Using Cooperative Learning Strategies to Improve the Student’s Reading Comprehension

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Abstract. This article is aimed at improving eighth graders reading comprehension by using Cooperative Learning Strategies. The research was carried out through action research. The researcher acted with the students and the English teacher as the collaborator. The result of the teaching of reading comprehension did not anymore reach the criteria of learning success. The average score was less than the research criteria (60) and classical mastery (75%) officially stated by the school. Based on his day-to-day experience and preliminary observation, the researcher found that most of the students lacked of vocabulary and the seat management did not anymore provide equal opportunity for those who belonged to the lower to collaborate with the clever ones. The group-work was student-self selected team and organized on the basis of friendship, acquaintance, gender, familiarity, emotion, and similar ability instead of equal reading ability between one group to another. The objective of the study is to investigate whether or not the cooperative learning strategies employing both pair-work model improve the students’ reading comprehension. This study is Classroom Action research (CAR) with a collaborative design. This study consists of two cycles, each of which consists two meetings for teaching and learning activities and a meeting for administering the quiz. The subject of the study are the eighth graders comprising of 36 students: 12 males and 24 females.

Keywords: cooperative learning; reading comprehension.

1. Introduction

As one of the four language skills, reading is really important for students of junior high school, especially those in Indonesia, since this skill is highly needed for them to deal with the growing exposure of English in daily life. As Along with the growth of the technology, there are more international references the students need to look at in improving their knowledge generally. In this case, the role of the English reading skill is really great to ensure their ability in comprehending those references. As stated by Grabe (2009:5), he defines reading as the process in which readers learn something from what they read and involve it in academic context as a part of education. Reading comprehension is classified into three different categories: literal, imperative, and critical reading comprehension (Burn: 2013:255). The main purpose of the literal comprehension is to acquire the information that is directly stated in a selection. For instance, a who question and for the name or identification of a person, or sometimes an animal; a what question asks for a thing or an event; a where question asks for a place; a when question asks for a time; a how question asks for the way of something is or was accomplished; and a why question asks for the reason for something. After discussing these question words and their meanings, the teacher can model for the students the locations of answers to catch type of question in a passage.
Syakur, Using Cooperative ... displayed on the chalkboard or transparency. The goal of interpretative reading is to derive ideas that are implied rather than directly stated. This reading includes: (a) making inferences about main ideas of passage, (b) cause-and-effect relationships that are not directly stated, (c) referents of pronouns, (d) referents of adverbs, (e) omitted words, (f) detecting the mood of a passage, (g) detecting the author’s purpose in writing a selection, (h) drawing conclusion, and (i) interpretation figurative language.

In disparity with traditional small group discussions that the team members are composed based on the student self-selected, homogeneous in reading ability and habitually group students infrequently for a relatively short period of time, the cooperative learning group naturally meet regularly over an extended period of time. This however creates the opportunity for social cohesion and bonding to develop among group members and allows for continuity of interaction among group members.

In cooperative learning, the students work mutually in pairs or in ideally group of four to share ideas, knowledge, or strategies in order to solve the reading problems. The students have more opportunities to talk within their groups and as a result, they have more probability to obtain input for acquisition. Moreover, cooperative learning provides opportunities equally to the whole students to learn in a sense that the low and the high able students are treated the same in teaching and learning process. Cooperative learning strategy promotes higher intellectual achievement compared with individual learning. This is so because students can communally share ideas, knowledge, and strategies while learning in groups or pairs. At the time students are working on tasks, giving out ideas and knowledge is much emphasized. The role of teacher is a facilitator in a sense that he helps his students in learning if needed. He is also the last basis of information for his students. By such learning administration, the students are estimated to be able to improve their reading comprehension.

Slavin (2013) reported that programs that provide extensive professional development in well-structured methods such as cooperative learning and the teaching of metacognitive skills produce more positive effect sizes than those evaluating other curricula reforms or computer-assisted instruction. Given the volume of information that supports structuring cooperative learning experiences, the next section of this paper, focuses on identifying the key elements of cooperative small group learning that underpin structured cooperation or also promotes higher achievement than competitive and individualistic learning structures across all age levels, subject areas, and almost all tasks. She also states that cooperative learning as demonstrated by hundreds of lab and field research has a number of positive outcomes, and the most important ones are (1) academic gains, especially for low achieving students; and (2) improved social and affective development among all students. From the recent research findings, cooperative learning promotes higher academic achievement and social relationships among students occupied in learning with the method.
2. Method

The design of the research is classroom action research (CAR). The writer together with English teacher conducted the research (CAR) collaboratively at the teaching reading skill during the school hours. It was carried out for the sake of finding out an elaborated teaching strategy of reading comprehension that is more applicable mainly for the students, so that it improved their reading achievement. In short, the research was directed to find an elaborated teaching reading strategy concerning with reading comprehension.

