LITRAYA-TOP-DOWN: A MODEL IN TEACHING READING

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WORD COUNT 6178
TIME SUBMITTED 20-OCT-2020 10:44PM
PAPER ID 64272289

Diterbitkan oleh
Fakultas Sastra, Budaya dan Ilmu Komunikasi
Universitas Ahmad Dahlan Yogyakarta
Alamat: Jl. Pramuka No. 42 Sidikan Yogyakarta 55161

ISSN: 1412-8268

LITRAYA Jurnal Sastra dan Budaya Vol. 8, No. 1, Agustus 2015

ISSN: 1412-8268 Vol. 8, No. 1, Agustus 2015

LITRAYA

Jurnal Sastra dan Budaya

JURNAL LITRAYA

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LITRAYA, Vol. 8, No. 1, Agustus 2015 ISSN: 1412-8268

Diterbitkan oleh Fakultas, Sastra, Budaya dan Ilmu Komunikasi
Universitas Ahmad Dahlan Yogyakarta

Daftar Isi

ISSN: 1412-8268 LITRAYA, Vol. 6, No. 1, Agustus 2014, hal. 46-53

LITRAYA, Vol. 8, No. 1, Agustus 2015, hal. 22-33 ISSN: 1412-8268

TOP-DOWN: A MODEL IN TEACHING READING

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the teacher's strategies teaching reading of sixth grade students. Specially, it sought to answer following questions: (1) What are the teaching strategies in reading adopted by the teacher? (2) Are the teaching strategies effective in the teaching reading process? (3) Is the top-down model can be designed by the teacher in teaching reading? The researcher conducted the study to the twelve intermediate teachers to determine the teachers' strategies in teaching reading by using the descriptive research as the research method. The findings showed that: first, all of the respondents used top - down model as the strategies in teaching reading. Second, the general weighted mean of the teacher strategies was 4.22. It means that the teachers' strategies in teaching reading were very effective. Third, an observation and validation of the teachers' responses showed that top-down model can be designed in teaching reading.

Keywords: *Teaching Reading, Teachers' Strategies, Top-Down model*

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A. Introduction

1. Reading

Reading is cognitive process. Making sense of text involves complete control by both the readers and the writers of how language works and how texts are constructed (Goodman, 1967). In order to read with mastery, one must utilize a predictive strategy originated from pre-existing knowledge of vocabulary, language structure, phonics and rhytm in order to answer the question: "what does the text say?" if the brain is focused on any other goals, is not using a predictive strategy, and/or is not integrating an appropriate mix of information at any given moment in the reading act, some degree of reading problems will be experienced the reading will not be fluent, comprehension will be poor, reading speed will be slow, and/or retention information will be impaired (Smith, 1996). Reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their background knowledge which need reading strategies to build meaning (Anderson, 2003). Reading is kind of dialogue between the reader and the text. This interactive process of reading reflects that a reader should toil hard to draw meaning out of a text employing different reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, predicting, etc. Hence, in this process of reading, there is active interpretive interaction between the reader, the writer and the next (Grabe in Melkamu, 2002). Grabe also sad that "reading can be seen as active process of comprehending where student needs to be taught strategies to read more efficiently, for example, guess from context, define expectations, make inferences about the text, skim ahead to fill in the context, etc" (1991: 377). Herber

(1970) stated that reading is means of language acquisition, communication and of sharing information and ideas. Like all languages, it is a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experience, attitude and language community which is culturally and socially stuated. Nicholas (1998) stated that Reading is a complex process, it is not about identifying words but it is aliso about understanding the text art identifying information of the text.

