THE INFLUENCE OF USING PEER ASSISTED LEARNING STRATEGIES (PALS) TOWARDS STUDENTS ACHIEVEMENT IN READING COMPREHENSION AT THE SMPN 7 PEMATANGSIANTAR

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to identify the significantly effect on the students' achievement in reading comprehension by Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS). This research is an experimental which was conducted at SMPN 7 Pematangsiatar. Academic year 2022/2023. The population of this research was the second grade which distributed into two classes with total 64 students. Experimental class consisted of 32 students and control class consisted 32 students. The instruments for collecting data in this research was written test in form multiple choice test, consist of 20 questions. Pre-test and post-test were conducted in both, experimental and control group. The data of post-test was analyzed by using SPSS Version 22.00. The result of the research shows that the testing hypothesis of post-test scores was found that that t_{count} (0.970) >t_{table} (2.188) at the significance level α =0.05 with the degrees of freedom (df) = 31, and 0,340 for the sig (2-tailed). Ho (Peer Assisted Learning Strategy doesn't influence to students reading comprehension) is rejected and Ha (Peer Assisted Learning Strategy influence to students in reading comprehension) is accepted. It means that there are the Influence Of Using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) Towards Students Achievement In Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text at SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar.
Keywords: Influence, Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS), The Students' Reading
*   Comprehension.*

I. INTRODUCTION
The Background of Research

Language is the way to communicate with other people, to know each other and make the interaction by the conversation. English is an international language, demanded language to master. In learning activities, it is necessary to have the ability of teachers to facilitate students understanding of the material being taught (Sutrisna & Artini, 2020). Language is the most important thing in human life because we can give some information to other people or we can express our feeling by the language.

Reading is one of the four skill that are very important to learn. Reading as a process to get products is influenced by some elements such as vocabulary,grammar, organization, spelling, in the second year of Junior High School. In many aspects of life, students need to have a reading skill. The may have many purposes of reading. First, students need to read for academic purposes. Since there are many books written in English, it is important for them to have a good reading competence. Moreover, reading is skill is required when they take an examination.

Based teaching assistance experience (2022) in the SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar, the researcher found some problems faced by the students at the Eighth grade of SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar. There are various factors that might have been the cause of the failure in teaching reading. By interviewing an English teacher who is teaching there, the researcher found that the students have problems in reading comprehension to transfer information from the text and students motivation in reading text is still low. The teacher got the score based on the formative test of reading once she administered, it was found that many of them still lack of reading comprehension. In addition, she said that score of KKM (criteria of minimum mastery) in SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar is 70.

Based on that previous observation, the researcher expects that by using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS), the students can comprehend text easily, the students can easy transfer information from the text, and can increase students score and increase motivation in reading text. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting the research entitled "The Influence of Using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) toward students achievement in Reading Comprehension at the SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar".

The Problem of Researcher

Based on the background of problem of the study above, the following problem can be identified "Does the influence of using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) towards students achievement in Reading Comprehension at the SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar?

The Objective of Research

The objective of this research is to find out whether there is any significant influence of using Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) towards students achievement in reading comprehension at the SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Defenition of Reading

Reading is one of the language skills. Instead of listening, speaking, and writing. Reading includes the subject material in the school that should be mastered by the students. Reading is the important skill, this is supported by (Patel & Javi, 2008) who state that reading is the most useful and the important skill four people. By reading, the students will know more that should they write and speak.

Meanwhile, (Grabe, 2011) states that reading is process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form use the medium of print. From the statements, it can be concluded that reading is an interactive process between the reader and the text in order to gain an understanding of a written text. The understanding is made by reconstructing meaning rather than decoding form.

Reading Comprehension

According to (Karen et al, 2007), reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning to coordinating a number of complex processes that include word reading, word and world knowledge and fluency. Reading comprehension means that a reader acquires from reading.

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning by coordinating a number of complex processes that include word reading, word and word knowledge and fluency, (Brown, 2003). It means that reading comprehension is activity when the reader read the text they understand and get total meaning of the passage.