To cope with above teaching strategy, the researcher applied cooperative learning method: a pair work and student team-achievement divisions. The research was undertaken in cycles and previously proposed at least three cycles. In fact, it was conducted in two cycles since the average score of their reading achievement had reached the research criteria (60) and classical mastery prior predetermined. It was done by systematical collecting data on day-to-day teaching practice or two cycles consisting of four meetings and analyzing it in order to come to the appropriate decision on how to conduct the suitable teaching reading activity.

The research however comprised four main steps beginning from planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting.

The Procedures of the Classroom Action Research

This research started with a fact finding analysis phase to portrait the applied strategy of teaching reading happening in the classroom and the reading achievement, and to find the possibly existing problems faced by teacher and students in day-to-day teaching and learning process. The research together with his collaborator constructed the research activity: planning, implementing, observing, analyzing and reflecting follow the activity. These integrated activities were repeated for the following cycles. This research was collaboratively implemented in two cycles.

Fact-finding and Analysis

In the fact-finding and analysis phase, the researcher together with his collaborator was mapping the real situations and learning factors that probably affecting the reading achievement, for instance a classroom management, instructional media, seat position, mainly teaching reading strategy, and other raising problems faced by students in learning English.

Planning

The researcher made a planning for the sake of maximizing his research process. It became one of important phases that should be well prepared as soon as he had carried out any fact-finding analysis. This activity focused mainly on the following: 1) the preparing of the chosen teaching reading strategy: a cooperative learning strategy, 2) identifying syllabus derived from national curriculum, 3) constructing lesson plan for each cycle, 4) preparing worksheets and media, and 4) determining the criteria of success: individual and classical mastery.

Identifying Syllabus and Constructing Lesson Plan

The important step to identify the syllabus of English lesson since the government has employed a new
approach in teaching English. For example, the basic competence of teaching reading is to help students how to comprehend functional, dialogue and short monologue text. Therefore, lesson plans proposed on this action were constructed on the basis of 2006 national curriculum and 2013 national curriculum mainly adapted for junior high school students. This curriculum requires ELT students to master language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing and to acquire social skill.

Preparing Instructional Material
The reading instruction running well, the researcher with the classroom teacher had at first constructed the learning material related to the reading course namely for those who were learning reading. The first reading text taught for the first cycle composed of a descriptive text discussing ‘The Island of Singapore and San Fransisco City’, and the second one describing ‘giraffe’. The first reading text taught for the second cycle composed of a recount text discussing ‘Diving in Bunaken Island and Traveling to National Park’, and the second one telling about ‘Sue’s letter’. All of the presented learning materials were adapted from their guided book(s), worksheets and other resources in line with the available 2006 national curriculum and 2013 national curriculum.

Preparing Reading Test
The next phase was to construct the reading tests for both cycles measuring students’ reading comprehension and administered them at the third meeting of each cycle. The tests composed of the written ones assessed the students’ achievement in reading after a cycle completed. The quizzes were adapted from the textbook in the form of short answer questions in which students were expected to answer with literal and inferential comprehension. Again, the quizzes were constructed on the basis of the instructional aims of teaching reading comprehension.

Preparing Observation Sheet and Field Notes
The sake of recording the important data concerning with the performances of both teacher and students during the teaching and learning process, the research collaborated with his partner constructed the observation sheets and field notes.

