Enhancing 11th Graders' Reading Comprehension by Using Making Connection Technique

Nafisya Alfiani Aisyah, Nur Fajar Arief

Graduate Program State University of Malang, Islamic University of Malang

alfiani.aisyah@gmail.com, nfarief5999@gmail.com

Article History

Received : January 7th 2021

Revision : February 11th 2021

Publication : March 30th 2021

Abstract

Reading is a comprehending process which involves complex steps. Despite the important role of reading comprehension, many researchers indicate that the students' reading comprehension skill is not satisfactory yet. This situation is also found in MAN 3 Malang. The students were found to have difficulty in comprehending the reading text because of low ability in reading, especially in drawing on their prior knowledge. Thus, the researcher implemented the Making Connection Technique in the reading lessons in collaborative with the classroom teacher. This technique has several steps; they are text to text, text to self, and text to world. The design of this research was Classroom Action Research covering four stages; they were planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. The subjects of the study were 29 students of class XI SCIENCE 1 of MAN 3 Malang. The instruments used to collect the data were students' reading comprehension pre and post-test), observation checklist, and field notes. Since the researcher aimed to know whether the technique helped the students in both lower and upper group, this research is successful if there was a significant improvement from their pre and post-test scores. The findings of this study revealed that by using Making Connection technique, the students' reading comprehension scores had achieved the criteria of success. The students also showed positive attitude during the implementation of the technique. The several procedure of using the technique found are (1) making text to text-connection in group, (2) making text to self-connection in group, (3) making text to world-connection in group, and (4) having a class discussion related to the results of their discussion. Based on the research findings, the researcher suggested English teachers to implement the making connection technique in more interesting ways. Future researchers can investigate the use of making connection technique for other research purposes.

Keywords: Reading, Reading Comprehension, Making Connection Technique

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the important language skills taught in English classes of Indonesian secondary schools. Students, however, still experience a lot of issues with reading, such as, lack of vocabulary and grammatical mastery, lack of concentration or attention, lack of thinking skills, lack of background knowledge, and lack of reading comprehension strategy (Gunning, 2010). With regard to reading in English as a foreign language, there are several research findings indicate that Indonesian students' skill is not satisfactory. Floris & Divina (2009), for example, found that Indonesian students are generally not trained to recognize text organization after they read a passage. They are usually asked to answer some questions after reading a text, but, they might not get enough exposure to reading text.

In a preliminary study conducted in MAN 3 Malang, I also observed some of those problems. Based on the interview results, I obtained information that the problems faced by XI SCIENCE 1 students in reading were related to lack of motivation and low ability in reading, especially in drawing their prior knowledge and experience. The teacher had tried to conduct group discussion with the expectation that the students could be involved in the class discussion. Unfortunately, it was not really effective to solve the difficulties of the students. Thus, when I gave them a preliminary test, the result showed that almost all of the students got below 60. There were only three from 29 students who got 70 and two students got 80 and above.

From the interview and preliminary test' result, the researcher concluded that the students needed more attractive technique which could motivate them to read and show the relevance of reading text. This would also improve their reading fluency in the classroom. One way to do this is implementing making connection technique. Research on reading comprehension indicates that a powerful strategy for readers to understand text is to make connections (Keene & Zimmermann, 2007). Readers pay more attention when they relate to the text. Readers naturally bring their prior knowledge and experience to reading but comprehend better when they think about the connections they make between the text, their lives, and the larger world (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000)

Making connection technique might not commonly used in Indonesia, but the students can use it flexibly depending on the types of text they are reading and the purpose for reading it (Rice, 2005). This technique provides schema which is the prior knowledge that students bring to the text they are reading (Haynes, 2014). Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000) discuss the role and importance of prior knowledge for learning. They assert that humans come to formal education settings with a range of prior knowledge, skills, beliefs, and concepts that significantly influence what they notice about the environment and how they organize and interpret it. This in turn affects their abilities to remember, reason, solve problems,

and acquire new knowledge. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), the primary purpose of reading is reading for comprehension; raising students' awareness of main ideas in activating their prior knowledge.