Definition of Learning Strategies

According to Chamot 1987 in (Wael et al., 2018) "Learning strategies are techniques, approaches, or thoughtful actions that students take to learn and remember linguistic information and content areas." In other words, strategies are ways or actions that students have in preparing them to learn. Learning strategies are another factor that can make students improve their skills in English. In the learning process, there are still many students who have learning difficulties. In addition, learning strategies are steps that students take to improve their learning. This learning strategy helps students in gaining comprehensive knowledge of foreign languages, a strategy generally needed by all students to achieve optimal results in language learning

Classifications of Learning Strategies

According to O'Malley as cited in (Gerami & Baighlou, 2011), Learning strategies can be classified into several categories, Cognitive, metacognitive, Peer Assisted Learning, management, and motivational.
1. Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies aim to acquire and deepen the understanding of the content within the domain studied, as well as improve retrieval and transfer of knowledge. These include reading, highlighting, note-taking, summarizing, paraphrasing, elaboration, organization, generation, retrieval practice, and self-testing, etc.

2. Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies are based on the individual's understanding of learning and cognition. They rely on his or her ability to assess the learning process to identify strengths and weaknesses. Metacognition involves planning learning activities, monitoring the process during learning, and evaluating results.

3. Peer Assisted Strategies

Peer Assisted Strategies a peer tutoring strategy that can be incorporated into a literacy curriculum to improve fluency, decoding, and comprehension. In PALS, students are divided into pairs and alternate between the role of the tutor and tutee.

Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)

According to (Delquadri, 2016), Peer Assisted Learning Strategy is a reciprocal class wide peer-tutoring strategy with different grade level versions that extend the Juniper Garden Children''s project work on class wide Peer Tutoring. It means that PALS is a strategy that the roles are reciprocal, so both of students in a pair serve as a tutor and tutee during each seassion. In the same manner as Delquadri said that as indicatedevery student in the class is paired with another students, and each pair consist of a higher and a lower performing students.

The purpose of this strategy is to help students improve key reading skills which include reading with fluency and comprehension. This strategy teaches students to working together in pairs to read stories and answer the questions. the students work in pair to improve and motivate each other during reading. Another definition of PALS stated from Topping. He said that PALS is a supplemental program adding positive feedback and an alternate option for didactic or direct teaching. It can be included that PALS is a supplemental program adding positive feedback because PALS teaches students to think critically an independently. To prepare students for the vocation or occupation opportunities that. are available in our new and changing world. It teaches students to think critically and independently while also learning to interact successfully as a team player or cooperative, contributing member of society.

Teaching Reading Comprehension as Narrative Text by using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (P A L S)

Peer Assisted Learning Strategies is also a good strategy for the teacher to develop the students'' reading comprehension but he/she should be more creative developing it. Doing this in every reading activity, Therefore, the teacher should know about what the students want to learn and get reflection from the students about their impression and suggestion todo next. It is also important to show how teacher assess reading. The students can learn from every single point and correction. It may take more time in developing peer - work rather than individual the teacher should be creative, so that it can work effectively and interestingly work.However, it can be better developing reading skills in peer, in the terms of comprehension, vocabulary, distinguish types of text, find the main idea, organizing pattern, and so on.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Research Design

In conducting this research, the researcher used quantitative research. In the quantitative research, researcher applied quasi experimental design because it is a kind of experimental research that suitable to this research.

Quasi experimental includes assignment, but not random assignment of participantsto group, so the researcher select two classes, one was experimental class and the other one was control class. The research design cloud be presented in design as follow : The design present as follow :

$$G_1 \text{ (Random) } = T_1 \qquad X \qquad T_2$$
$$G_2 \text{ (Random) } = T_2 \qquad O \qquad T_2$$

Note:
  G1 (Random)   = Experimental class, chosen randomly
  G2 (Random)   = Control class, chosen randomly
  T1   = Pre-test
  T2   = Post-test
  X   = Treatment by Peer Assisted Learning Strategies
  O   = No treatment

The Population of Research

In this research, the population were English teacher and the students of second grade of SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar 2022/2023 academic year. There are seven classes of second-grade at SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar, but the researcher just take two class for the research. The total population consisted of 64 students. The items can be seen in table below :

Table 1
He Number Of Students Of The Eighth Grade Of SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar 2022/2023 Academic Year

No	Class	Gender		Total
		Male	**Female**	
1	VIII-1	17	15	32
2	VIII-2	19	13	32
	TOTAL			**64**

The Sample of Research

The sample is a portion of the population that represents the same characteristics and characteristics so that it truly represents the population (Sugiyono, 2017). The researcher chose the sample with consider some reason such as those class have an equal number of students, also they teach by the same teacher.

