

**USING *MAKING CONNECTIONS* STRATEGY IN TEACHING READING
COMPREHENSION AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

PAPER

***Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements to Obtain the Strata One
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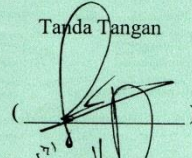
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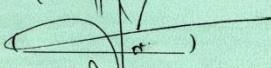
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ABSTRAK

Wahyuni, Fatma. 2016. *Using Making Connections Strategy in Teaching Reading Comprehension at Senior High School.* Graduating Paper. English Department. FBS. UNP. Padang.

Lemahnya kemampuan pemahaman membaca siswa terhadap teks berbahasa Inggris disebabkan oleh dua faktor utama. Faktor pertama datang dari siswa yaitu rendahnya motivasi mereka untuk membaca, hal ini berdampak pada sedikitnya usaha yang mereka berikan dalam rangka memahami sebuah teks. Selain itu kurangnya latihan yang siswa lakukan juga membuat mereka tidak terlatih untuk memahami teks secara mendalam. Sebagai akibatnya mereka tidak mampu menjelaskan apa yang sebenarnya mereka baca dan tulis sebagai jawaban dari latihan yang diberikan. Faktor kedua adalah faktor yang berasal dari guru seperti metode yang dipakai guru dalam mengajarkan “*reading*” belum memotivasi siswa untuk terlibat aktif dalam membaca teks. Akibatnya siswa menganggap membaca adalah kegiatan yang membosankan. Untuk mengatasi masalah-masalah tersebut dibutuhkan sebuah strategi pembelajaran yang tepat. Makalah ini menawarkan sebuah strategi yang dikenal sebagai strategi “*Making Connections*”. Strategi ini mendorong siswa untuk menghubungkan informasi yang mereka dapat dari teks dengan diri mereka sendiri, dengan teks lain yang pernah mereka baca, dan dengan kenyataan yang ada di sekitar mereka. Guru dapat memulai pelajaran dengan mengaktifkan *background knowledge* siswa kemudian mencontohkan bagaimana cara menggunakan strategi ini. Hasil dari *connections* yang dibuat digunakan sebagai bantuan bagi siswa untuk lebih memahami bacaan sehingga diharapkan penggunaan strategi ini juga dapat meningkatkan kemampuan pemahaman membaca siswa.

Keywords: *reading comprehension, making connections strategy.*

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The Writer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRAK	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
 CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION	
A. Background of the Problem	1
B. Identification of the Problem	5
C. Limitation of the Problem	6
D. Formulation of the Problem	7
E. Purpose of the Study	7
 CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
A. The Nature of Reading Comprehension.....	8
B. <i>Making connections</i> Strategy	12
C. Advantages of “ <i>Making Connections</i> ” Strategy.....	17
D. Teaching Reading Comprehension at Senior High School.....	18
 CHAPTER III. DISCUSSION	
A. Implementing <i>Making Connections</i> Strategy in Teaching Reading Comprehension at Senior High School.....	22
B. Teaching Procedure.....	25
 CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGETIONS	
A. Conclusion	33

B. Suggestions	34
BIBLIOGRAPHY	35
APPENDIX 1	37
APPENDIX 2	43
APPENDIX 3	44
APPENDIX 4	45

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Reading is one of important English skills that has to be mastered by students since it always supports their achievement for now and in the future. It can be seen from there are many conditions which require students to read a lot when they want to be success at school, for example they have to read books, journals and articles as their task. In addition, they have to read when they are taking examination. Furthermore, students also must read a lot when they are doing research in college. Besides, they also have to read when they searching information in the newspapers, internet, magazines and so on. It can be said that students spend most of their time by reading. On the other word, reading is always being part of students' life.

