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## Improving Students' Reading Skills Through Information Gap Activities: An Experimental Research On Second Grade Students Of Sman 1 Woja, Dompu Academic Year 2020/2021

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### Abstrak

The aim of this study was to examine the effectiveness of information gap activities to improve students' reading skills especially skimming and scanning. This study was conducted at the second grade students of SMAN 1 Woja. It was an experimental research using quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test design which were given to the experimental and control group as the participants. The experimental group was XI MIPA 1 which was taught using information gap activities about analytical exposition text, while, the control group was XI MIPA 2 which was taught without using information gap. The result of this study shows that information gap activities has an effect to increase students' reading skills with the mean score obtained by the experimental group 69.35 which was greater than the control group which was 62.5. The t-test result indicated that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected in which at significance 5% t-test was greater than t-table ( $t_o > t_t$ ) which was  $3 > 1.996$  and at significance 1%  $t_o > t_t$  which was  $3 > 2.652$ . It means that there is significant effect of information gap activities to improve students' reading skills. The observation data gained in this research shows that information gap activities provide a cooperative learning environment, help students to remember the information in the text easily, create fun learning atmosphere, and increase vocabulary mastery. The result proved that information gap activities can be the alternative strategy to increase reading skills.

**Keywords:** *reading skills, information gap activities, skimming, scanning.*

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## **A. Introduction**

Reading is one of English language skills that is important to be mastered by the students, besides listening, speaking and writing. Reading skill is very important to build up communication which is the ultimate goal of language teaching and learning process. Mastering reading skills is very necessary considering that in the syllabus and curriculum students are expected to be able to capture contextual meaning about various genres of texts. According to Surkamp and Vierbrock (2018), reading is the process of receiving information from a text with different processes of comprehension which takes place simultaneously. It is an activity to take the information contained in reading from books, newspaper, electronic media, and so on (Hidayati, Amin, & Lestari, 2020).

Reading is a synthesis of various processes which then accumulate in a single action (Harras, Priyatni, & Harsiati, 2014). Reading should be viewed as an active experience, that is, an activity carried out consciously and has a purpose. The main purpose of reading is to obtain information which can be in the form of details or facts, the order or organization of stories, conclusion, classification, evaluation, comparison, etc. After the information is obtained the reader will follow up with the actions which can be in the form of concluding activities, assessing, and comparing the content of the reading. In order to capture the information in the text properly, students need to increase their reading skills, such as skimming and scanning. It is also important for students to share the information they get, making it easier for them to understand the contents of the text and sort out the important information contained in the text. Student should be able to sort out any necessary information in a text because most of the English language tests, especially for students, are in the form of reading comprehension tests.

However, based on the researcher's preliminary observation in SMAN 1 Woja, especially on the second grade students, there are still many students who seem unable to comprehend the information in reading texts properly. This problem can further affect their ability to answer the questions

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in English tests, especially reading comprehension tests. Therefore, it is necessary to apply English teaching strategies that can stimulate students to read a lot and to interact each other to find and share information that they read. In order to do this, some experts suggest to use information gap activities as the alternative strategy. Information gap activity gives the opportunity for each student to enhance their own English skills and share the information that they have been read and share their thought and understanding. This activity entails the transfer of information from one student to the other (Sujana, 2012).

In general, information gap activities have been mostly implemented to increase speaking skills. Information gap activities help students to be confident in speaking class and increase their speaking performance without using many notes of memorizations (Putri, 2014:68). However, information gap activities can also be used to teach reading skills. As Harmer (1991) cited in Fatrina et al (2015:4) states that one of the information gap advantages is that it not only serves to teach productive skills but also receptive skills. Students' literal comprehension in reading skill is improved by information gap activities (Abduh, 2013). Therefore, this study attempts to find the effect of information gap activities to the students' reading skills focusing on skimming and scanning and how it improved.

Regarding to these issues, this study is aimed (1) to identify the effectiveness of information gap activities implementation towards the improvement of students' reading skills in their English class; and (2) to examine how information gap activities improve the students' reading skills at the second grade students of SMAN 1 Woja.