Based on the explanation from the technique sampling above, the researcher took two classes. The researcher used class at SMPN 7 Pematangsiantar in Academic Year 2022/ 2023 as an experimental and control class. Each class consists of 32 and 32 students.

The Research Instrument

Instrument is a device that used for collecting data. In this research, the researcher gives pre-test and post-test to measure the student's ability before and after get the treatment.

The Technique of Collecting Data
Scoring The Test

For scoring the test, the score ranging from 0-100 are use. The rule is by counting the correct answer by using this following formula:

$$S = \frac{r}{n}100$$

Technique of Analyzing Data

The data analysis process helps reduce a large chunk of data into smaller fragments, which makes sense. After collecting the data, the researcher is going to analyze the data by using independent sample t-test. There were three tests that must be done before analyzing the data by using independent sample t-test. They are normality, homogeneity test and Hypothetical Test.

Normality Test

The normality test is used to measure whether the data in the experimental class and control class are normally distributed or not. In this research the researcher will use statistical computation by using SPSS 22 (*Statistical Package for Social Science*) for normality. The tests of normality employed are Kolmogorov – Smirnov.

The hyphotesis for the normality test are formulated as follows:

    H_o **:**   The data have normal distribution

    H_a **:**   The data do not have normal distribution

While the criteria of acceptance or rejection of normality test area:

H_o is accepted if Sig. > $\alpha = 0.05$

H_a is accepted if Sig.< $\alpha = 0.05$

Homogeneity Test

    Homogeneity test is used to determine whether the data obtained from the sample homogeneuos or not. In the research , the researcher will use statistical computation by using SPSS 22 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

The hypohesis for the homogeinity test are :

    H_a **:**   The variance of the data is not homogeneous

    H_o **:**   The variance the data is homogeneous

  While the criteriaof acceptance or rejection of hyphotesis test are:

H_o is accepted if sig> $\alpha = 0.05$

H_a is accepted if sig < $\alpha = 0.05$

Hypothetical Test

    After the resercher know that the data are normal and homogeneous, the data was analized by using T-test to know the signficance of the treatment effect. The resercher will use SPSS (Statistical Package for the social sciences) to pocess the data in normally test, homogeneity test and T-test.

IV. THE DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

The Data Analysis

The Data Analysis of Pre-test in Control Class

    Based on the table of Pre-test above, the researcher found that there are 10 students scores of this pre-test in control class. They are 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 65, 75. The lowest score is 20 and the highest is 75. The researcher found the pre-test score from 32 student's in control class : 1 student get score 20 (3,1%), 7 student get score 25 (21,9%) , 5 students get score 30 (15,6%), 5 students get score 35 (15,6%) , 6 students get score 40 (18,8%), 2 students get score 45 (6,3%), 1 students get score 50 (3,1%), there is 2 student who get score 55 (6,3%) there is 1 student who get score 65 (3,1%) and 2 students get score 75 (6,3%).

The Data Analysis of Pre-test in Experimental Class

    Based on the table frequency above, Based on the table frequency above, the researcher found that the lowest score is 25 and the highest is 80. 5 students get score 25 (15,6%), 6 students get score 30 (18,8%). 6 students get score 35 (18,8%), 4 students get score 40 (12,5%), 3 student get score 45 (9,4%), 3 students get score 55 (9,4%), 2 students get score 60 (6,3%), 1 students get score 65 (3,1%), 1 student get score 70 (3,1%), 1 student get score 80 (3,1%)

The Data Analysis of Post-test in Control Class

    Based on the table frequency above, the researcher found that there are 8 students scores of this post-test in control class. They are 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75 and 85. The lowest score is 45 and the highest is 85. There are 5 students gets score 45 (15,6%), 6 students get score 50 (18,8%), 5 students get score 55 (15,6%), 6 students get score 60 (18,8%), 3 students get score 65 (9,4%), 3 students get score 70 (9,4%), 2 students get score 75 (6,3%) and 2 students get score 85 (6,3%).