2. Teachers' strategies

Wenden (1987 cited in Alderson 2000) notes that the strategies have been labeled differently in the literature and goes on to list the following: techniques, tactics, potentially conscious plans, consciously employed opertions, learning skills, basic skills, functional skills, cognitive abilities, language processing strategies and problem-solving procedures. Brown (2007, p. 119) define strategies as the "specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information". Brown (2001) pointed out that "reading comprehension is a matter of developing appropriate, efficient comprehension strategies". He proposed some principal strategies for reading comprehension, namely:

a. Identify the purpose in reading
b. Use graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up reading
c. Use different silent reading techniques for relatively rapid reading
d. Skim the text for main idea
e. Scan the text for specific information
f. Use semantic mapping or clustering
g. Guess when you aren't certain
h. Analyze vocabulary
i. Distinguish between literal and mplied meanings
j. Capitalize on discourse markers to process relationships

Pani defined reading strategies as "the mental operations involved when readers approach a text effectively to make sense of what they read …. Good readers apply more strategies frequently….. and more effectively than poor readers" (Pani 2004). Among the learning strategies cited in the literature, there are three main theories which explain the nature of learning to read. The first traditional strategies or bottom-up processing which focused on the printed form of a text, novice readers acquire a set of hierarchically ordered sub-skills that sequentially build toward comprehension knowledge in addition to what appeared on the printed page, on the other hand relate to the specific contexts and learning tasks and the meta-cognitive strategies which is based on the control and manipulation that a reader can have on the act of comprehending a text, concerned with monitoring, or watching, and evaluating the success of the learning process and thus emphasizes the involvement or the reader's thinking about what he is doing while reading are most relevant to reading (Dale et al, 1991). King (1998) stated that Reading comprehension has five components, these are:

a. Finding factual information
b. Finding main idea
c. Finding the meaning of vocabulary in context
d. Identifying references
e. Making inferences

3. *Top-Down Model*

"A reading model is theory of what is going on in the reader's eyes and mind during reading and comprehending or miscomprehending of text" (Davies, 1995). Models nof the reading process try to explain and predict reading behavior. They are te bases on which reading instructions are built which the models are bottom- up and top – down. The proposed study focuses on the analysis of one main model of reading that is top-down model. A top-down reading model is reading approach that emphasizes what the reader brings to the text, it contends that reading is driven by meaning and proceeds from whole to part. It is also known as concept-driven model. To these theorists (e.g. Goodman. 1967; Smith, 1971), efficient reading doesn't result from the precise perception and identification of all the elements in a word, but from skills in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary. They contend that readers have a prior sense of what could be meaningful in the text, based upon their previous experiences and their knowledge about language. Readers are not, in their view, confined only to one source of information—the letters before their eyes, but have their disposal two other important kinds of information which are available at the same time: semantic cues (meaning), and syntactic cues (grammatical or sentence sense). Thus, what readers bring to the text separately in terms of both their prior knowledge of the topic and their knowledge about the language assists them in predicting what the upcoming words will be. Readers sample the print, assign a tentative hypothesis about the identity of the upcoming word and use meaning to confirm their prediction. If meaning is constructed, readers resample the text and form a new hypothesis. Thus readers need to only briefly sample the marks on the page in order to confirm word identity. In this model is evident that the flow of information proceeds from the top downward so that the process of word identification is dependent upon meaning first. Thus the higher level processes embodied in past experiences and the reader's knowledge of the language pattem interact with and direct the flow of informations, just as listeners may anticipate what the upcoming words of speaker might be. This view identifies reading as a kind of :psycholinguistic guessing game" (Goodman, 1967).

3.1. Top-Down Model Process

Top-down reading models teach students to read by introducing them to literature as a whole, instead of teaching students to read by sounding out each word in a sentence. Students begin to use context clues to decipher unfamiliar words. Top-down model are defined as general strategies or global strategies for readers to predict text content, set a goal for reading, and monitor their reading process (Block, 1986a; Block 1992 and Cheng, 1998, Sheorey&Mokhtari, 2001a). Top-down model is characterized, presented reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game, a process in which readers sample the text, make hypotheses, confirm or reject them, make new hypotheses, and so forth. Here, the reader rather than the text is at the heart of the reading process (Goodman (1967; cited in Paran, 1996). The top-down reading model theory encourages students to focus more on understanding the main ideas of a passage than understanding every word. Even if students do not understand each word, they are likely to grasp the meaning of a text as a whole. The top-down reading model encourages students to rely on their own knowledge and use context clues to understand new concepts or words. Readers handle the reading text through their pre-existing schemata in place of identifying each new word (Hsu, 2009a). The top-down model emphasizes the importance of schemata, namely previous experience and background