## **B. Research Methods**

This study was an experimental research in the form of quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test design to gain the data. Pre-test was given before applying the treatment and the post-test was given after the treatment. This study was conducted at SMAN 1 Woja. The population of this study was the second grade students of SMAN 1 Woja which consisted of seven classes. The researcher took two classes

among the seven classes as the sample of this study. There were a total of 70 samples which involved 36 students from XI MIPA 1 as the experimental group and 34 students from XI MIPA 2 as the control group. Both groups were given the same pre-test and post-test.

**Table 1. The Treatment of Experimental and Control Group**

| <b>Groups</b>    | <b>Pre-test</b> | <b>Treatment</b>                                | <b>Post-test</b> |
|------------------|-----------------|---|------------------|
| Experiment group | X1              | Taught using information gap activities         | X2               |
| Control group    | Y1              | Taught without using information gap activities | Y2               |

The data were collected using three techniques of collecting data that were pre-test, post-test and observation. The pre-test was given to know the students' basic knowledge and was considered as the preliminary data. It was a reading comprehension test consisted of 15 multiple choice questions. The questions were related to the general information such as main idea, topic of the text, etc., detailed information such as names, places, objects, phrases, etc., structure of the text, and vocabulary similar meaning. The post-test was given to both treatment and control groups after the teaching and learning process. This test aimed to measure the students' achievement after the treatment.

It was a reading comprehension test which testing the ability of students to find out the general and specific information of the text, classifying the text structure and vocabulary opposite meaning. The test was consisted of 15 questions in the form of multiple choices. The result of pre-test and post-test was analyzed using statistical calculation of t-test adapted from Sudijono (2008) cited in Nuraeni (2014) to find whether or not information gap activities has significant effect to improve students' reading skills. It included of calculating the standard deviation of both variable X

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(experimental group) and variable Y (control group), standard error mean of both variable X and Y, standard error from mean of variable X and Y, calculating the t-observation, degree of freedom and t-test.

Determining the mean score adapted from Sugiyono (2017) cited in Widiawati (2019):

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

M = the mean score

$\sum x$  = the total of score got by the students

N = the number of students

The observation technique was conducted to evaluate how the information gap activities increase the students' reading skills. The researcher observed the teaching and learning process while the treatment of information gap activities is given to the students. The teaching and learning process was recorded. The observation was guided by an observation sheet that the researcher developed. It was in the form of checklist table using Guttman scale cited in Alberti (2014) which consist of two options that were yes and no. The checklist was also equipped with additional columns to note and record detailed information from the observation checklist data. The data was analyzed using several steps proposed by Gay, Mills and Airasian (2012:467-468) such as collecting data, reading/memoing, describing, classifying, and interpreting.

### **c. Findings and Discussion**

#### **1. Research Question I: Is information gap activities implementation effective towards the improvement of students' reading skills?**

After conducting the treatments, the pre-test result showed that both the experimental class and the control class get relatively low scores. This indicated that the students' reading skill were still low. However, after the treatment was applied to the experimental class, the students' reading skills improved. According to the data

obtained, the students who were taught using information gap activities performed better than those who were not taught using information gap activities. It is evidenced by the result of the post-test in which the students' scores increase with a total gained score of 893. It was greater than the total of post-test score achieved by the control class which was 771.

The mean score of experimental class was greater than the control class which taught without information gap activities. The mean score of experimental class was 69.35 while the mean score of control class was 62.5. The standard deviation of experimental class was 12.41 with standard error mean of 2.16. In the control class, the standard deviation was 10.81 and the standard error mean was 1.88. Furthermore, the researcher calculated the standard error from mean of both classes which was 0.52. The calculation of t-observation was 13.17.

In order to calculate the t-test, the researcher counted the correlation coefficient of variable X and Y which was 0.29. The result of t-test was 3 with the degree of freedom (df) of 66. Therefore, the t table ( $t_t$ ) at significance 5% is 1.996 and the t table ( $t_t$ ) at significance 1% is 2.652. The result obtained is that  $t_o > t_t$ . It can be seen at significance 5%  $t_o > t_t$  which is  $3 > 1.996$  and at significance 1%  $t_o > t_t$  which is  $3 > 2.652$ . It can be concluded that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and  $H_0$  is rejected. It means that there is significant effect of information gap activities implementation on the students' reading skills.