In helping students to activate the prior knowledge they bring to the learning environment, the teachers build on students' strengths and experiences to create new learning. Similarly, research on reading comprehension suggests that prior knowledge is a strong predictor of how well the reader will understand the text and make meaning, or generate new knowledge and understanding (Keene & Zimmermann, 2007). When readers engage with an unfamiliar text, they rely on their prior knowledge; personal experiences, conceptual understanding and other texts to make sense or meaning of the text. According to Keene (2008), proficient readers capitalize on different types of connections to enhance understanding and make meaning of texts. These connections include specific knowledge texts, topics, themes, content, structure and organization (text-to-text), drawing from memories from particular experiences that shed light on what the text presents (text -to-self), and specific knowledge about the topic, general world knowledge (text-to world).

Text-to-text connections are links that students make between the text that they are reading and another story that they have read. Sometimes when we read, we are reminded of other texts we have read. Encourage students to consider the variety of texts they have experienced which will help them understand the new selection (Draper, 2010). Text to text connection also makes the students possible to understand more about the structure of the text. There are some questions that will be used by the students for doing this step; one of them is related with the text structure. One factor that influences comprehension of information in the texts is the structure of the text. There are different ways for an author to organize the ideas in texts in general or in scientific texts in particular, resulting in different structures (Kendeou & Broek, 2007)

Text-to-self connections are associations that readers make between the text they are reading and thing that happen in their own lives. Text-to-self makes students aware of their thinking during reading and to interact with, experience, and construct meaning in the stories they read (Menzella, 2007). Using the text-to-self reading-connection instruction for reading comprehension, students can activate prior knowledge with reading-connections and personal experiences. This is especially important as adolescents increasingly work with texts that are more complex in structure and vocabulary, and that deal with concepts, information and issues that tend to be more abstract and that may be further outside their everyday experiences (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010).

Text-to-world connections are also those links students make between the text and something that has happened in the world. We all have ideas about how the world works that goes far beyond our own personal experiences. We learn about things through television, movies, magazines, and newspapers. Often it is the text-

to-world connections that teachers are trying to enhance when they teach lessons in science, social studies, and literature. An example of a text-to-world connection would be when a reader says, "I saw a program on television that talked about things described in this article" (Drapper, 2010). World knowledge is an essential component of reading comprehension, because every text takes for granted the readers' familiarity with a whole range of unspoken and unwritten facts about the cultural and natural worlds (Jr, 2003).

A previous study from Correia & Bleicher (2008) said that making connections using comparative markers (text-to text, text-to self, and text-to world) is an excellent opportunity for teaching reflection. By using those comparative markers, the students will be guided to reflect themselves on the text they read. It is of course related with the problems faced by XI SCIENCE 1 students about lack of motivation and low ability in reading, especially in drawing their prior knowledge and experience. Tovani (2000) also offers reasons why connecting to text helps adolescence readers; for example, it helps readers understand how characters feel and the motivation behind their actions, it helps readers have a clearer picture in their head as they read thus making the reader more engaged, it keeps the reader from becoming bored while reading, it sets a purpose for reading and keeps the reader focused, it forces readers to become actively involved, and it helps readers remember what they have read and ask questions about the text. In addition, based on the curriculum 2013, the learning and teaching process is expected to be meaningful. It means that the material should be related to the real life of the students. Throughout instruction, students need to be challenged to analyze how their connections are contributing to their comprehension of the text (Drapper, 2010).

As a conclusion, what should be investigated is how making connection can be appropriate technique to enhance 11th grade students reading comprehension. However, this technique does not only provide a possibility in connecting two texts in terms of the same content and language they are used, but also the way it relates to the readers' experience and world experience.

METHOD

The research design used in this study is Classroom Action Research. This research design is seen as an ideal method to solve the problems found in the preliminary study. In order to conduct the research by using CAR, I did the cycle method that was based on the diagram proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1998). This method involves four stages; they are planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting.

This classroom action research was conducted in MAN 3 Malang. There were 29 students in the class. This class was chosen based on the interview with the English teacher and the result of students' test in preliminary study. Curriculum

2013 was applied in this school. There was one meeting for English lesson in a week; where each session was done in 90 minutes (2x45 minutes). The research instruments of this study consist of students' reading comprehension test, observation checklist, and field note.