knowledge in understanding the literary work (Xia, 2011a), In this vein, readers with common knowledge of the world are able to "predict" the meaning of the reading text, verify or decline the previous guesses, and ultimately, understand the text by way of an influential and constructive reading process (Aebersold&Field, 1997). Top-down Processing in Reading the uptake of information guided by an individual's prior knowledge and expectations. In this view, reading is not just extracting meaning from a text but a process of connecting information in the text with the knowledge the reader bings to the act of reading. In this sense, reading is a dialogue between the reader and the text which involves an active cognitive process in which the reader's background knowledge plays a key role in the creation of meaning (Tierney and Pearson, 1994). Reading is not a passive mechanical activity but purposeful and rational, dependent on the prior knowledge and expectations of the reader. It is not merely a matter of decoding print to sound but also matter of making sense of written language (Smith, 1994: 2).

B. Related Studies

The literature and previous studies were all related to the present study and provided the research with significant information. The researcher used some of the researches from foreign and local studies to support the present undertaking. The literature and studies were gathered here to determine the relationship of the present claim against the previous studies.

Some of foreign studies that were Hassan Soleimani and Sajadeh Hajghani entitled "The Effect of Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies on Iranian EFL Pre-University Students Reading Comprehension Ability", Madoda Cekiso entitled "reading comprehension and strategy awareness of grade 11 English second language learners', Rebecca J. Baie "reading comprehension and reading strategies", Emma Karoline Norman Johansen entitled "Reading Strategies in Upper Secondary School", Fang Liu entitled "A Short Analysis of the Nature of Reading", Michael Dambacher entitled "Bottom-up and top-down processes in reading "while some of local studies were Nurlaili Tin entitled "A study on Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension at the Second Grade Student's MTs Tarbiyatul Ulum Panggungasri Panggungrejo Blitar Academic Year 2013/2014", Nurman Antoni entitled "Exploring EFL Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension: A Case Study at a Junior High School in Riau", Ichtiarti, Amin Cahyan entitled "the Effect of Teaching Reading using Top-Down and Bottom-Up Model an Reading Skill of the Second Year Students of SMPN 2 Mojogedang in Academic Year 2007/2008", were these authors dealt with a study on strategies in teaching-learning of reading which could help students or readers a lot in the learning process of reading activities. All of those studies were similar to the present undertaking research but the different were this studied had different analysis and style in reading.

C. Methodology

Research Design

The descriptive research method was used in this study. Descriptive research is defined as a purposive process of gathering, analyzing and tabulating data gathered about prevailing conditions, practices, beliefs and trends. Specifically, descriptive research involved collection of data in order to answer questions in this study. Thus this research is conducted for the purpose to describe systematically about the fact and characteristic of the subject (the teacher of USANT Montessori School) accurately and their teaching strategies in reading.

Data Gathering Tools

The main instrument used in data gathering was the questionnaire checklist supplemeted by informal interview and personal observation. Library technique was likewise employed to gather secondary sources of data for the study.

Questionnaire. A research instrument.consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. It serves four basic purposes: to (1) collect the appropriate data, (2) make data comparable and amenable to analysis, (3) minimize bias in formulating and asking question, and (4) to make questions engaging and varied[2]. In this study, the questionnaire checklist was utilized to determine the teaching strategies in reading. This was done after reading different sudies retaled to the present study, which guided the researcher in preparing the questionnaire. The questionnaires constructed in this study were based from several sources from the internet. It consisted of teachers' strategies with 25 items and to identify the strategy that teachers used in teaching reading.

Validation of the questionnaire. The main data gathering tool was the questionnaire. It was based from the specific questions. It was shown to her adviser for connections. After it was corrected, copies were retrieved, the responses were analyzed. There was a minor change noted and suggested. It was a suggestion to put the options after each item and not before the item. This was to facilitate indicating the response.

