IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY
IN READING COMPREHENSION TEST BY USING SCANNING

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ABSTRACT

Reading is one four major skills in English besides speaking, listening and writing. Most of students who are still poor in English often find difficulties in doing reading comprehension test. Using Scanning technique can improve their ability in it. The aims of using scanning in reading comprehension test are to solve the above problem and to see the effectiveness of it. The subject of the research was the sixth semester students, and the sample taken randomly. To do the research, the writer tried to find data by teaching them about reading comprehension and focusing on scanning. The writer also gave them pre-test and post test and interviewed them informally. After collecting data, the writer analyzed the score of pre-test and post-test. From the result of analysis, it was found that the average scores are 71,35 for pre-test and 87,70 for post-test. It indicates that the application of scanning in reading comprehension test can improve students' ability as well as motivate them in learning English.

KEY WORDS: *scanning*, and *reading comprehension test.*

INTRODUCTION
The Background of the Study

Reading is one of the most important skills besides listening, speaking and writing. It is not only about compound words constructing a sentence but also about comprehension the meaning of the sentences. As Charles and Urguhart (1984: xv) state that reading involves four factors: knowledge of the language, ability to predict or guess in order to make correct choice, ability to remember the previous cues, and ability to make necessary association between the different cues that have been stated.

Currently, many kinds of reading methods are used such as intensive reading, extensive reading, silent reading, reading aloud and speed reading. All of them generally have the same purpose; that is to comprehend the context of reading. The comprehension of the reading is measured by answering some questions which are given together with the reading text. As Barbara (1981: 163) says that a student's success in reading is evaluated by his/her ability and extent of understanding the contents being read.

Some techniques in solving the problems above in comprehending a reading text have ever been implemented, even only for particular group. Those techniques are tachistoscope, clustering, previewing, skimming and scanning. The last technique is the most simple and famous technique used in answering the question of reading comprehension.

This study would elaborate any reading comprehension text by using the scaning techniqe. The writer chose scanning because by using scanning, readers do not need to read the entire text. But they just read special little section. Therefore in a limited time, the students are expected that they can answer the whole questions, understand the reading well and improve their achievement in reading

The Problem of Study

Two research questions that the writer considered important to be searched are:

1. Is scanning technique effective to improve students' ability in answering the questions in reading?
2. What are obstacles faced by students in comprehending the reading text and answering the questions in reading text?

The Objective of the Study

Two objectives of study in this thesis that should be drawn up to ensure the aims of the thesis. They are as follow:

1) To find out whether the scanning is effective to improve students' ability in reading comprehension test.
2) To know what obstacles faced by students in comprehending the reading text and in answering the questions are

DISCUSSION

Definition of Scanning in Reading Comprehension

Wallace (1981: 9) states that reading must be with a purpose, otherwise it will give many negative effects, such as: boredom, lack of comprehension, misunderstanding and simply time waste. Furthermore, Grellet (1981: 3) divides two main reasons for reading, namey for pleasure and for information. Some people read to pass the time, or to keep up-to-date with what is happening in the world, or even just because the teacher/lecturer asks to do. Anyway, this activity needs some skills to apply so that what is read will not be useless.

Reading involves a variety of skills. Grellet (1981: 4-5), quoted John Munby's Communicative Syllabus Design, lists the main ones:

1) Recognizing the script of a language
2) Deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items
3) Understanding explicitly stated information
4) Understanding information when not explicitly stated
5) Understanding conceptual meaning
6) Understanding the communicative value (function) of sentences and utterances
7) Understanding relations within the sentences
8) Understanding relations between the parts of a text through lexical cohesion devices
9) Understanding relations between the parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices
10) Interpreting text by going outside it
11) Recognizing indicators in discourse
12) Identifying the main point or important information in a piece of discourse
13) Extracting salient points to summarize (the text, an idea, etc)
14) Selective extraction of relevant points from a text
15) Basic reference skills
16) Skimming
17) Scanning to locate specifically required information
18) Transcoding information to diagrammatic display

Many kinds of reading methods are used in order to comprehend the text. The famous methods that have been known such as: extensive reading, intensive reading, silent reading, reading aloud, and speed reading. In addition, there are some techniques. They are tachistoscope, clustering, previewing, skimming and scanning (Nuttal, 1989: 38).

