

**ARTICLE**

***THE EFFECT OF USING PEER-ASSISTED LEARNING STRATEGIES  
(PALS) TO STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION  
AT THE TENTH GRADE OF SMA MUHAMMADIYAH  
IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/2016***



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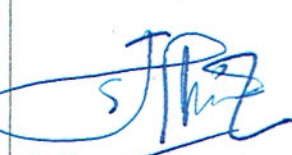

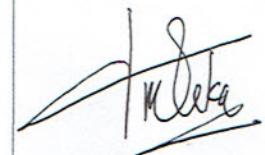
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**THE EFFECT OF USING PEER-ASSISTED LEARNING STRATEGIES  
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AT THE TENTH GRADE OF SMA MUHAMMADIYAH KEDIRI  
IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/2016**

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**ABSTRACT**

In reading skills, students are expected to identify the main idea, general, specific information, implied meaning and determine the communicative function of the text in learning English. However, they still have difficulties in comprehending texts because the teacher only teaches reading comprehension in traditional way.

This paper aims to investigate the effect of Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS). PALS helps to enhance students' abilities of the thinking process and understand what they comprehend through active helping and supporting among students, and it allows for the reader to connect meaning. Thus, the purpose of this research is to know the effect of PALS on students' reading comprehension.

This is a quantitative study applying pre-experimental design with one-group pre-test–post-test. Then, the subject is the tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah Kediri. The population is 57 students and 26 students are taken through simple random sampling. The result shows that students' reading comprehension increased after being taught using PALS. This statement is a result when the mean of post-test is higher than the mean of pre-test. The mean of pre-test is 69,85, while the mean of post-test is 80,15. It also proven by the value of t-score (11,85) which higher than the value of t-table in the degree of significance 1% (2,485) the degree of freedom is 25.

In conclusion, Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) can make the students easier to understand the content of the text such as; finding the main idea, finding detail information, guessing meaning of difficult words from the context, and creating meaning to the whole text.

Keywords: Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies, PALS, Reading Comprehension

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Reading is an activity in which readers respond to and make sense of a text being read connected to their prior knowledge (Spratt, Pulverness, and William, 2005: 21). Reading can also be defined as the process in which readers learn something from what

they read and involve it in academic context as a part of education (Grabe, 2009: 5). Snow and Sweet (2003: 1) define reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning.

Students are directed to understand many kinds of texts such

as recount, descriptive, narrative, etc. They are also expected to recognize a core of words, and interpret word order patterns and their significance, grammatical word classes, recognize that a particular meaning may be expressed in different grammatical form and recognize cohesive devices in written discourse and their role in signaling the relationship between and among clauses.

In the school, the teacher only teaches the students to read the passages, find the meaning of difficult words and answer exercises in teaching learning process. It gives some effects to students, there are : the students cannot understand a text when they do not get the general idea from the passage, difficult for students to understand what the meaning of unfamiliar words because ability of students of grammar and less vocabulary.

According to Alderson (2000: 33), the nature of the knowledge that readers have will influence not only what they remember of text, but the product of their understanding of the text and the way they process it. If the readers do not know the language of the text, then they will have great difficulty in processing the text. From the statements above, it can be

concluded that the problem of reading is not only remembering the text but also understanding the meaning, structure and content of the text.

Knowing the reason above, the researcher proposed a suitable strategies, that is Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS). It is the acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping and supporting among status equals or matched companions (Topping and Ehly, 1998).

Meanwhile, Fuchs and Fuchs et al (1997: 196), mentioned that PALS had positively affected their learning disabilities, low performing, and average-achieving students' reading achievement and social skills. The PALS students, too, irrespective of learning disabilities, low performing, and average-achieving designations, expressed a belief that the treatment had helped them become better readers. It means that PALS is simply students working together in pairs to improve fluency, understanding and comprehending a text through different reading activities provided in the program.

Meanwhile, Falchikov (2007: 32) states that, peer-assisted requires students to provide either feedback or grades (or both) to their peers on a

product or a performance, based on the criteria of excellence for that product or event which students may have been involved in determining. Peer feedback can encourage collaborative learning through interchange about what constitutes good work. Beside that, students can help each other to make sense of the gaps in their learning and understanding and to get a more sophisticated grasp of the learning process.

In this study, the researcher conducts SMA Muhammadiyah Kota Kediri. Based on interview to the English teacher, it is showed that the students have less motivation in reading class. It is because they have inadequate vocabulary and not interested with reading material. In addition, English teacher does not apply appropriate strategy to teaching reading comprehension.