Preparing the Criteria Success
The average reading score of learning success applied in the research is sixty (6.0). It means that the individual student is regarded to reach the criteria of learning success if his reading score taken from the administered quiz is sixty (6.0). Suppose the targeted minimal score of reading comprehension does not reach sixty (6.0), the next action became important to conduct in the following cycle (s). If possible the targeted average score of reading achievement should exceed the criteria of learning success officially predetermined by the school board. Therefore, the reading score of each student was expected to achieve sixty (6.0). As mentioned above, if the criterion had not yet achieved, the researcher had to keep going in the following cycle by adapting of some revisions on the teaching procedure,
learning activities, classroom management, and etc

**Implementing**
The implementation of the research plan was focusing on the teaching and learning activities in the classroom. The research as their English teacher taught English reading comprehension by means of cooperative learning strategies that were prepared together the classroom teacher. The classroom instruction at the first meeting in cycle one began from pre learning activities: greeting, checking students; attendance, apperception, and informing learning goals.

**Observing**
The activity of observation was directly conducted while the collaborator monitored the implementation of the actions. So, the data collecting activity was actually done at the same time as the teaching reading process. The observation was focusing on both teacher’ and student’ performances, beginning from pre learning activities up to post learning activities at the classroom meetings. Since the data was collected through observation, the data gotten was however qualitative.

**Reflecting**
The last session of this action research is reflection. It became a vital activity to analyze, to synthesize, to interpret and to explain the collected information gathered from different resources. It was also the last phase in which the researcher made a conclusion on the obtained data

**Preparation of the Action Research**

**Socialization of Cooperative Learning Strategy**
In order to keep cooperative learning strategy running effectively, the research and his collaborator consciously socialized the implementation of elaborated strategy. It was expected that students became more familiar with the principle characteristic of cooperative learning strategy since it was the first time for them to learn reading comprehension by means of this learning method.

**Assigning students to Group**
To organize the pair group teams, the researcher first determined the rank of the students according to the base score. It became the start point to set up pair or group members without taking accounts of other aspects such as sex or gender. So, the pair or group formatting was heavily relied on the current reading achievements. Based on the rank of the base scores, the pair and the group work arrangement were legally organized.

It means that pairing was begun with placing the first high score to the first low score in a pair and then followed by the second score from the top and the other second from the bottom, and so on. Since the number of the research respondent was 36 students, the research together with his collaborator had decided to make at least 20 pairs. So, for the sake of organizing the approximate equal achievement of each pair, the first score (Rank 1) was paired with the lowest one (Rank = 35). The second score (Rank 2) was paired with the second last score (Rank = 35), etc.

To create the group members with approximate equal achievement, on the other hand, all of base score were
classified into quartiles, and each quartile consisted of 9 members. The quartiles however were arranged from the highest to the lowest. The quartiles however were arranged from the highest to the lowest. The first quartile consisted of number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9; the second quartile is number 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18; the third is 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27; and the last is number 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36. The group members were derived from each of the four quartiles with equal achievement, so there was no group got advantage of the formation. For example, the first group consisted of rank: 1, 10, 27, and 36 while the second group consisted of rank: 8, 9, 25, and 21, and etc.

The Result of the First Cycle
The researcher together with his collaborator had constructed three instructional preparations such as instructional syllabus, lesson plans and students’ worksheets. The instructional syllabus was however derived from 2006 curriculum published by BSNP and developed with 2013 national curriculum. At this stage, the lesson plans used in this research were complete with competency standard, basic competence, and indicator, learning strategy, theme and evaluation instrument to be employed in the first and second cycle. Students’ worksheets contained short descriptive text completed with the exercised related to the discuss topic. (s) The action in the first cycle was arranged into two meetings for teaching and learning process in which each meeting was consisting of two periods or was lasting eighty minutes each one meeting or eighty minutes for administrating Quiz I.

Both of the assigned task and quizzes question at the first cycle required the students to extract the main idea of paragraph, to understand word meaning, to identify a reference word, to make inferences about information indirectly implied and explicitly stated, to find out author’s purpose and generic structure of descriptive and recount texts.

Reflection of the First Cycle .Action
Based on the results of the above analysis on the actions of the first cycle, it was footed that the teaching of reading comprehension applying the cooperative learning principles with a pair-work and Student Teams Achievement Division did not yet fulfill the expected criteria set up before such as classical mastery level: 26 (75 %) of the students should have got fair scores (60). The results of first quiz showed that 16 (44%) of the respondents achieved fair scores (60) and 20 (56%) of them got less than 60. It means that the outcomes of teaching reading employing cooperative learning strategies did not meet the criteria of classical mastery. Therefore, the teacher and his collaborators decided to hold another cycle by making some important revisions on certain aspects. The reflection of the first cycle of the actions revealed several aspects which needed revising.