Administration and retrieval the questionnaire. The researcher sougth the permission of the principal of the school to allow the researcher to conduct the study among the target of respondents in the school. Upon approval of the request, the researcher made the necessary coordination and schedules to be able to administer the questionnaire the respondents.

Observation. A way of gathering data by watching behavior, events, or noting physical characteristics in their natural setting. Observations can be overt (everyone knows they are being observed) or covert (no one knows they are being observed and the observer is concealed). Observation can also be either direct or indirect. *Direct observation* is when you watch interactions, processes, or behavior as they occur; for example, observing a teacher teaching a lesson from a written curriculum to determine whether they are delivering it with fidelity. *Indirect observation* is when you watch the results of interactions, processes, or behaviors; for example measuring the amount of plate waste left by students in a school cafeteria to determine whether a new food is acceptable to them[3]. In the study, the observation process can be categorized in direct observation as it was conducted during the teaching process of English in the classroom, and the observer becomes a part of the field in which the subjects are observed so that they can provide a view from the inside because the view from within may be very different from the view from without.

Interview. A meeting of two persons to exchange information and idea through and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic. Interview can be viewed as method of data collection by way of question and answer undertaken unilaterally by systematic and based on the purpose of the investigation. There are four kinds of interview used specifically as research tools, namely (a) unstructured interview. In this type, the interviewer carries out the interview with no sysmatic plan of question, (b) structured interview. The interview carries out the interview by using set questions arranged in advance, (c) non-directive interview, (d) focused interview. For the

purpose of educational research usually only the first two are used[4]. In this the researcher used structured interview. The interview will be done with he English teacher after finishing the teaching and learning process. This interview is conducted to gain a direct response from the participants. The functions of the interview in this research are to cross-check the data and to make sure that the data from the observation were really valid. In this study, the interview was conducted to verily the responses of the teachers in the given questionnaire.

The library technique. Likewise utilized in order to gather pertinent information from books, journals and other existing document-based researches. Likewise, the researcher also gathered information available in the internet for significant data which show bearing to the research.

D. Stastical Tools

The following statistical tools used to analyze data were the percentage technique and the weighted mean. These used to determine the curricular validity of the instructional material, entitled "Top-Down: a Model in Teaching Reading".

a. Percentage technique. This was used to determine the proportionate number of respondents who answer a particular question, or in quantifying the responses.

The formula is:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$$

Where:

P = percent

f = number of responses

N = total number of respondents

b. Weighted Mean. The researcher utilized the weighted mean to determine if the teaching strategies were curricuarly valid. The formula is:

$$WM = \frac{\Sigma Fx}{N}$$

Where:

WM = weighted mean

ΣFx = sum of all strategies of each weight

N = total number of respondents

In order to easily qualifying, interpreting, and determining weighted mean with the range:

Table 1

Scale and Weighted Mean

Scale	Range	Description
5	4.20 – 5.00	Very Effective
4	3.41 – 4.19	Effective
3	2.61 – 3.40	Moderately Effective
2	1.81 – 2.60	Less Effective
1	1.00 – 1.79	Least effectice

The table above shows the possible least eefective strategies and the possible very effective strategies in teaching strategies.

E. Findings

Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading

Based from the finding, there are some strategies that were used by the teacher in teaching reading. These are prepare students to skim by asking them to recognize the key sentences of a passage, conduct a discussion on the topic to enhance students' comprehension, ask students to read carefully/intensive reading in order they get the information correctly, ask students to make hypotheses about the text, require sudents to transfer information from a continuous text, ask students to identifying the purpose of reading. Invite students' participation, ask students to integrate the text with their priorn knowledge, give true/false or multiple-choice exercises in order to enhance comprehension, involve students into role-play, teach students to employ mind-mapping techniques, make guessing game related to the reading text, ask students drawing conclusion, ask students to predict the meaning of an unknown word from the context, ask students to memorize new words and expressions, ask students to look unknown words up in the dictionary, interrupt the reading process and ask students to predict the following events, conduct mistake correction when the reading process, conduct the reading speed (scanning and skimming), ask students to write a summary about the text, inform students about the topic of the passage, give pre-reading activities to the students, ask students to guess the meaning of the text and ask students trying to locate a topic sentence and follow supporting detail toward a contusion. These strategies used by the teacher in teaching reading are very effective, because these strategies the pupils can comprehend the material easily.

