

## **IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION OF THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SMA NEGERI 1 SOE THROUGH POSSE STRATEGY IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2021/2022**

Yabes Olbata<sup>\*1</sup>, Marike Nelwan<sup>\*2</sup>, Dessy Natty<sup>\*3</sup>  
[yabesolbata@gmail.com](mailto:yabesolbata@gmail.com)<sup>\*1</sup>, [marikelenny@gmail.com](mailto:marikelenny@gmail.com)<sup>\*2</sup>, [nonamarthelda2022@gmail.com](mailto:nonamarthelda2022@gmail.com)<sup>\*3</sup>  
Institut Pendidikan Soe<sup>\*1</sup>, SMA Negeri 1 Soe<sup>\*2</sup>, SMA Negeri Kualin<sup>\*3</sup>

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### **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this research is to improve reading comprehension of the tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Soe through POSSE strategy. The type of the research was action research. The subjects of the research were 32 students of grade X Science 1 at SMA Negeri 1 Soe. There were two kinds of the data in this research were qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data were obtained by doing observation, interviewing and field note. The quantitative data were obtained from the pre-test and post-test. They were presented in the form of scores and analyzed by using descriptive statistics in SPSS 17 program. The result showed that POSSE strategy allows students to have practices in predicting the text, organizing the prediction, searching the main idea, summarizing the text, and evaluating their understanding of the text. It also helped the students enrich their vocabulary by maximizing use of the predicting and the evaluating steps. Then, most students show their enthusiasm and active participation in the teaching and learning process of reading. Finally, there is an improvement on students' reading comprehension. It could be concluded that POSSE strategy could improve students' reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** *Reading, Comprehension, POSSE Strategy, Students*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Reading is a kind of a crucial activity in an attempt to master a certain language. Richard and Renandya (2002: 273) state that reading has special spotlight in many second and or foreign language learning situations. In other words, reading becomes an important activity because it enables people to find out information from variety of the texts, to get pleasure, to get jobs, and to deal with some study purposes.

In reading class, most of the reading activities focused on reading for comprehension. The reason is that the students' skills in comprehending the text will lead them to develop their knowledge, even to gain new information. In reference to the explanation above, it can be said that the ability or skill of comprehending a

message or content in the text is the main goal of reading in the language instruction. As argued by Richard and Renandya (2002: 227), reading for comprehension is the primary purpose for reading. However, comprehending a text message is not easy for students. It can be seen from the fact that students' reading comprehension is still far from what is being expected. The survey conducted by organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Program for International Student Assessment 2012 (PISA) shows that Indonesia ranks second from the bottom in an international education survey conducted to assess students' skill in reading.

This also happens to be the case found in the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Soe, especially Grade X Science 1 students, where most students still face difficulties dealing with reading texts written in English as their second language. With regard to the preliminary observation, the unsatisfactory results of the students' reading comprehension were caused by several following factors. First, most students did not know the meaning of many words found in the text. Second, students were not able to comprehend the content of texts. Third, students did not know the way to read. Fourth, the teacher still used a conventional teaching method. She would shortly explain the text and asked students to answer questions related to the text. Finally, students felt unmotivated to do it.

A teaching method or strategy needs to be implemented to solve those problems. The strategy used should be a strategy that involves the students in the process of reading activity. POSSE (Predict-Organize-Search-Summarize-Evaluate) strategy by (Englert & Mariage 1991) is one of the reading strategies that can solve the problems mentioned above. Students discuss their reading and use the strategies of predicting, organizing, searching, summarizing and evaluating to comprehend the text.

In addition, students are be highly motivated in the reading activities, especially, find the topic, main idea, and supporting detail of the text since they are given a chance to be active in teaching learning process. The researchers are interested in implementing the POSSE strategy to improve the tenth grade students' reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 1 Soe by conducting Classroom Action Research.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Reading in general can be defined into several definitions. According to Rivers (1981; 261), reading is a process enunciating the conventional way the sound symbolized by the printed or written markers on the script. Brown (2004: 189) adds that reading is a process of negotiation of meaning. In this process, the readers bring their early thought to the net parts of reading process to finally reach their understanding about the meaning of the text they read.

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Furthermore, Nunan (1989: 72) states that in reading, the readers do a solitary activity in which the reader interacts with the text in isolation. This isolated activity involves many interactions between readers and what they bring to the text like previous knowledge and strategy use, as well as variables related to the text like interest in the text and understanding of the text types.

According to Harmer (2002: 199), when the learners read a story or a newspaper, they deploy range of respective skills. It means that reading is respective skills that require the readers' ability to create interaction between the linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world.