The first consideration was the model of the selected cooperative learning. In this case, the researcher and his collaborator preferred to apply more frequently Pair work model since this model truly increased the students’ curiosity, motivation and interest to work in groups.

The Result of the Second Cycle
The main purpose of this step is to keep the process of teaching reading running as well as possible. The researcher collaborated with English teacher set up the teaching and learning preparations: syllabus, lesson plans and students' worksheets. The syllabus was constructed on the basis of Indonesian National curriculum officially published in 2006 and developed with 2013 national curriculum. Then, the lesson plans used in this research are completed with: competency standard, basic competence, learning indicator, objective of reading, cooperative learning strategy, learning material, and evaluation instrument to be discussed in the second cycle. The worksheet contained some short monolog texts: recount text completed with the exercises related to the discussed topic(s).

The action in the second cycle was arranged into two meetings for the teaching of reading and one meeting for administering Quiz I. The purpose of teaching reading in the second cycle was to help students how to comprehend English recount texts. In this case, the students were expected to be able to extract the main idea of paragraph, to understand word meaning, to identify a reference word, to make inferences about information indirectly implied and explicitly stated, to find out the generic structure of short descriptive and recount texts.

Reflection of the Action
The analysis of the implementation of the actions during the second cycle. The data were obtained through the results of the field notes, observation, Quiz 2, and private interview. It also concerns with the reflection of the action appeared in the second cycle.

Analysis of Learning Results
Based on the observation result, the students' participation in the second cycle significantly improved and it was classified as fair (69%) in the first meeting and continuously increased in the second meeting categorized as good (89%). The classroom atmosphere in the second cycle was quietly different from what happened in the first cycle. There was of course a better progress in the attempts to maximize the involvement of all members to work together as partners or as teams.

Analysis of Learning Results
The obtained scores showed that the process of cooperative learning strategies positively affected the reading achievement. There was improvement of reading comprehension achievement. For example, the average reading score of quiz two administered at the end of the cycle is 64.9, and the classical mastery is 80.6%. The average score had really fulfilled the criteria of learning success stated in chapter III of this research. It means that those who got 60 or reached the minimal score fulfill the classical mastery of 75%.

Analysis of the Results of the Interview
The interview was committed during the break time carried out inside or outside the classroom. It was conducted randomly asking for their comments, ideas and responses. The teacher and his collaborator together made notes on what the interviewees said. The interviewers tried to keep the interviewing atmosphere as natural as possible, so they did not feel
embarrassed anymore to say whatever they wanted to. Surprisingly, the result of interview showed that all of the interviewed felt enjoyed with the model of teaching reading. By the help of teammates, they enabled to do the tasks and curiously to answer every question of the selected reading text. If possible, they were eager to compete with other groups.

**Analysis of the Results off the Field Note**

Field notes were used to gather the data associated the phenomena beyond observation. Most of indicators for learning success appeared significantly in the second cycle. He also enabled to set up more conducive learning atmosphere. The class condition was seemingly full of students' interactive activities and perfectly controlled by teacher and his collaborator. Most of them looked satisfied with the task instructions properly understood. The researcher at the last meeting enabled to provide-interactive feedback well responded by students, the pair work model was apparently acceptable in terms of constructing learning teammates since they did cooperate to share one another to reach the goals of teaching reading. It seemed that they seemed permanently involved in accomplishing the, task for the sake of the whole members instead of their own needs.

**Reflection of the Second Cycle Action**

Based on the fore-mentioned findings taken from the observations, field notes, interview, and the quiz 2, it was finally concluded that the implementation of the cooperative learning applying pair-work models had already shown significant improvements. Though in some cases still need improvement. For instance, the criteria of success should be higher than sixty, etc. Yet, for the sake of the thesis research; the study was assumed completed. The indication of the improvements was first obviously seen in their classical average achievement after the treatment in the two cycles of actions. The average of reading score taken from the previous formative test was 51.8 whereas at the final cycle it was 64.9. The classical mastery was only 26 % whereas at the end of the cycle was 80.6 %. It was found that the index of reading achievement increased 13.1 points. After all, the average of the achievement met the target grade predetermined for it did reach 75% of the whole class got at least 60.