Based on the percentage show on table 2, all of the respondents in Montessori School used Skim by asking them to recognize key sentences of a passage, conduct a discussion on the topic to enhance students' comprehension, invite students' participation, give pre-reading activities to the students, make guessing game related to the reading text and ask students drawing conscious as strategies in teaching reading. Ask students to make hypotheses about the test ranked 7th, involve students into role-play ranked 8th, followed by ask students to predict the meaning of an unknown word from the context and ask students to look unknown words up in the dictionary ranked 9.5th, conduct mistake correction when the reading process, conduct the reading speed (scanning and skimming), ask students to write a summary about the ranked 11.5th, and one of the respondents choose, ask students trying to locate a topic sentence and follow supporting details toward a conclusion as strategy in teaching reading in Montessori School.

It can be deduced based from the foregoing findings that Montessori teachers of USANT make used of a variety of strategies in teaching reading to elementary students. The Montessori teachers frequently utilize these strategies peer, the reason that these strategies are part and parcel of the every meeting cyde of teaching. The teachers role are to prepare students to skim by asking them to recognize the key sentences of a passage, conduct a discussion on the topic to enhance students' comprehension, invite students' participation, give pre-reading activities to the students, make guessing game related to the reading text and ask students drawing conclusions.

Table 2
The Teaching Strategies Adopted by Montessori Teachers in Reading

No	Strategies	F	%	Rank
1	Prepare students to skim by asking them to recognize the key sentences of a passage	12	100%	3.5
2	Conduct a discussion on the topic to enchance students' comprehension	12	100%	3.5
3	Ask students to make hypotheses about the text	10	83%	7
4	Ask students to predict the meaning of an unknown word from the context	6	50%	9.5
5	Ask students to look unknown words up in the dictionary	6	50%	9.5
6	Conduct mistake correction when the reading process	4	33%	11.5
7	Conduct the reading speed (scanning and skimming)	4	33%	11.5
8	Ask students to write a summary about the text	4	33%	11.5
9	Ask students trying to locate a topic sentence and follow supporting details toward a conclusion	0	0%	13
10	Invite students' participation	12	100%	3.5
11	Give pre-reading activities to the students	12	100%	3.5
12	Involve students into role-play	8	67%	8
13	Make guessing game related to the reading text	12	100%	3.5
14	Ask students drawing conclusions	12	100%	3.5

The Effectiveness of Teaching Strategies in the Reading Process

The strategies used by the teacher in teaching reading are very effective, because with these strategies the students can comprehend the material easily.

Table 3
Mean Responses of the Effectiveness of Reading Strategies in Teaching Reading

No	Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1	Prepare students to skim by asking them to recognize the key sentences of a passage	4.59	VE
2	Conduct a discussion on the topic to enchance students' comprehension	4.59	VE
3	Ask students to read carefully/intensive reading in order they get the information correctly	4.50	VE
4	Ask students to make hypotheses about the text	4.50	VE
5	Ask students to predict the meaning of an unknown word from the context	4.17	E
6	Ask students to memorize new words and expressions	4.09	E
7	Require students to transfer information from a continuous text	4.33	VE
8	Ask students to look unknown words up in the dictionary	3.42	E
9	Ask students to identifying the purpose of reading	4.33	VE
10	Interrupt the reading process and ask students to predict the following events	4.00	E