Students' Reading Comprehension Test

This kind of test was used to collect the data about students' reading comprehension ability before and after the implementation of making connection technique. The material which was used in this test was based on the sub-competence "Distinguishing and comprehending the social function, text structures, and some linguistics elements of an oral and written explanation text by asking for and giving information related to natural or social phenomena." In this case, the test questions were taken from national examination (UN) for Senior High School. Especially for the questions of this test, based on Brown (1979), they were related with recognizing the communicative functions of written texts, according to form and purpose, and describing events, ideas, etc., infer links and connections between events, deduce causes and effects, and detect such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.

There were two kinds of students' reading comprehension tests which were given; they were pre-test and post-test. Prior to the test administration, I tried out the pre-test and post-test to another class who had similar ability as XI SCIENCE 1. Then, the result of the try out was analyzed by using SPSS to prove that they were not significant in terms of its difficulty. Moreover, the item difficulty was analyzed based on the following criteria:

Table 2.3 Classification of Difficulty Level

PP	Classification
0.0 – 0.29	Difficult
0.30 – 0.629	Medium
0.70 – 1.00	Easy

(Adapted from Arikunto, 1999)

The discriminating power of the test is how the test item is able to differentiate which students belong to the upper group (clever) or lower group (not clever) (Purwanto, 2013). The following are the criteria to analyze the qualification of the discriminating power.

Table 2.4 The criteria of Discriminating Power

DP	Classification
0.0 – 0.19	Poor, have to be revised or ignored
0.20 – 0.39	Satisfactory
0.40 – 0.69	Good
0.70 – 1.00	Excellent

Negative	Not good, have to be revised or ignored
----------	---

(Adapted from Arikunto, 1999)

Observation Checklist

The observation checklist was used to observe the teaching and learning activities. Besides, it was used to observe students' participation in the classroom. There were three aspects being observed; they were the condition of the classroom, activities of the teacher, and also the students' participation in the classroom. It covered the indicators that the students and teacher had to achieve based on the lesson plan in every meeting.

Field Notes

During the implementation of the technique, I monitored the students by using observation note to know how well they used making connection technique to help them comprehend the reading text. The observation note covered the information about what kind of steps that the students were using while implementing the making connection technique and the idea that they verbalized.

The research procedure of this study consists of preliminary study, planning, acting, implementing, observing, and reflecting. The preliminary study was conducted on November 25, 2016. During the preliminary study, the researcher acted as the teacher who administered the lesson. In doing the observation, some important notes about the classroom condition; behavior and the students' attitude towards lesson were also taken. The main activity in the preliminary study was reading comprehension. Right after I explained the learning material, the students were assigned to do a pre-test. There was one type of the questions in the pre-test which was multiple choice questions. The results of the pre-test indicated that the students needed an effective technique to motivate them in reading and help them comprehend the English text more easily. It was because almost all of them got score below 60; only three students who got 70 and the other 2 students got 80 and above. Additionally, I interviewed the teacher to analyze the problem occurred in a class and it was related to the students ability in comprehending the reading text and to confirm the notes about the classroom condition observed in the preliminary study. The teacher, however, had tried to conduct group discussion with the expectation that the students could be involved in the class discussion. Unfortunately, it was not really effective to solve the difficulties of the students.

After the researcher had done the preliminary study and indicated the problem occurred; 11th grade students who were difficult to comprehend the English text, I made a plan including research instrument, lesson plan, and the criteria of success. I prepared lesson plans that were used in the class based on the syllabus for MAN/SMA in Curriculum 2013. The lesson plans were made as guidelines to implement the technique in the classroom. According to Brown (2007), planning the lesson means a set of guidelines for evaluating and using textbooks in

your classroom and a reminder of the various technology aids that can enhance learning. Scientific approach was used to arrange the learning activity. It consisted of some aspects; they were observing, questioning, associating, and communicating. The assessment was also explained in the lesson plan. The making connection was the main technique used in the lesson plan to comprehend the meaning of explanation text of cause and effect as the material for XI SCIENCE 1 students. I combined two meetings in one lesson plan, so, there were three lesson plans in one cycle. One meeting was done in 90 minutes.