From the definitions above, reading can be concluded as an active process of getting the meaning of a printed words or verbal symbols in written text. In order to get the intended meaning from the text, a reader has to comprehend what she/he has read. During this process, a reader combines his/her language skills and background knowledge of the world to grasp the meaning.

POSSE strategy is a mnemonic reading comprehension strategy developed by Englert and Mariage in 1991. The acronym of POSSE stands for Predict, Organize, Search, Summarize, and Evaluate. This strategy is designed to model habits of strong readers to students and teach them how to utilize these strategies. This reading comprehension strategy includes many reading practices that have been shown to aid reading comprehension, such as graphic organizers, text structures, stimulation of student background knowledge, and self-monitoring.

In addition, Englert & Marriage in Westwood (2008: 45) state that POSSE strategy is designed to activate student's prior knowledge about the topic and to link it with new information contained in the text. Freville & Collen (2006:21) support this by saying that POSSE is a multistep teaching strategy that not only assists students in activating the prior knowledge, but also encourages them to organize their existing knowledge and structure, and then summarize and elaborate on the connections between what they already knew and what they have learned.

In conclusion, POSSE strategy is a mnemonic reading comprehension strategy designed to model habits of strong readers to students by activating the background knowledge of the students and combining the existing information with the new information provided in the text.

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Some researchers have proved the effectiveness of POSSE strategy in teaching reading comprehension. POSSE strategy has been proven to be helpful to improve the students' achievement in comprehending reading material (Englert & Marriage in Westwood: 2008).

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Meljulita (2012) applied POSSE strategy in improving students reading comprehension in the eighth grade students of SMP N 2 Jujuhan in academic year of 2012/2013. The research finding shows that the POSSE strategy improves students' reading comprehension. There is an improvement in students' reading scores as justified by the gain score of students' scores of pre-test and post-test.

Research conducted by Mickuleky (2007) also found that if not prompted students do not properly implement all steps of the POSSE strategy, which in turn means that they are not able to properly identify the main ideas of the passages because they do not take the time to familiarize themselves with the text before reading or take time to organize the information. Therefore, it is important for students to implement all of the steps of the POSSE strategy to comprehend the text. In reference to the two studies above, it can be concluded that the POSSE strategy has been proven as a useful strategy to enhance students' reading comprehension. Reading is a kind of a crucial activity in an attempt to master a certain language. In relation to the English language learning, reading is one of the four essential skills that language learners need to acquire. The ability or skill of comprehending a message or content is the main goal of reading in language instruction. However, comprehending a text message is not easy for the students. It is not a solely understanding the meaning of each sentence in the text. Nevertheless, it is an understanding the intended meaning of a whole text by the writer.

Through the POSSE strategy, it is expected that students have practices in predicting the text, organizing their prediction, searching the main idea, summarizing the text, and evaluating their understanding. Those practices help student comprehend the text effectively. With regard to the interview with the English teacher and the students, the researcher found that the lack of vocabulary was the main problems causing students' low comprehension. To enrich students' vocabulary, students should maximize the use of predicting and evaluating step. In the predicting step, students write as many ideas as possible. Meanwhile in the evaluating step, they note the new vocabulary they find in the text. As consequence, the students could improve their comprehension. The strategy is also expected to make the students have more interesting and challenging activities in reading class. Moreover, it is expected that the students actively participate and enjoy the reading activities during the implementation of the strategy.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research was a classroom action research (CAR). Kusumah (2012:9) explains that classroom action research is research conducted by teachers in their own classes by a way of planning, implementing, and reflecting action collaboratively with the aim of improving their performance as teachers, so that students learning

outcomes can be improved. In this research, the researcher and the teacher of the subject worked collaboratively to carry out the research at least in two cycles. Furthermore, Kusumah (2012:9) explains the ideal classroom action research is one that is carried out in pairs between the ones who perform the action and the ones who observe the ongoing proses of implementation of the action. The procedure used in the research is action research of Kemmis and McTaggart model. There were eight stages of action in the model. Those were the planning, first action, first observation, first reflection, revision against first planning, second action, second observation, and second reflection. The participants of the research were the students of Science 1 grade XI which consisted of 32 students. The data were obtained by doing observation, interview, field notes and tests. They were presented in the form of scores and analyzed by using descriptive statistics in SPSS 17 program

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

In this part, the findings in connection to the discussion of Cycle I and Cycle 2 are discussed. The findings of this research consist of qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data consist of the general findings of the actions, while the quantitative data includes the students' reading scores. The following section is the qualitative data of the study.