11	Conduct mistake correction when the reading process	3.92	E
12	Conduct the reading speed (scanning and skimming)	4.00	E
13	Ask students to write a summary about the text	3.76	E
14	Inform students about the topic of the passage	4.00	E
15	Ask students trying to locate a topic sentence and follow supporting details toward a conclusion	2.76	ME
16	Invite students' participatiom Ask students to integrate the text with their prior knowledge	4.42	VE
17	Give pre-reading activities to the students	4.59	VE
18	Require students to transfer information from a continuous	4.17	E
19	text to some kind of grid or matrix	4.67	VE
20	Give true/false or multiple-choice exercise in order to enhance comprehension Involve students into role-play	4.59	VE
21	Teach students to employ mind-mapping techniques	4.26	VE
22	Make guessing game related to the reading text	4.33	VE
23	Ask students to guess the meaning of the text	4.59	VE
24	Ask students drawing conclusions	4.00	E
25		4.83	VE
	General Weighted Mean	**4.22**	**Very Effective**
Legend: 4.20 – 5.00: VE, 3.40 – 4.19: E, 2.60 – 3.39: ME, 1.80 – 2.69: LE, 1.00 – 1.79: LE			

There were 14 indicators (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25) that indicated the teachers strategies were very effective. These include Prepare students to skim by asking them to recognize the key sentences of a passage, conduct a discussion on the topic to enhance students' comprehension, ask students to read carefully/intensive reading in order they get the information correctly, ask students to make hypotheses about the text, require students to transfer information from a continuous text, ask students to identifying the purpose of reading, invite students' participation, ask students to integrate the text with their prior knowledge, give true/false or multiple-choice exercises in order to enhance comprehension, involve students into role-play, teach students to employ mind-mapping techniques, make guessing game related to the reading text, ask students drawing conclusions Moreover, 10 indicators (5, 6, 8,10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 24) were rated effective that are ask students to predict the meaning of an unknown word from the context, ask students to memorize new words and expressions, ask students to look unknown words up in the dictionary, interrupt the reading process and ask students to predict the following events, conduct mistake correction when the reading process, conduct the reading speed (scanning and skimming), ask students to write a summary about the text, inform students about the topic of the passage, give pre-reading activities to the students, ask students to guess the meaning of the text, then 1 indicator (15) indicated that the teachers strategy was moderately effective that is ask students trying to locate a topic sentence and follow supporting details toward a conclusion. None of the respondents perceived that the reading strategies were not effective.

The general weighted mean of the teacher strategies was 4.22. It means that the teachers' strategies in teaching reading were very effective. Those strategies can make students active and easy to comprehend text in reading.

F. Top-Down Model in Teaching Reading

For English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learner, reading is seen as a complicated process because they usually don't have enough language background and knowledge that they can bring to the task of acquiring literacy as first language learners do. Therefore, reading comprehension must be taught directly with modeling strategies to reveal how reading can be interesting and enthusiastic activity. A well planned comprehension for reading text involves directly teaching reading strategies. In this case, the teachers can use top-down model to improve the students reading comprehension.

An observation and validation of the teachers' responses on the top-model designed in reading, the researcher found out that Prepare students to skim by asking them to recognize the key sentences of a passage, conduct a discussion on the topic to enhance students' comprehension, ask students to make hypotheses about the text, ask students to predict the meaning of an unknown word from the context, conduct the reading speed (scanning and skimming), ask students to write a summary about the text, invite students' participation, give pre-reading activities to the students, involve students into role-play, make guessing game related to the reading text, and ask students drawing conclusions.

Based on the observation and questionnaire checklist, top-down model can be designed by the teachers in teaching reading. It was shown on the table 4 below.