Procedures of Implementing the Making Connection Technique

In this step, the researcher put into action the teaching technique that had been designed. The researcher became the teacher who handled the class and conduct the learning and teacher process. The making connection technique became the major guideline for the researcher to do the teaching and learning activities. There were 5 meetings in one cycle to implement the technique as followed;

The teaching stage in the 1st meeting

I reviewed the material of explanation text in short; general definition and function. Then, I divided the students into 7 groups; one group consisted of 4 or 5 students. It was because the numbers of the students were 29. Then, I gave an explanation text, "How Does Flood Happen?" to every group. All groups were asked to find some aspects of the text, namely; text structure, theme, and general information. After that, they were asked to present their result in front of the class. I clarified the students' work and gave them more explanation about the text.

Then, there were some comprehension questions for every group; it was related with the text 'How Does Flood Happen?'. I gave the students' pre-test after that. After the pre-test was collected, the students were given a short explanation about making connection technique.

The teaching stage in the 2nd meeting

In the second meeting, I started introducing the use of making connection technique; and I used video as a media to make it more interesting. **Concepts:** making connection is one of cooperative learning styles; and it deals with how the students are able to connect the text with these three straps, namely; *other texts, their selves' experience, and world experience*. Steps: There are three steps in making connection technique; (1) **Text to text:** The students connect across the text which they have read before (2) **Text to self:** The students connect the text with their own experiences (3) **Text to world:** The students connect the text with something happen in the world. After giving the explanation, I gave the students two texts; the first text was an explanation text, "How Does Tsunami Happen?" and another text was a report text "Tsunami". They had to identify both of them using the first step in making connection technique; which was *text to text*. In this step, the students connected the big idea and themes across the text. There were some questions as the guidance to help them used this technique; they were "Are there similarities or

differences in (they can choose some of these cases); ***genre, text structure, topic, theme, fact, opinion, information and, vocabulary.***"

The teaching stage in the 3rd meeting

In this meeting, I asked the students to continue into the second step of making connection technique; which was *text to self*. In this step, the students connected their personal experience to the text "How Does Tsunami Happen?" There were some questions as the guidance to help them used this technique; they were (1) How is it related to your life's experience (2) Has something like this ever happened to me? (3) What are your feelings when you read this?

After that, the students did the last step of making connection technique; which was *text to world*. In this step, the students connected a current issue in the world to the text. There were some questions as the guidance to help them used this technique; they were (1) What does it remind you with the current issue in the world? (2) How is this text similar to things that happened in the real world? (3) How does that part relate to the world around you?

The teaching stage in the 4th meeting

In this meeting, every group was asked to combine the result of implementing making connection technique through the text, "How Does Tsunami Happen?" It was useful to help them analyzed the text and make a conclusion related to the content of the text. After fifteen minutes, every group should present their analysis in front of the class. Other groups had a chance to give or add some comments to the presenter. I also challenged the presenter by giving them a question related to text. Right after the group presentation was done, I drew some columns as mind map on the whiteboard; and it was related to the content of the text based on the students' groups' analysis. The columns were filled by the students.

Then, I gave them an individual practice; and it was related to the text that had been discussed before. There were 5 numbers of multiple choice questions they had to do.

The teaching stage in the 5th meeting

This was the last meeting of the section. I gave the students a post-test; and they had to do individually. The questions of the post-test were in the form of multiple choice questions. The students had to do it in 90 minutes. After that, they had to collect it in front of the class. There was no class discussion about the answer of the post-test.

Criteria of Success

The criteria of success in this research were conducted by analyzing the result of students' pre-test and post-test. In this case, I looked at the improvement of students score in pre-test and post-test, also used means to compare pre and post test score. When there is an improvement from every student score in the class and average of students' post-test score was significantly higher than the average of students' pre-test score, it meant that the technique was successfully implemented.

Observing the Action

As quoted from Latief (2013:149), observing is the process of collecting data which indicates the success of the strategy to solve the students' learning problems and shows the process that leads to success. The focus of the observation was on the data; and it was based on the criteria of success.

During the implementation of making connection technique, observation checklist in every meeting was filled by the English teacher to record the information about the learning and teaching activity in the classroom. It covered the indicators that the students and teacher had to achieve based on the lesson plan in every meeting.