The Data Analysis of Post-test in Experimental Class

    Based on the table frequency above, the researcher found that there are 8 students scores of this post-test in experimental class. They are 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80 and 90. The lowest score is 50 and the highest is 90. There are 1 students gets score 50 (3,1%), 5 student get score 55 (15,6%), 4 students get score 60 (12,5%), 11 students get score 65 (34,4%), 4 students get score 70 (12,5%), 3 students get score 75 (9,4%), 2 students get score 80 (6,3%) and 2 students get score 90 (6,3%).

The Research Finding and Discussion

The research finding of this research indicated that there was improvement on th students reading comprehension which was taught by test reading comprehension. The used of SPSS version 22.00 has helped the research to gain the logical and acuration result. To know the influence of using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) which was used as the method in this research, it had implemented in the experimental class afte that has given the pre-test. The pre-test had given to the control class to in a similar time with the experimental class. Then, to make sure that Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) had any influence to the experimental class, the researcher gave the treatment by using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies to experimental class 4 times. The students score pre-test in control class 1225, the data is valid 100% with Means (X) from pre-test of control class is 38,28 and median score is 35.45 with N (the total students in control class) is 32 students. The minimum 20 and the high score/maximum is 75, with Standard Deviation 14.120. The test is normal Asymp sig 0,002 > 0.05. The students score in post-test in control class 1885, the Means (X) from post-test of control class is 58.91 and median score is 57.27 with N (the total students in control class) is 32 students. The minimum 45 and the high score/maximum is 85, with Standard Deviation 11.197. The post- test is normal Asymp sig 0,070 > 0.05.

Meanwhile,the students score pre-test experimental class is 1310, Mean (X) from pre-test of experimental class is 40.94 and the Median score is 37.00 with N (the total students in control class) is 32 students. The minimum 25 and the high score/maximum is 80, with Standard Deviation 14.505. pre-test scores of experimental class is distributed normally because sig in pre-test lower than (0,005 > 0.05). The total students score post-test experimental class is 2125, Mean (X) from post-test of experimental class is 66.41 and the Median score is 65.33 with N (the total students in control class) is 32 students. The minimum 50 and the high score/maximum is 90, with Standard Deviation 9.608. Post-test scores of experimental class is distributed normally because sig in post-test lower than (0.001 > 0.05).

From the researcher findings above, the researcher found that the test is valid and the mark of the students in experimental class is better than students in control class. From the explanation, it's clearly see that were significantly different, brief it shows that the score of experimental class on students reading comprehension by using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) can be achieved.

At the beginning, students reading was bad. Almost of them were confused and spent much time to think about the meaning of the word in the narrative text.. The researcher gave the treatment by using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies. As the result, students become active and enjoy in reading activity. They would be easy to answer the question that was given to them. Most of their utterance were correct and no need to read for a long time to understand. The results of the data collection through the reading test as explained in the previous findings section that the students' achievement after using the peer assisted learning strategies was significant.

It means that there are improvement in student learning by using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies in students' reading comprehension at the eight grade of SMP Negri 7 Pematangsiantar. This Strategies can benefit all students in real-life situations as students learn to be more active in finding and locating information in a text. So at this time, the researcher can see that students are required to be confident in every opportunity.

Discussion

From the explanation above, the researcher found that all of the tests were valid and normal. From the application of control and experimental to students, it is evident that the use of Peer Assisted Learning Strategies can improve students' reading comprehension. And can be seen from the results of data analysis can be seen that the values of students developed from the application of pre-test and post-test.

It means that there are improvement in student learning by using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies in students' reading comprehension at the eight grade of SMP Negri 7 Pematangsiantar. This Strategies can benefit all students in real-life situations as students learn to be more active in finding and locating information in a text. So at this time, the researcher can see that students are required to be confident in every opportunity.

Finally, this strategies can enrich students' knowledge, attitudes and skills in social issues. Based on the research experienced by the researcher, in this method students are required to be more active to develop the weaknesses that students have such as lack of comprehension. This strategies can reduce students' bad attitudes such as laziness in reading English.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the result of data analysis of finding and discusiions in the previous chapter, the researcher concludesI that there are the Influence Of Using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) Towards Students Achievement In Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text at SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar. The teaching reading comprehension by using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) was preceived positively in question. It was proven by the result of the analysis, the students had excellent category. The research categorized positively in teaching reading comprehension by using Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, it means that the students liked and enjoyed doing the Peer Assisted Learning Strategies in the class, and this is still effectively use in teaching reading.

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