1. Tachistoscope; is a one of machines has been designed which force students to read at a given rate, and without regression, by exposing the text only briefly, a bit at a time. This technique can only be practice by using a computer program.

2. Clustering; is a nonlinear activity that generates ideas, images and feelings around a stimulus word. The same thing that a reader can do to get the writer's idea in the text so that he/she can get the point each paragraph tells about.

   There are hundreds of different types of organization in texts. For example, in *scientific text*, as given by Wallace (1981: 28) as one often finds this type of organization:

   Problem   Hypothesis   Experiment   conclusion

   Other type is *chronological* (i.e. things stated one after another in the order that they happened). Many other types of text that can be found in some books (see: Writing Academic English by Alice Oshima & Ann Hogue).

   By knowing the organization of the text, one will have a better idea of where to find the information needed. Furthermore, it will be much easier to make a summary of the text. This technique is called clustering in reading process (Wallace, 1981: 29).

3. Previewing; is generally as a very specific reading technique which involves using the table of contents, the appendix, the preface, the chapter and paragraph heading in order to find out where the required information is likely to be (Grellet, 1981: 4). This technique is commonly used for searching whether or not a book suitable to the reader.

4. Skimming; is reading the text fairly quickly in order to understand the topic and the main points. Grellet (1981: 4) explains skimming is quickly running one's eyes over a text to get gist of it. It means that skimming is searching the information through the text by looking at the whole text.Skimming involves searching for the main ideas by reading first and last paragraph, nothing other organizational clues, such as summaries, used by the author.

5. Scanning; is a method of selective reading that is used when you are searching for a particular fact or answer to a question (McWhorter, 1989: 371). Scanning as based is described as looking rather that a reading process. As you look for the information you need or ignore everything else.

   Garbutt and Sulivan (1996: 4), state 10 points of reading strategies in answering question. One of the points is finding the information needed. This strategy is to find the specific information needed directly without having to read the whole text which is called *scanning*.

All those technique are used for being able to comprehend or understand text. This kind of skill is called reading comprehension. Quant (1997: 110) divides reading comprehension into three levels, namely:

1) Literal comprehension; this is very helpful in involving the readers'/students' understanding and remembering about what the idea of the text.

2) Interpretive comprehension; this is very helpful in involving the readers/students in analyzing about what the author had said and making some decision about it or students conclude it.
3) Critical comprehension; this is focusing on the ability of the readers/students to make some evaluation of reading material. They can give the response to the reading material and make a comparison between the text and their experience.

The Concepts of Scanning in Reading Comprehension Test

Scanning is a technique someone often uses when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary. Reader searches for key words or ideas. In most cases, he knows what you're looking for, so you're concentrating on finding a particular answer. Scanning involves moving his eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases. Scanning is also used when he first finds a resource to determine whether it will answer your questions. Once he has scanned the document, he might go back and skim it.

The purpose is to extract certain specific information without reading through the whole text (Grellet, 1981: 4). By doing scanning, it is aimed that the needed time of searching the information will be more efficient. So, the reader just needs to scan the word he/she needs without looking to all words in the text.

Scanning involves examining the organization of a text to locate specific information. Most people use scanning to read web pages when surfing the internet. When scanning, look for the author's use of organizers such as numbers, letters, steps, or the words, first, second, or next. Look for words that are bold faced, italics, or in a different font size, style, or color. Sometimes the author will put key ideas in the margin.

