (cycle 1) compared with oral ability posttest 2 (cycle 2). At the oral tests in the second cycle an average increase of 0.6 from 3.7 to 4.3.

DISCUSSION

Indicators of success can be seen from the students participate actively in learning activities. Students were enthusiastic and keen to participate their learning activity and also students' test results increased. The differences in student's achievement can be seen from the scores and student's average has increased after compared to the initial test both written and oral. During the learning process, students

looked happy and enthusiast although there were some students who were indifferent.

Look and say technique using images and text media (*flash card*) can help the students to know how to read and understand the English lesson given.

In calculating the written test of first cycle is obtained $t_o = 5.2$ more than t table (5% = 2.06; and 1% = 2.78). The average achievement oral test was increased about 0.6 from 3.1 to 3.7. Written test cycle II obtained $t_o = 7.0$ of more than t table (5% = 2.06 and 1% = 2.78). The average achievement oral test of the previous cycle increased by 0.6 from 3.7 to 4.3.

Although there is an increase in student's achievements through *look and say* technique, but in reality there are some limitations generally included the lack of time; when the implementation there is still some students who were busy playing and joking so that learning activity is not the focus; the use of media is not maximized and teacher still have some "problematic" in handling of the student.

The implications of this action research among others, the spirit and enthusiasm of students when carried out activities of teaching and learning to read English through technical look and say. Students also were active in the

following study. The result of students has increased ability to read English.

With these results, the teacher attempts to use look and say technique as a way to introduce and improve the ability to read English at that school.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The results of this study concluded that reading by using look and say technique makes students more enthusiastic because with the usage of flash media card that containing images and text not only can be used to attract students attention but also help them read correctly and understand the meaning of the English text. This condition is supported through the result of gained score achieved by the students. For written test in cycle 1, t_o is $5.2 > t$ table (5% = 2.06 and 1% = 2.78). In cycle 2 is obtained $t_o = 7.0 > t$ table (5% = 2.06 and 1% = 2.78).

According to the conclusion above, it is necessary to make some various ways to attract the students for reading therefore the teachers can consider to use look and say technique in teaching reading ability. And also the teachers should give opportunity for the students to work in a group during the process of reading activities.

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