Because of the important of reading skill for students' life, reading becomes a skill that must be taught at school. Nowadays, teaching reading at senior high school is based on kind of texts or genre. There are several types of text that should be learned by students: transactional and interpersonal text, functional text and monologue text. Among all of them, monologue texts are the most difficult type to be understood by students because they are identical a long texts. The longer text are more difficult to be comprehended. Narrative, recount, descriptive, procedure,

report, news item, spoof, explanation, exposition, review, and discussion are belonging to this type.

Even though reading lesson has been given to students, they are still difficult in reaching the main goal of reading which is comprehending texts. Based on the writer observation toward teaching learning reading at Islamic Senior High School 3 Padang, students still have difficulty in comprehending texts that they read, moreover if the text is in English, which is foreign language for them. It could be seen from the fact that they often failed to answer the questions that are constructed based on the text which have been read. Most of students complain about the excessive number of new difficult vocabularies that they found on the text. In order to cope that matter, the teacher gave them bunch of vocabularies before they read or allowed them to open dictionary to find the meaning of the vocabularies. Unfortunately, they still unable to comprehend the text that they have read. Based on Tovani (2000:14) those of students with that problem called as word callers who can decode the word but do not understand or remember what they have read.

Furthermore, some of students have lack of motivation in reading English text. Lack of students' reading motivation is influence their comprehension. Wolley (2011:146) states that the role of motivation toward students' reading comprehension is very important because "the motivation will influence the choices that individuals make about what activity they will engage with, the degree of persistence, and the amount of effort that they will use on given activity. It means that the low of reading motivation will make students do not give more their effort

to get deeper comprehension from the text and affect their reading comprehension become low.

Low of students' reading motivation is proven by many of students avoid to practice reading when the teacher asked them to read the text. They choose to talk with their friends or did something else. According to Tovani (2000:14) those struggling readers are categorized as resistive readers, they can read but they choose not to. They assumed that reading is wasting time because they will not understand what exactly they have read. They have already judged themselves will not understand the text, even before actually reading the text. They also attend to cheating others when they do the exercise or wait teacher explanation.

Next, lack of exercise that students did also affect students' reading comprehension become low. When the teacher asked students to do exercise in the *LKS*, many of students did not try to comprehend the text seriously before answering the questions. In the processing of answer the questions, many students just copied their friends' answer without knowing why those sentences become the answers of the questions. They only cared about their *LKS* has fulfill and they got high score. They did not try to decode the message of the text in the deeper comprehension, so if they were asked about what exactly that they have read, they unable to explain it. Whereas, by doing a lot of exercise will make students trained to understand the text that read, in other words do routine reading exercise will develop their reading comprehension.

Then, the way of teacher present the reading activity also influenced students' reading comprehension ability. Most of teachers just use students' worksheet (*LKS*) as the main source for reading activities. Students are asked to read text in the *LKS* then answered several questions based on the text. This method made reading become boring activity and did not make sense for students because they did not motivate to interact actively with the text that they read. When students did not interact actively with the text, the meaning of the text that they read did not leave an impression for them, so they are easy to forget what they have read and finally they are unable to answer the questions that are constructed based on the text. Because of that, teacher should create interesting and creative reading activities to encourage students' motivation to read a lot.

One of the way to make students enjoy reading activity is by teaching them the available reading comprehension strategy. Hence, this paper offers *making connections* strategy to help students in increasing their reading comprehension. *Making Connections* strategy guide students to comprehend the text through connect what they found on the text to themselves, to the others text which they have read, and to the real world.

Perez et.al. in Herrera, Perez, and Escamilla (2010:135) say that comprehension is more than the ability to decode text. It means that in comprehending text, students do not only translate the word on the text literally but are also demanded to interact with the text and connect what they find in the text with their personal background knowledge. Based on their statement, it can be said

that the role of connecting background knowledge with the students' reading comprehension text is very important.