Scanning has close relation with the graphic convention of a text. Nutall (1989: 42-47) explains about the utilizing non-text information (graphic conventions) as follows:

a. Spacing; indentation; layout.
b. choice of type; Including: choice of type-face (written art), choice of *italic*; **bold**; <u>underlined</u> or standard, choice of type size, choice of capital or small letters.
c. Punctuation; Including: a row of points (…), a dash (-), Quotation ("…"), a colon (:)
d. Symbols

When scanning, look for the author's use of organizers such as numbers, letters, steps, or the words, first, second, or next. Look for words that are bold faced, italics, or in a different font size, style, or color. Sometimes the author will put key ideas in the margin.

Material Reading Test of Scanning

Scanning is a skill that requires that you read quickly while looking for specific information. There must be variety in the range of exercises. This is an important factor in motivation and it is necessary if different skills are to be covered (Grellet, 1981:10). Furthermore, reading can be done as a class activity but reading activities can also be devised to individualize students' work at home.

There are some kinds of scanning test. Here are the simple scanning tests as given by Wallace (1981: 27) and Nuttal (1989: 40)

Exercise 1:

In each line of words below, one word is printed on the left hand side of the vertical dividing line, and the same word is repeated on the right hand side. Your task is to scan for the repeated word and underline it. The first one is done for you. You have 15 seconds to finish the exercise.

1. newspaper   journal-periodical-magazine-<u>newspaper</u>-review-bulletin
2. geology   geometry-psychology-physics-logic-geography-geology
3. anarchism   socialism-conservatism-Marxism-liberalism-anarchism-capitalism

    …

10. Indian   Iranian-Icelandic-Iraqi-Irish-Italian-Indian.

Exercise 2:

Use the index printed. Keep one finger on the index and one on this exercise; quickly check up the page references for the following topics (This exercise should not take more than 90 seconds):

   leadership
   libraries
   household
   Ivory Coast
   Janowitz, M.
   inequality
   Kariba

Other kinds of scanning test are:

Exercise 3:

   Answer the questions below:

1. Look at page 00 and find out when Shakespeare died.
2. How many times does the word *this* occur on this page?
3. (Using a page from an index) On what page is the topic of evaluation mentioned?
4. (Using a page from a telephone dictionary) What is the telephone number of J.A. Brown?
5. (Using an article, possibly one with subtitles) Does this article deal with …? When …. ?

METHODOLOGY

In collecting the data, the writer used two kinds of test namely pre-test and post-test. The writer gave them pre-test in the first meeting. In the next meetings, the writer conducted teaching by applying Scanning technique four sessions of classroom meeting. In every session, the writer gave them a brief explanation about reading comprehension and scanning technique, and then asked them to do some exercise by applying it.

At the last meeting, the writer gave them post-test in order to know if there is any improvement of the students' ability in doing reading comprehension test.

In supporting data collection, informal interview with some students was also held. It was also to know the result of teaching and students' motivation in learning with the technique that had been applied.

RESEARCH RESULT AND FINDING
Analyzing Pre-Test and Post-Test

After conducting the pre-test and post test, the result of the score can be seen as the following table.

Table 4.1 the Row Score of Pre-Test and Post test

No	Reg.No	Score	
		Pre-Test	Post-Test
1	A	100	90
2	B	70	90
3	C	70	100
4	D	90	100
5	E	50	70
6	F	70	70
7	G	40	80
8	H	70	100
9	I	50	70
10	J	80	100
11	K	100	90
12	L	80	80
13	M	70	90
14	N	70	100
15	O	60	100
16	P	60	70
17	Q	40	80
18	R	80	80
19	S	70	90
20	T	90	100

Analysis of Data Pre-Test

After obtaining the students' scores row, then the writer arranged them from the lowest scores to the highest one as follow:

40	40	50	50	60	60	70
70	70	70	70	70	70	80
80	80	90	90	100	100	

As Sudjana (1984: 46) proposes in his book that there are four steps that should be done, those are: determine the range (R), determine how many interval classes that needed (C), determine length of interval classes (P) and decide the beneath point of the interval class.