As a whole, the teaching and learning activities ran well. The students actively participated and cooperated during the three treatments. Students worked together in pairs and groups to complete a text that has several blank charts or information by exchanging the information with other students so that they got a text with complete information. Afterwards, the students reread the text with the information they had been completed and then answered some questions related to the content of the text. In addition, the researcher also provided tasks during each treatment. Students were asked to complete

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worksheets about analytical exposition text in which students were able to classify the structure of the analytical exposition text such as thesis statement, arguments and conclusion/reiteration correctly. They completed the worksheets properly and answer some questions provided related to the general and specific information about the given texts along the treatments.

## **2. Research Question II: How do information gap activities improve the students' reading skills at the second grade students of SMAN 1 Woja?**

Based on the observation data, students showed positive responses to the application of information gap activities. The result of the observation data were classified into some themes as follows:

### **a) Information gap activities provide a cooperative learning environment.**

Information gap activities provided a cooperative learning environment where students work together with their partner and group during the teaching and learning process. Alberti (2014:60) states that when students worked in pairs or groups, they were able to benefit from social learning theories that taught them how to improve their social interactions with others. The interaction of students went very well during the treatments were carried out. They helped each other, those who already understand helped their friends who did not understand yet, had serious group discussions, cooperated with each other, and gave awards to their friends who answered questions correctly by clapping their hands lively and enthusiastically.

### **b) Information gap activities help students remembering the information easily.**

Information gap activities allowed students to work cooperatively to exchange information they get with other students in order to complete the text. By exchanging the information, students were able to comprehend the content of the text because they should read the text carefully to find the missing part of the text as well as the suitable information. By

exchanging the information, students also were able to remember the information they had filled easily. It gave them a sense of "I have seen this before" so that they can find the answer of reading comprehension questions related to the text provided. This Sense helped them to skim and scan information in text well. It was proven by the improvement of the number of students who were able to answer the teacher's questions related to the given text correctly and completed their students' worksheet properly along the treatments.

**c) Information gap activities create fun learning atmosphere.**

During the treatments in this research, students were motivated to be more active in the class because they have many activities to do. Thus, students were not got bored easily. They enjoy their teaching and learning process and actively participated in class. This can be seen from the students' activities during the treatments. In the first treatment students were still learning to understand the material about analytical exposition text being taught, yet their enthusiasm was pretty good from the start. In the second treatment with different texts and type of information gap activities than the first treatment, students became more active in participating in discussions, asking questions and answering student worksheets properly and correctly. In the last treatment, only a few students sometimes did not participate in class. Most of them were very enthusiastic about reading and answering the questions provided.

**d) Information gap activities increase vocabulary mastery.**

Information gap activities help students enrich their English vocabulary so that they can use it to communicate using English language in their daily life inside and outside of school. Information gap activities can also be used to reinforce vocabulary and



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grammatical structures that have been taught in class (Abduh, 2013:71). During the three treatments, the researcher provided texts with interesting topics in which each text was equipped with a vocabulary section that can help students understand the content of the text easily.

### **C. Conclusion**

The result of hypothesis testing showed the significant effect of information gap activities in increasing students reading skills especially skimming and scanning with the reading comprehension pretest and post-test given to both control and experimental class. The result achieved from the t-test calculation that  $t_0$  was 3. Furthermore, the t-table ( $t_t$ ) at significance of 5% was 1.996 and  $t_t$  at significance 1% is 2.652. The result obtained was that t-test was greater than t-table ( $t_0 > t_t$ ). It could be seen at significance 5%  $t_0 > t_t$  which was  $3 > 1.996$  and at significance 1%  $t_0 > t_t$  which was  $3 > 2.652$ . So that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected. It means that information gap activity is effective to improve students' reading skills.

The observation data gained in this research shows that information gap activities provide a cooperative learning environment in which students work together with their partner and group during the teaching and learning process. It helps students to remember the information in the text easily by giving a sense of "I have seen this before" so that students can find the information easily and answer of reading comprehension questions related to the text. It also creates fun learning atmosphere that motivated the students to participate more in the class because they have a lot things to do. During the treatments, Information gap activities stimulated the students to actively discussed with their partner and groups, seek and shared their information, completed the missing part of information in the given text and answered related question about the text. Thus, students became very excited during the teaching and learning process. Finally, information gap activities increase vocabulary mastery.

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