Through *making connections* strategy, students will be drilled to connect their background knowledge with the text. *Making connections* strategy is in line with the schema theory, which explains what and how someone learns are affected by how their previous experiences, knowledge, emotions, and understanding. McWhorter (p.10) gives an example how a students' trip experience to nearby city influence his understanding about the "Growing Urban Problem" text. His previous experience led him to recall reading about drug problems and so on and it help him to understand the text. In addition, Harvey and Goudvis (2007:11) also point out that students who can make connection between the text that they read with their own lives will more understand about what they have read and considered as good readers. Based on that reason, *Making connection* which always drill students to connect the information in the text with their background knowledge is hoped can develop students' reading comprehension.

Furthermore, by using *making connections* strategy, students will involve their feeling during read. They will more understand about the felling of character in the text. They can also more comprehend the text because they relate what they read in the text with the global issue around them, so they will easy to catch what exactly the writer want to tell on his or her writing because they can imagine it. On the other word, making connections strategy will help students to be critical thinking readers. Students do not only receive the information in the text passively,

but they are also analyzed it through connections that they make. When their critical thinking improves their comprehension also develop as well.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the problems above, the difficulties in reading comprehension are mainly caused by several factors. First, students' lack of motivation in reading text makes them lazy to keep practicing reading. Less of practices that they do will make students have lack of vocabularies and store of knowledge. As a result, it will influence them in comprehending text. Then, lack of reading motivation also make students lazy to the test by them self. It was proven by students 'cheating habit during doing exercises or homework, it causes they do not really do the exercise by themselves, so they are unable to explain what exactly that they have read at the end. Next, reading teaching method that teacher used to still do not motivate students to enjoy reading activity. It can be seen from the reading activity is only about read the text and answer the questions in the *LKS*. Last, students still do not familiar with varieties of reading comprehension strategy that is very useful in improving their ability in comprehending a text. To make the texts become more understandable, teacher needs to teach students the suitable reading comprehension strategy.

C. Limitation of the Problem

This paper is limited to the use of *making connections* strategy in teaching reading comprehension at senior high school.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The problem of this paper can be formulated into “How is the implementation of *making connections* strategy in teaching reading comprehension at senior high school?”

E. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explain how *making connections* strategy can be used in teaching reading comprehension at senior high school.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. CONCLUSION

The existence of reading comprehension is always needed for increasing students' reading comprehension ability. One of those good strategies is *Making connections* strategy. This strategy improves students' reading comprehension through activating their background knowledge. The involving of students' background knowledge during reading the text is very important because it will make them more interested and motivated to read the text. *Making connections* strategy helps students to see the text not only based on the information that are presented by the writer in the text, but they are also demanded to connect the text with their experience, previous knowledge, and the reality around them.

There are three types of connection that students should make when they want to comprehend the text. The first type is Text-to-Self (T-S) connections. In this connection, students have to relate the information in the text with their own experience. For example, after reading the information from the text, it reminds him of a similar event that has ever happened in his life or the information that he gets from the text is different from his life and he compares about it. The next type of connection is Text-to-Text (T-T) connection. Students connect the information on the text with other information from their previous reading. For example, someone has ever read an article which also talks about that topic but the writer offers a different view. The last connection that students make is Text-to-World. This connection makes students see the topic in the text based on the reality in the world.

Through that connecting, students will more involve actively with the text and reading will make sense for them. So, their reading comprehension increase as well.

B. SUGGESTION

For *Making connections* strategy will be more effective, writer suggest several things:

1. Teacher should create motivate classroom' atmosphere. It will make students involve actively in learning teaching process.
2. Teacher has to select interesting text in teaching reading. More interesting and familiar topic that is chosen will make students easy to connect their background knowledge with the information that presented in the text.
3. Teacher is suggested to check the connection that students made to clarify whether the connection is important or not in helping students comprehend the text.
4. Teacher have to master the text before teaching especially when she or he teach students how to apply *Making connections* strategy. When teacher do not understand the text completely, it will make her or him difficult to model how to connect text with self, other text, and the world.
5. There is always a possibility where students find trigger words that distract their attention and cause they make unnecessary inferences. The students should to stop a while and check that word are important for meaning or not.

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