In determining the range which is symbolized by R, the writer used the formula as bellow:

$R = X_t - X_r$ Which: R: refers to the range of score

X_t : refers to the highest score

X_r : refers to the lowest score

So, Range: $R = X_t - X_r$
                        $R = 100 - 40$ $= 60$

To determine how many classes interval needed, the writer used *Struggles Rule* as revealed by Sudjana (1984: 46):

$C_i = 1 + (3,3) \log n$ Which: C_i : refers to amount of interval classes
                                    n : refers to amount of samples

So, Interval: $C_i = 1 + (3,3) \log n$
                        $C_i = 1 + (3,3) \log 20$
                            $= 1 + (3,3) (1,3020)$
                            $= 1 + 4,2933$
                            $= 5,2933 \quad 5$

From this result, the writer used 5 classes to make the frequency distribution.

To determine the length of interval class which is symbolized by P, it can be used the formula below:

$p = \dfrac{R}{Ci}$ Which: p: refers to the length of interval
                                R: refers to range
                                C_i: refers to interval classes

So, the length interval: $p = \dfrac{R}{Ci}$

                        $p = \dfrac{60}{5} = 12$

The number can be chose 12 or 13 for the length of interval (Sudjana, 1984: 47). In this case, the writer would like to choose 13 as the length of interval in order to make it easier to be counted.

By considering all the calculation above, the frequency distribution list can be seen as in the following table:

Table 4.2 the Frequency Distribution List of Pre-Test

No	Interval Class	X_i	f_i	$X_i.f_i$
1	40 – 52	46	4	184
2	53 – 65	59	2	118
3	66 – 78	72	7	504
4	79 – 91	85	5	425
5	92 - 104	98	2	196
			20	1427

Note: X_i : the middle point of interval class
      f_i : the frequency
      $X_i.f_i$: the amount of multiplication between the middle point and frequency of interval.

The next step is to find out the mean of students' score as follow:

$\bar{x} = \dfrac{\sum fiXi}{\sum fi}$ Which: $\bar{x}$: refers to mean
                                Fi : refers to frequency
                                Xi : refers to middle score of interval class

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum fiXi}{\sum fi}$$

$$= \frac{1427}{20} = 71,35$$

After calculating all pre-test scores, the mean score of this test was obtained 71,35. This is the base average ability of students in reading comprehension test skill before being trained by using scanning.

Analysis of Data Post-Test

The writer arranged the data of post test from the lowest to the highest one as follow:

70	70	70	70	80	80	80
80	90	90	90	90	90	100
100	100	100	100	100	100	

Based on the test score mentioned above, the lowest score is 70 and the highest one is 100 to determine the range score the writer used formula:

$R = X_t - X_r$ Which: R: refers to the range of score

$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ X_t : refers to the highest score

$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ X_r : refers to the lowest score

Range: $\qquad$ $R = X_t - X_r$

$\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $R = 100 - 70 \qquad = 40$

For the total number of interval class, the writer used *Struggles rule* to calculate it as in pre-test calculation.

$C_i = 1 + (3,3) \log n$ Which: C_i : refers to amount of interval classes

$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ n : refers to amount of samples

Interval: $\qquad$ $C_i = 1 + (3,3) \log n$

$\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $C_i = 1 + (3,3) \log 20$

$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $= 1 + (3,3) (1,3020)$

$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $= 1 + 4,2933$

$\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $= 5,2933 \quad 5$

For this calculation, the writer determines the total number of interval class is 5. As Sudjana expresses the result of calculation in determining interval class can be taken the numeral of the result or rounding off of the result figure.

To determine the length of interval class which is symbolized P, it can be used the formula below:

$p = \dfrac{R}{Ci}$ $\qquad$ Which: p: refers to the length of interval

$\qquad\qquad\qquad$ R: refers to range

$\qquad\qquad\qquad$ $C_{i:}$ refers to interval classes

So, the length of interval: $p = \dfrac{R}{Ci}$

$$p = \frac{30}{5} = 6$$

The number can be chose 6 or 7 for the length of interval. In this case, the writer would like to choose 7 as the length of interval in order to make it easier to be counted.