In terms of the implementation of the cooperative learning strategies applying two different models in teaching reading showed that the class became effective to reach the reading basic competence and to instill social skill. It is hoped that the English teacher or/and the practitioner as a designer, a model, a motivator, a facilitator, and an evaluator should be able to convince the students that in cooperative learning 'interdependence and mutual help' really exists.

Briefly, the implementation of pair-work improved the reading instruction and reading achievement of the English learners. At the end of the second cycle, the learning participation increased from 61 % (fair) to 83 % (good). Most of students were actively involved in the process of teaching reading activities: sharing, discussing, questioning, and responding. The self-assistance, individual accountability, personal curiosity, and self-motivation, aroused
to be the grateful spirit for the students recovering the learning obstacles. As a result, the students reached the goals of reading comprehension, the criteria of learning success, and classical mastery predetermined. The average score of reading increased from 57.4 to 64.9, while the classical mastery also increased from 61% to 82%.

Discussion of the Implementation of Cooperative Learning Strategy in Teaching Reading

This section consists of the elaborated discussions on the implementation of cooperative learning strategies throughout the research action, beginning from assigning students to pair-work and groups, setting up the classroom seats, constructing the instructional syllabus and lesson plan, preparing the reading materials and quiz one, and elaborating teaching reading procedures based on the three phase approach. The teacher assigned the students to pair of two or to team of four and balanced them so that each work team composed of a representative from each the performances-based divisions. The team moreover consisted of heterogeneous members placing high, medium and low ability of students and author self-selected based on their formative test. The main purpose was to promote elaborative thinking, more frequent giving and receiving of explanations, and greater perspective taking in discussing materials that increased the depth of understanding. Arranging the classroom management was also the other important factor to successfully apply the cooperative learning. Members of a learning group sat close enough to each other that they shared materials, maintained eye contact with all group members, and talked to each other without disrupting the other learning groups. So, each of learning group students enabled to see all relevant assigned task and conversed with each other. The seat position in working in pairs selected was side-by-side pair and face to face by other pair. The choice was based on the, practicality of application for the students needed not to frequently move their chairs to begin the learning activity and to share one pair and another.

To set up the group seating formation, the four members were sitting around the same table having face-to-face seats. In order to facilitate a group learning approach, the classroom was arranged to that suitable way in which the group members sat close enough to each other to talk quietly, maintaining eye contact and share materials.

In constructing the lesson plan and composing the worksheet was another important step to assure that the classroom activities really happened. The lesson plan specified heavily determined direction of teaching and learning process. After the lesson plan and the tasks were structured, the instructional process was obviously ready to hold. The lesson plan was constructed to fulfill both pair and group work activities applying the principles of cooperative learning. The paired work activity was arranged to accomplish the assigned task related to literal questions, and group work activity was arranged to accomplish inferential questions. According to Richard and Rogers (2001:192) cooperative learning is a group of systematic learning activity which depends on the information
exchange between the learners in the groups in which each learner is given responsibility for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others, as the size of the learning group increased, the range of abilities, expertise, skills, and the number of minds available for acquiring and processing information increase. The more members the group has, the more chance to have someone who has special knowledge helpful to the group and the more willing hands and talents are available to do the task.

The learning experiences that are planned and structured allow learners to have the opportunity to build on what they already known, have a clear sense of direction, and have enough time to develop their understanding. Further, she claims that once this has been made, the teacher creates learning experiences structured for positive interdependence, individual accountability, inter-group cooperation, and the opportunities for learners to use language purposefully and meaningfully in the context of experiencing specific cooperative skills. The time allotment employed in the lesson plan was already set up as wisely as possible. Each meeting having eighty minutes was evenly distributed by three divisions according to the stages of activities in Pre learning activity with a division 5 to 10 minutes in while learning activity, 60 to 70 minutes for Post learning activity, 5 to 10 minutes. While learning activity was divided by three, reading activities with a division 5 to 10 minutes in pre reading, while reading, 30 to 35 minutes, and post reading, 5 to 10 minutes. Though it was designed as well as possible, the teacher at the first meeting could not manage the time wisely. He spent much time in pre-reading phase.

Similarly, the students had lost much time to understand the task instruction and to accomplish their assignment, properly. Through the cycles of meeting, still few students seemed unable to complete their task in the given time frame. Therefore, they were assigned to do the assigned task at home and submitted in the next session. The home assignments were assigned to ensure the accomplishment of the reading indicators. When the students became more experience and skillful, they could manage the time allotment better.