Reflecting the Action

To measure the success of this study, I developed the criterion of success. The criterion of success is indicator which determined the success of the study implemented during the research. Since the major goal of this study was to improve the students' reading comprehension mastery, the students reading score in pre and post-test became the measurement of their mastery. The pre-test was given before the implementation of making connection technique, while the post-test was given at the end of the research, after the implementation of the technique. There should be a significance improvement between the students' score in pre and post-test.

In this step, I compared the results of the data analysis to the criteria of success. If the results were good, it meant that the students could achieve the criteria of success, so, the research was considered.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of the pre-test and post-test, the students had achieved the criteria of success which signifies the success of this study. The students' achievement can be seen based on their test scores. The pre-test conducted in the first meeting indicated that the students had low proficiency of reading. It could be seen that specific technique was needed in order to make it easier for them in comprehending reading texts.

After the implementation of making connection technique, the students showed a satisfactory result since all students from upper and lower group could achieve the criteria of success; which was the significance improvement between the students' pre-test and post-test score. Using t-test for correlated sample in SPSS, the result of the post test showed a significant improvement from the pre-test. The significance value was .000; it was less than 0.05. It also indicated that making connection technique was successfully implemented to improve 11th grade reading comprehension.

Table 3.1 The Students' Scores of Pre-Test and Post-Test

NO.	STUDENTS' NAME	F/M	PRE-TEST SCORE	POST-TEST SCORE
1.	ARZ	M	60	70
2.	EMA	M	60	75
3.	HSN	M	50	65
4.	IYW	M	60	75
5.	MAK	M	55	70
6.	MF	M	70	85
7.	MFR	M	50	65
8.	RYA	M	60	70
9.	ANK	F	60	75
10.	ASZ	F	70	80
11.	AZP	F	65	85
12.	AAPN	F	60	75
13.	AFF	F	65	75
14.	DU	F	85	90
15.	IE	F	65	70
16.	NKP	F	60	75
17.	LA	F	65	75
18.	LI	F	60	80
19.	LAR	F	60	70
20.	MA	F	60	75
21.	NAF	F	65	70
22.	NNF	F	65	75
23.	NMTS	F	80	95
24.	REAG	F	50	65
25.	RAS	F	50	65
26.	RAN	F	60	75
27.	SSW	F	60	75
28.	NSW	F	65	75
29.	YQA	F	70	80
AVERAGE			62	75

In addition to the quantitative data of the students' reading comprehension achievement, I also tried to elicit the students' attitude during the implementation of making connection technique. I obtained this data from the observer's observation checklist and my field notes. In order to know how well the teaching and learning activity was going in each meeting and how well the students gave response to the technique, I developed several indicators to be assessed by the observer. The indicators were adjusted to the research focus in each meeting. There

were different focus and agenda throughout the first until the fifth meeting, so the indicators also vary considerably.

The main focus of the first meeting was to introduce the material and making connection technique. Since explanation text was the new material for them, so the explanation about it was needed. At the end of the lesson, the students were given a pre-test related to the material. After that, I introduced making connection technique by using power-point presentation. There were three steps that would be implemented; text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world. The observation checklist indicated that the researcher role's in the class activity was 85% match with the indicators in the descriptors. It showed that the learning and teaching activity went very well. Then, based on the field notes, the students were interested to listen to my explanation about making connection technique. They seemed curious to know how it was implemented to help them comprehend the text more easily.

The focus of the second meeting was to get the students familiar with the technique and to practice the first step of making connection technique. I gave a modeling to facilitate the students' practice with the first step of the technique. The observation checklist indicated that the researcher role's in the class activity was 90% match with the indicators in the descriptors. It showed that the learning and teaching activity went better than the previous meeting. Based on my field notes, the students were paying full attention to the modelling given by the researcher in the first meeting. They were also engaged well in the implementation of the first step in making connection technique, "text-to-text".

The third meeting focused on the implementation of the second and third step of making connection technique, "text-to-self" and "text-to-world". In this meeting, the students also participated well in the discussion. Furthermore, my field notes showed that this second and third step motivated them to comprehend the text by recalling their life experience and world experience. The observation checklist indicated that the researcher role's in reading comprehension activity using making connection technique was 95% match with the indicators in the descriptors. It showed that the learning and teaching activity was very good.