Table 4

Top-down model's designed by the teacher

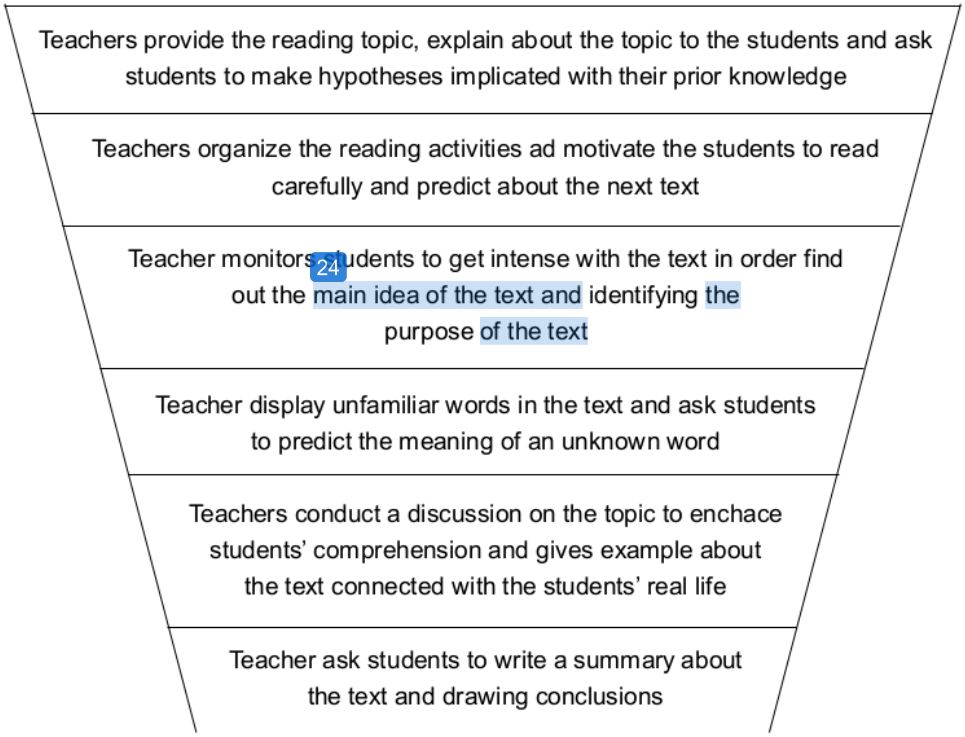
No	Strategies	F	%	Rank
1	Prepare students to skim by asking them to recognize the key sentences of a passage	12	100%	3.5
2	Conduct a discussion on the topic to enchance students' comprehension	12	100%	3.5
3	Ask students to make hypotheses about the text	10	83%	7
4	Ask students to predict the meaning of an unknown word from the context	6	50%	9.5
5	Conduct the reading speed (scanning and skimming)	4	33%	11.5
6	Ask students to write a summary about the text	4	33%	11.5
7	Invite students' participation	12	100%	3.5
8	Give pre-reading activities to the students	12	100%	3.5
9	Involve students into role-play	8	67%	8
10	Make guessing game related to the reading text	12	100%	3.5
11	Ask students drawing conclusions	12	100%	3.5

The data above showed that most all of the teachers in the USANT Montessori Grade School designed top-down model in teaching reading because top- down model can make students comprehend the text earlier. To use e top-down model in teaching reading, the teachers used narrative texts as the materials that are very familiar to students. It consists of fairytale and

folklore that can motivate and attract students to read. It is hope that the use of this activity, the student's comprehension and vocabulary learning will be improved.

In the picture above, showed the teachers designed of the process in the teaching reading using top-down model.

Step by Step the Process of Using Top-Down Model in Teaching Reading



G. Conclusions

Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that most of the teachers in the USANT Montesson grade school frequently use these strategies peer, the reason that these strategies are part and parcel of the every meeting cycle of teaching. The teachers role are to prepare students to skim by asking them to recognize the key sentences of passage, conduct a discussion on the topic to enhance students' comprehension, invite students participation, give pre-reading activities to the students, make guessing game related to the reading text and ask students drawing conclusions. Teachers also respond if these strategies were very effective in the teaching reading processes especially for the top-down model design. Based on the data, most all of the teachers in the USANT Montessori Grade School designed top-down model in teaching reading because top-down model can make students comprehend the text earlier. In teaching reading by this model, the teachers used narrative texts that are very familiar to students. It consists of fairytale and folklore that can motivate and attract students to read. It is hope that the use of this activity, the student's comprehension and vocabulary learning will be improved.

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