According to Brown (2001:177), group work is a generic term covering a multiplicity of techniques in which two or more students are assigned a task that involves collaboration and self-initiated language another opinion states that time is crucial in implementing successful group work. She further elaborates that if the students have not enough time, they cannot engage in necessary exploration. Too much pressure impedes effective learning. Therefore, the aspect of time usage should be considered for following research applying cooperative learning. Harris and Sherblom (2008:4) define a group as a collection of at least three and ordinarily fewer than twenty individuals who are interdependent, influence one another over some period of time, share a common goal or purpose, assumed a specialized role, have a sense of mutual belonging, maintain norms and standards for group membership, and engage in interactive communication.

Moreover, the data from observation and interview show that the students showed great attention since they were willing to followed teacher’s instructions. The students’ participation
on each meeting was getting better. It affirms Stanley’s (2012:42) statement that “it is fun to be a student in a cooperative classroom.”

In addition, the researcher employed dependent t-test to investigate whether the difference of pretest and posttest means are significant. and that keys for structuring a successful cooperative classroom are found in creating social climate, setting goals, planning and structuring the task, establishing the physical arrangement of the classroom, assigning students to groups, selecting materials and times.

Pre-Reading
The purpose of pre-reading activity was to facilitate students to recall their prior knowledge dealing with the topic associated with the pictures. By having observed the pictures, the students were able to respond the leading questions related to them for they were already familiar with the pictures. It was intended to introduce students to situations that generated expectations that were useful in anticipating and predicting the content of the passage to read. So, the pre reading activity was to arouse students’ motivation, and interest to help them be familiar with the topic. These activities also promote specific skills in students such as defining the purpose of reading, asking questions, making predictions, figuring out the meaning of unfamiliar words, and relating new material to what is already known. Related to schemata or prior knowledge activated through pre-reading activities in that reading, schemata are used to make sense of text; the printed words evoke the reader’s experiences, as well as past and potential relationships.

The visual media utilized by the teacher in pre reading activity created the conducive learning atmosphere, attracted the attention across an entire class, and made them share the message, and retain the information conveyed in. Such media made teacher easily drive their curiosity and deliver information. It made possible for the teacher to enhance their comprehension and to extract the message conveyed in it. The interesting media assisted students to remember and recall the information learned. Moreover, It was very helpful to transmit the information into the learners' heads.

While-Reading
On this phase, the teacher distributed the worksheet in which contained the material of text descriptive and the task or some questions. The text measured the reading comprehension achievement, they consisted the literal and inferential questions in which the characteristics of reading comprehension

The activities in while-reading consisted of pair-work and group-work. The activities in while-reading in the first cycle particularly at the first meeting were mostly initiated by teacher and collaborator. She assigned them to read the reading text, to do the task, and to ask any questions. It did not happen anymore for the following meetings. The students themselves assigned to pair and to group at the beginning of the phases they initiated to do it themselves for they already knew what to do before having the task.

The assigned task done in pair-, at the beginning of while reading activity was to have the students comprehended the literal questions. During the activity, the students were let to discuss questions in
the task in pairs in a particular time frame, 10 to 20 minutes. The teacher and his collaborators were monitoring, intervening to provide task assistance or to increase their interpersonal skills. But, it did happen spontaneously and immediately for they had to share with their peers intensively so that the sense of trusting with their peers grew well and peer assistance existed. Since each of pairs consisted of high and low achievers, they seemed not need to spend longer times to accomplish the task.

Based on the predetermined recommendation, the activity of group-work at the second cycle covered the activity of answering literal questions since it provided more opportunity for them to solve the reading problems, and to develop mutual help and understanding. So, The Student pair work was a choice to do the task consisting of inferential question. The seating arrangement was face-to-face sitting around the tables. Though they did not have knee-to-knee seat in position, they were so close apart to communicate. Each of group positions was far enough apart so they did not interfere with each other learning groups. Having the students grouped, they were assigned to read the instruction, reading selection, and its questions carefully. They were motivated to share with teammates within their own groups.

At the first cycle in the first meeting, the students did not accomplish the task until the predetermined time. It was still required to discuss. The teacher asked them to crosscheck their answers inters groups. Later, the collaborator intervene sharing the unfinished questions since they seemed difficult to answer to the questions consisting of information not explicitly stated in the text and generic structure of descriptive text. To reinforce their understandings, the teacher held the classroom discussion at the post reading activity and asked them to do home assignment.