Different from the first until third meeting, the fourth meeting was mainly focused on the discussion of the result in analyzing the text using making connection technique. In this meeting, based on my field notes, all groups demonstrated very good performance both in presenting their result and getting involved in the class discussion. They could keep speaking up to express their thoughts. The observation checklist indicated that the researcher role's in the class activity was 98% match with the indicators in the descriptors. It showed that there was an improvement in the learning and teaching activity using making connection technique.

The fifth meeting was arranged for post-test. The students did their post-test independently. The observation checklist indicated that the researcher role's in the class activity was 100% match with the indicators in the descriptors. Then, my field

notes showed that the students looked pretty confidence in doing their post-test individually. During the post-test, it could be seen how they tried to recall something to comprehend the reading text. It was different from the first meeting when they had to do their pre-test. At that time, many students complained about some vocabulary they had never known before; but this did not happen post-test. They tried hard to guess the meaning of vocabulary themselves by using making connection technique.

In addition, to get the students' feedback on the implementation of making connection technique, I asked two students as the representative of the class in order to give testimonials.

Testimonials from students;

Student 1: "I think it is an awesome technique because from here I can open my mind and I can know another technique to decide some of things about the text. We can know many sources or many techniques from this time."

Student 2: "I think this technique makes me easier to do some questions in the text. I am so happy because it is so helpful for me, for us."

DISCUSSION

Before the main making connection task was applied to the students, I focused on the introduction of the strategies used in making connection technique. As Draper (2010) states, to effectively use this strategy, teachers should spend time modeling for students how to make meaningful connections. Draper continued saying, "when teachers suspect that students may lack the ability to make meaningful connections, classroom instruction will be necessary to bridge the gap between reading experiences and author assumptions." Considering that, I asked the students to focus on my explanation before they used the technique in group.

I explained in the first meeting about making connection technique, which was implemented through these three steps: *text to text*, *text to self*, and *text to world*. The session continued by modelling a reading text to guide the students about how to implement the first step of making connection which was followed by the students practicing the technique in groups. The second and third meetings were also started by modelling the implementation of second and third step in making connection technique before the students practiced it in groups.

There were some activities that I could do to begin their making connection activity. However, due to the limited time, I only made three games before the three steps in making connection technique were implemented. This activity built the students' motivation in following the next activity since XI SCIENCE 1 students were interest with the game. There were two reasons why I decided to use this activity. First, it only took a short time so the students would have more time to focus on their main making connection activity. Second, it had relevance with the material, "Explanation text".

In the main making connection technique, the students grouped themselves and did every worksheet together. In the worksheet, there were three questions that must be answered and analyzed by using making connection technique. The discussion happened as I observed; it was found that there was an effort from the students to share information they knew. They were motivated to think critically in order to comprehend the reading text. It was totally different from their habit because XI SCIENCE 1 students commonly got stuck with the vocabulary they did not know or the complexity of the reading text.

This is in line with what Harvey & Goudvis (2000) explained regarding the making connection technique that can make readers be more engaged in reading English texts. The students use their inner world of ideas, prior experiences, and beliefs to make sense of their reading activity; this type of human activity is often referred to as reflection and had been the subject of decades of research. In the way the students were motivated to read, they automatically tried to connect the text to the experience or information they had known and tried to build understanding from that. Some difficult words in the reading text were successfully solved by the students when they created a connection to their previous experience. They could imagine the cause and effect of the tsunami by connecting to the text they had read before, their own experience or world experience. Even though their prior experience was not exactly the same as the reading text, some of the similarities could guide the students to visualize the text better. Block and Israel (2004) proposed that expert readers activate relevant background experiences and eliminate naïve, inaccurate, or irrelevant prior knowledge.

Richards & Renandya (2002) assert that the primary purpose of reading is reading for comprehension; raising students' awareness of main ideas in activating their prior knowledge and paraphrasing or drawing conclusion of the writer's ideas into the readers so that it would help the reader understood what the writer meant. A reader tried to interpret the implicit and explicit meaning contained in the text by engaging his or her prior knowledge (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Thus, in reading activities, there was an interaction between the students as readers and the text by involving his or her mental process as well as the strategy to understand the meaning within the text. In this case, to gain an understanding of the text, a reader should not only be able to read the printed words but also build meaning by relating the words. Moreover, Vogt and McLaughlin (2005) stated that reading was a way to involve readers with the text in which they must read the word and the world. It really reflects the needs of the mastery of both the text and the prior knowledge.