By considering all the calculation above, the frequency distribution list can be seen as in the following table:

Table 4.3 The Frequency Distribution List of Post Test

No	Interval Class	X_i	f_i	$X_i.f_i$
1	70 - 76	73	4	292
2	77 – 83	80	4	320
3	84 – 90	87	5	435
4	91 – 97	94	0	0
5	98-104	101	7	707
			20	1754

Note: X_i : the middle point of interval class
　　　f_i : the frequency
　　　$X_i.f_i$: the amount of multiplication between frequency and middle interval

The next step is to find out the mean of students' score as follow:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum fiXi}{\sum fi}$$

Which: $\bar{x}$: refers to mean
Fi : refers to frequency
Xi : refers to middle score of interval class

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum fiXi}{\sum fi}$$

$$= \frac{1754}{20} \qquad = 87,7$$

After calculating all pre-test scores, the mean score of this test was obtained 87,7. This is the base average ability of students in reading comprehension test skill before being trained by using scanning.

From the data on the table 4.1 the writer tried to analyze in full detail as Gronlund (1993: 143) in his book states:

90 - 100   : excellent
80 - 90   : very good
70 - 79   : good
60 - 69   : enough
Below 60   : unsatisfactory

Table 4.4 the Category of Students' Score

No	Category	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
		f	%	f	%
1	Excellent	4	20	12	60
2	Very Good	3	15	4	20
3	Good	7	35	4	20
4	Enough	2	10	-	0
5	Unsatisfactory	4	20	-	0
	Total	20	100	20	100

It can be seen that there was the significant difference between pre-test and post-test frequency and percentage. In the pre-test, only 4 students (20% of them) had excellent score category, while in the post-test, the amount of students who got excellent increase; 12 students (60% of them). Furthermore, it can be noticed that only 3 (15% of them students got very good score category in the pre-test, while in the post-test there were 4 students (20% of them) got very good score category.

It also can be noticed that in the pre-test, 7 students (35% of them) got good score category, but in the post-test there were only 4 students (20% of them) got good score category.

For enough and unsatisfactory score categories were only found in the pre-test; that is 2 students (10% of them) got enough score and 4 students (20% of them) got unsatisfactory score category, whereas in the post-test, these kinds of score category were not found anymore.

In addition, it can be said that the application of scanning technique in reading comprehension test gives improvement to students' ability in doing reading comprehension test. It can be proved as none of the students got unsatisfactory or enough score category anymore in the post-test, while it was still found in the pre-test.

Data Discussion

Based on the data from interview informally with some students, it is found that The dominant problem in doing reading comprehension test that most of the students faced was the lack of vocabulary. The rest think that the lack of available time was the dominant problem for them.

It can be understood that the available time and vocabulary are the most important things that need to be considered in doing reading comprehension test.

However, from the tests both pre-test and post-test given to the students and questionnaires distributed to them, it indicates that using scanning technique can improve their ability in doing reading comprehension test. In other word we can say that scanning is an effective technique used in doing reading comprehension test.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

After getting the valid data, the writer draws a number of conclusions based on the previous chapters, that:

1. Scanning is an effective technique applied in reading comprehension test. The result of pre-test and pos-test given to the students indicates the increasing of mean scores; in which mean score of pre-test is 71,35 and mean score of post-test is 87,7.
2. Scanning not only can improve students' ability in reading comprehension test, but also can minimize the need of time to do reading comprehension test. In addition, it is also the easiest technique to use.
3. Besides having the advantages, however, scanning also has the disadvantages. In particular sort of question, especially inference question where the answer is not stated directly on the text but must be found out by the reader implicitly, scanning is not a proper technique to apply. Reader has to get other techniques.

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