With Pair work model however provided enough chance for each team to compete one another to improve their previous scores. The teams were exposed to situations in which they were called for improving their prior scores. It was really not a competition among the students but a competition on their own scores. The winning team was the teams within which individual scores improved the most. To motivate the teams to achieve the most scores, the teacher and his collaborator encouraged each of the team members to be involved in the attempt to identify the required information of the questions and to mutual help.

Finally, it was identified that the time management during reading activities were already good. However, it was less efficient since the students were still in the beginning process of training to work cooperatively. Also, they were not proficient in answering questions in English. Therefore, it was concluded to space more times for filter implementation of cooperative work in any class.

**Post-Reading**

In the post-reading students could also be encouraged to discuss the task in parts or groups. Comprehension questions are just one form of activity appropriate for post reading also in this stage, -the students in groups were provided with task containing questions, which, mere required to reinforce their understanding about the topic, had been discussed. For the time was limited t
discuss the questions, they were asked to do it at home. The instruction on how to do the task was explained with some examples. The rest of the time was used to discuss the unfinished questions or the problems aroused dealing with the questions required students' inferences.

Discussion of the Learning Results on Reading Comprehension

The scores obtained from quiz 2 showed that students' reading comprehension gradually improved. The average score had increasingly improved from 57.4 in the first cycle to 64.9 in the second cycle. The class mastery level had improved from 44% to 80.6%. It is believed that there must be a positive impact of cooperative learning strategies towards the improvement of students' reading comprehension. So, cooperative-learning strategies like sharing ideas with peers; trusting friends in teams; taking turns; etc. increasingly motivated them to learn to read for better comprehension. Significantly, most of them gradually obtained better scores in the quizzes given at the end of second cycle. There were only 7 (19.4) students did not reach the criteria of success, since their scores taken from the administered quiz (Quiz 2) were less than sixty (60). Probably, they needed more times and trainings to improve their reading comprehension. Based on the above results, the following action was unnecessary to do in the third cycle. The researcher and collaborator decided not hold the next action since the student-, would have semester test as well. The other reason was that the students would have long holidays at the end of semester.

4. Conclusion and Suggestion

Conclusion

This research study aimed at improving students’ reading comprehension through cooperative learning. The teaching and learning process was found interactive when I implemented cooperative learning methods. At the beginning, communicating the objectives of the lessons through asking and answering activities accompanied by media stimulated the students’ involvement in the learning process. It also increased students’ attention toward the lessons. By applying cooperative learning, the students became more motivated to work together. It has encouraged the students to help the other friends by sharing their ideas, teaching one’s knowledge to the other and motivate the students in reading the text. The students became motivated, confident, and active during the reading class because they enjoyed the lesson. The mixed ability group which was well arranged could help and encouraged the slow learners in understanding the reading material. So, it leads to the improvement of the students’ reading comprehension. The mixed ability group also prevents the boredom among students. Moreover, the students were more interested to join the class activities when it was done in groups or in pairs. Encouraging the students and making the learning processes at ease were effective to improve their involvement in the class activities. It successfully made the students not afraid to interact with their friends. So, they can exchange their knowledge when comprehending the text. First, the English teachers particularly are advisable to adopt the results of cooperative learning strategies in teaching English reading by employing
its strengths found in this study. It is important that the English teachers consider the applied teaching procedures to teach reading texts for her future students such as how to employ effective cooperation, how to construct well-planned lesson and worksheet, and how to present a systematic presentation. They are also suggested to have a careful monitoring, to check their learning activities, to get detail information concerning with the effectiveness of the cooperative learning strategies.

Further, the English teachers are hopefully expected to set up the time allotment wisely to provide the low students enough chance to accomplish the assigned tasks because it often takes them much time to understand the instruction and to recognize the key words mainly at the beginning of the first meeting.

Suggestion
The last suggestion is extended to other prospective researchers. For the other prospective researchers, especially those who are interested in conducting the research dealing with the reading comprehension. It is suggested to use another applicable and effective teaching reading strategy, so that the result of their research findings can be used by other teachers as another alternative teaching strategy especially for teaching reading comprehension.

References