In relation with this study, I employed making connection technique to dig up students' prior and world knowledge dealing with the material given. The activity that had been done aimed at assisting the students to connect the information that were stated in the text with their own prior knowledge and experiences. This study found that the students were really interested and paid better attention and read

more attentively when they used making connection technique to help them comprehend the reading text more easily. Therefore, by using the students' prior knowledge, world knowledge, and other text they had read before as a connector, it was useful for leading the students to comprehend the concept being discussed in the text. Using making connection technique could also help the students not only in activating their critical thinking towards the reading text, but also maintained their attention, interest, and motivation (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000)

Based on the research findings, I found that the use of making connection technique improved the ability of XI SCIENCE 1 students to comprehend the reading text. The research findings revealed that 100% of students (29 students) showed a significant improvement in their reading ability. They put up effort to understand the text by connecting the other texts they had read, their prior experience or world experience. Since the questions in students reading test were related to the main idea and information that were stated in text, so this technique successfully changed their habitual while reading English text.

The goal of teaching reading strategies was to make students aware of their thinking during reading and to interact with, experience, and construct meaning in the stories they read (Menzella, 2007). Her research findings, moreover, proved that the application of making connection technique could motivate the students to make their thinking visible to others; to the text they read. It also boosted their confidence to use the technique independently later.

However, from the three steps in making connection technique, there was a difficulty that the students encouraged when they were trying to make text-to-text connection. It was because there were no many things that the students could connect except the similarity or difference aspects between the texts in terms of structure or content. On the contrary, they became more critics when they had to make text-to-self and text-to world connections. There were many things they could connect based on their own experiences and something they had watched in video or television.

Furthermore, there was some limitation to be addressed by future study. In implementing making connection technique, after the students had practiced the steps of the technique, there should be monitoring process to check whether they practiced the steps correctly. This was done by conducting a discussion led for them. In the discussion, I should be able to engage the students so that they acquired a complete understanding about how to use the steps of the technique. Therefore, it would take much time to hold a heated discussion. As a result, regarding the complexity, this technique cannot be implemented in only two meetings.

CONCLUSION

Referring to the research findings and discussions stated in chapter III and IV, it can be concluded that the implementation of making connection technique can improve the 11th grade students' reading comprehension. The procedure of the implementation is presented below.

In the first meeting, I reviewed the material of explanation text in short. After that, the students were assigned to make a group. Then, they did some discussion towards the content of the text which was given to them. The result of the discussion should be presented in front of the class before I conducted a class discussion. The main thing in this meeting was to know students' competence in analyzing explanation text of cause and effect before I introduced making connection technique.

In the second meeting, I tried to build their knowledge of the text by opening question and answer session about the topic of the text. It could also be a brainstorming session for them. The students were expected to share their life experiences as relevant as possible to the topic that was introduced. Then, I explained the steps in making connection technique and did some modelling to show them how the first technique could be implemented. In this case, I gave some assistance to help the students as well as to motivate them to become more enthusiastic with their reading activities. Some practice of using the first step of making connection technique, which was "*text to text*" in the form of group works was conducted afterwards.

In the third meeting, I opened the activities by modelling the use of second step in making connection technique, which was "*text to self*" before assigning the students to do the step in groups. After that, I continued modelling the third step of the technique, which was "*text to world*" before the students implemented this step. Compared to the previous meeting, the students became more actively involved in the group discussion.

In the fourth meeting, I had a classroom discussion to review the result of the students' group work using the steps of making connection technique. Then, the students should do individual practice which was related to the text they had discussed. The post test was done in the following meeting.

By following those activities, the implementation of making connection technique in this research successfully achieved the criteria of success and improved the students' reading comprehension achievement. It could be seen based on the significant improvement on the two tests that were administered. To make sure that the improvement was significant, I used t-test for correlated sample to count it. The data obtained from pre-test and post-test showed that the students in the upper and lower group had achieved satisfactory achievement. The satisfactory result reporting that 100% of the students performed very well in both tests was the indication of the success of making connection technique in enhancing 11th grade students' reading comprehension.