## **II. RESEARCH METHOD**

In this research, the approach that is research is quantitative approach. It is appropriate with the name, this research is much demanded by using number. The data being collected are mostly in the form of number and analyzed statistically. The design of this study is pre-

experimental research with one group pre-test – post-test. According to Ary (2010:303) one group pre-test – post-test design usually involves three steps: (1) administering a pretest measuring the dependent variable; (2) applying the experimental treatment to the subjects; and (3) administering a posttest. In this research, the researcher uses pre-experimental research design (one group pretest-posttest design) to get the data.

The researcher chooses students in tenth grade of SMA Muhammadiyah Kota Kediri as population. It consist of 57 students. The researcher uses simple random sampling and the researcher chooses only one class that is class X-1 as the experiment class that consists of 26 students, 14 females and 12 males.

This research uses test to collect the data. According to Brown (2003:3) test is a melhod of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain. It means that test is a questions or exercise, other tools to measure the skills, knowledge, ability, understanding of person or groups about material that have been learned. The researcher gave pre-test, treatment and post-test to the students. The purpose of pre-test is to know the



students' reading comprehension before got treatment. After that, the researcher gave treatment that uses three procedures. They are pre-teaching, whilst-teaching and post-teaching. In pre-teaching, the researcher greets students and warm up before the material given. In whilst-teaching activity, the researcher introduces Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) and gave the text to the students. In post-teaching, the researcher evaluated the students after the lesson is done and then close the meeting. And the purpose of pre-test is to know the students' reading comprehension after got treatment. This test uses objective test of multiple choices that consist of five items about identifying the implied, specific, and general information, ordering the events in the story, classifying the information of text, determine the communicative function of the text.

This research used T-test as data analysis. After data were collected, especially data about reading comprehension, the data would be processed by statistic formula; because considering of the data is quantity data.

The pattern for t-test adapted from Ary et al (2010:177) is as follow:

$$t = \frac{\bar{D}}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2 - \frac{(\sum D)^2}{n}}{n(n-1)^2}}}$$

$\bar{D}$  = mean from the difference between pre-test and post-test

$D$  = the average of the total of Mean which is divided by the total of the sample

$N$  = total of sample

### III. FINDING

The research result shows that there is a very significant effect of using Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) to students' reading comprehension at tenth grade of SMA Muhammadiyah Kediri. The result of this research shows that t-score is 11,85 at degree of freedom 25 and t-table is 2,485 at the level of significant of 1%. It means that t-score (11,85) > t-table at the level of significance 1% (2,485). It means that t-score is higher than t-table or can be concluded that the result of the research is very significant. So, there is very significant effect of using Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) to students' reading comprehension at tenth grade of SMA Muhammadiyah Kediri.

#### IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The finding indicates that  $t$ -score is higher than  $t$ -table, it means that the differences are very significant, so the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted. In other words, there is significant difference of students' reading comprehension before and after they were taught using Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS). In conclusion, this strategy helps to enhance students' abilities of the thinking process and understand what they comprehend through active helping and supporting among students, and it allows for the reader to connect meaning. In group, the students support on each other and have self confidence, it makes students can be more enthusiastic and interested in learning English reading skills.

From the result of the research, using of Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) to develop students reading comprehension was effective. It reinforces the previous study conducted by Ibrahim and Aaijaz (2001) that Peer-Assisted Learning has significant positive effects on study achievement in terms of peer-assisted learning, the more influential factor is the companion relationship, which

shows that learning together is very important in the learning process. And the previous study conducted by McMaster, Fuchs and Fuchs (2006), show us that PALS has shown great promise as an effective supplement to conventional teaching methods to promote critical reading skills. PALS help the acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping and supporting among students. It allowed the students to have practices in finding any detail information by following the steps in PALS technique. It could allow the students to have more comprehension of what they read.

From the result above, this strategy has good effect on various study and increase students' motivation, confidence, interaction with the teacher and supporting among students, and it allows for the reader to connect meaning. Thus, the research result supports the theory was proposed by McMaster K. L. et all (2006). When the teacher applies peer tutoring programs carefully and accurately, they can help many of their students make great success in the school. This reveals that PALS can help the students to practice reading through some fun activities. Moreover, the teacher can use it in manage the

reading class and avoid teacher domination during the lesson. This implies that the teacher should give more opportunity to the students to practice by themselves.

After conducting a research about the effect of Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) to students' reading comprehension, the researcher would like to give some suggestion as follow for further research. This strategy give significant effect in teaching reading and can improve motivation, confidence, and interaction with the teacher. And can help the students easier to understanding the content of the text, finding the main idea, finding detail information, guessing meaning of difficult words from the context, and creating meaning to the whole text.

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