It can be concluded that the students gained a number of benefits; Firstly, the students were motivated to think critically in order to comprehend the reading text. Secondly, the students could use their inner world of ideas, prior experience, and beliefs to make sense of their reading activities. Thirdly, the students were able to show active participation in the learning process. Fourthly, the students had considerable amount of confidence in doing their test individually.

REFERENCES

- Arikunto, S. (1999). *Dasar-Dasar Evaluasi Pendidikan*. Jakarta: PT. Bumi Aksara
- Block, C.C, & Israel, S.E. (2004). The ABC's Performing Highly Effective: Building Students' Comprehension, Decoding, Vocabulary, and Fluency. *The Reading Teacher Journal* (Online). (http://www.accessmylibrary.com/coms2/summary_02869660332_ITM), accessed on January 2nd , 2017
- Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L, & Cocking, R., eds. (2000). How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
- Craig, D. V. (2009). Action Research Essentials. San Fransisco: Jossey Bass
- Drapper, D. (2010). Making Connection Strategies, (Online), (makingconnections-reading.weebly.com), accessed on February 9th 2016
- Fang, Z. & Schleppegrell, M. J. (April 2010). "Disciplinary literacies across content areas: Supporting secondary reading through functional language analysis", *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, International Reading Association*, 53 (7), 587-597.
- Floris, Debora F. & Divina, M. (2009). A study on the Reading Skills of EFL University Students. *TEFLIN Journal*, 20 (1): 37-47
- Gunning, Thomas G. (2010). *Assesing and Correcting Reading and Writing Difficulties*. Fourth Edition. United States of America: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Hamra, A & Syatriana, E. (2010). Developing A Model of Teaching Reading Comprehension for EFL Students . *TEFLIN Journal*, 21 (1): 27-40
- Harvey, S. & Goudvis, A. (2000). *Strategies that work: Teaching comprehension to enhance understanding*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.
- Haynes, J. (2014). Making Connection to Improve EL Reading Comprehension, (Online),(<http://blog.tesol.org/making-connections-to-improve-el-reading-comprehension/>), accessed on February 9th 2016
- Hirsch, E.D. (2003). Reading Comprehension Requires Knowledge— of Words and the World, (Online), (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237268208_Reading_Comprehension_Requires_Knowledge-_of_Words_and_the_World_Scientific_Insights_into_the_Fourth-Grade_Slump_and_the_Nation's_Stagnant_Comprehension_Scores), accessed on January 20th, 2017
- Keene, E. (2008). *To Understand: New Horizons in Reading Comprehension*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Keene, E. & Zimmerman, S. (2007). *Mosaic of Thought*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- Kendou, P. & Broek, P.D.V. (2007). The effects of prior knowledge and text structure on comprehension processes during reading of scientific texts. *Memori and Cognition Journal*, 35 (7), 1567-1577
- Menzelle, L. (2007). Using Comprehension Strategies in Second Grade. *TESOL Other Publications Journal* (Online). ([http://www.tesol.org/read-and-publish/journals/other-serial-publications/compleat-links/compleat-links-volume-4-issue-2-\(june-2007\)/using-comprehension-strategies-in-second-grade](http://www.tesol.org/read-and-publish/journals/other-serial-publications/compleat-links/compleat-links-volume-4-issue-2-(june-2007)/using-comprehension-strategies-in-second-grade)), accessed on January 18th 2017
- Purwanto, N. (2013). *Prinsip-Prinsip dan Teknik Evaluasi Pengajaran*. Bandung: Rosda Karya
- Richards, J.C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching, An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tovani, C. (2008). *I read it, but I don't get it: Comprehension strategies for adolescent readers*. Portland, ME: Steinhouse.
- Vought, M., and McLaughlin, M. (2003). *Teaching and Learning in a Global Society: Examining Changing Definitions of Literacy*. In M. Pandis, A. Ward, and S.R Mathews. (Eds). 2005. *Reading, Writing, Thinking*. Network: IRA.