First of all, the POSSE strategy is believed to improve the students' reading comprehension. Previously, students found many difficulties in comprehending the text. They read the text by translating each word in the text. Now, they could comprehend the text through the POSSE strategy. Although, in the beginning, they were confused to implement the strategy, in Cycle 2 they admitted that the POSSE strategy could help them comprehend the text better. It also could drive students' read strategically such as predicting the text, organizing the prediction, searching the main ideas of each paragraph, summarizing the text, and evaluating their understanding.

Second, the POSSE strategy is believed to enrich students' vocabulary. In connection to the observation and the interview with the students and the teacher, the main problem of students' reading comprehension is the lack of vocabulary. The lack of vocabulary could be solved by using the POSSE strategy especially during the predicting and the evaluating step. In the predicting step, students predicted as many ideas as possible related to the topic. Meanwhile, in the evaluating step, they wrote the new vocabulary they found during the implementation of the strategy. Those activities allowed students to enrich their vocabulary.

Third, the POSSE strategy is believed to improve students' participation toward teaching and learning process of reading. During the implementation of the strategy, the students were encouraged to be active in giving their ideas. They

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discussed their reading and used the strategies of predicting, organizing, searching, summarizing, and evaluating to comprehend the text.

Fourth, the POSSE strategy is believed to improve interaction in the class. The activities of this strategy were conducted both in pair and in group. These activities allowed students to interact with their classmates. It also improved the interaction between the teacher and the students. The teacher interacted closely with the students when she gave guidance and assistance during the discussion activities.

**Table 1. The findings after the implementation of the POSSE strategy**

No	Before Implementation	After Implementation	
		Cycle 1	Cycle 2
1	The students lacked vocabulary. In reference to the observations and the interviews with the English teacher, the main problem of the students' reading comprehension was the lack of vocabulary.	The students improved their vocabulary but it had not been maximal yet because they were lazy to write the new vocabularies they found.	Most students wrote the new vocabularies they found during applying the POSSE strategy and they said that the strategy could help them enrich their vocabularies.
2	The students had difficulties in comprehending the texts	The students could comprehend the text through the POSSE strategy although they still had difficulties in applying each step of the strategy.	The students could comprehend the text through the POSSE strategy. Most of them had understood well about the concept of the POSSE strategy and they admitted that the strategy could help them comprehend the text better.
3	There was low interaction among the English teacher and the students in the process of teaching reading.	Classroom interaction improved but there were some students who did not take a part in the group discussion.	Most students interacted not only with their friends but also with the teacher in the pair discussion.
4	Students were not enthusiastic in joining reading activities in the teaching and learning process. They had chit-chat with their friends, drew pictures, or even operated their mobile phones.	Some students were not enthusiastic in joining the reading activities provided by the researcher.	Most students were enthusiastic in joining the reading activities after they worked in pair and the accompanying actions such as guessing game, word search puzzle and crossword puzzle were

			implemented.
5	Students' participation was low.	The students were willing to participate in giving their ideas and asking questions to the researcher although some students were still shy to participate in the teaching and learning process of reading.	Most students participated actively in giving their ideas, asking questions and presenting their POSSE strategy sheets.
6	The mean score of the pre-test was 62.58. The standard deviation was 10.56		The mean score of the post-test was 79.64. The standard deviation was 3.96.

The last, use of LCD, the handout, the posse strategy sheet and the accompanying actions such as word search puzzle, guessing game, true false game and crossword puzzle could improve students' enthusiasm. It changed students' behavior. They paid more attention toward the lesson. Those actions also decreased students' misbehavior like having chit-chat, drawing, and operating their mobile phones during the teaching and learning process.

There were some good suggestions related to the problems which emerged on the implementation. First, the teacher should consider the time. The teacher should be able to manage the time, so the activities could be implemented well. Second, the teacher should give clear explanation and make sure that the students understand in his/ her explanations in applying this strategy. Third, the teacher should give effective guidance and assistance during the group and paired discussion. The last, the teacher should manage the class well, in order that the discussion activities run well. The summary of findings is presented in the following table.

As stated before, the quantitative data were derived from the students' reading comprehension scores. The scores were based on the pre-test and post- test that had been done before and after the implementation of the actions. The students' scores are presented in the following table.

**Table 2. The Students' Reading Comprehension Scores**

Test	Number of Students	
	Score $\leq 75$	Score $\geq 75$
Pre-test	29	5



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Post-test	0	34
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In connection with the table above, there were only five students or 14.7% of the total number of students who could pass the passing grade of 75 in the pre-test. Meanwhile, all of the students could pass the passing grade when they had done with the post-test.

The result of the pre-test and post-test above was then analyzed by using descriptive statistics in SPSS 17 program. The finding is presented in the table below.

**Table 3. The result of Pre-test and Post-test**

	N	Mean	Std Deviation
Pre-test	34	62.5882	10.56902
Post-test	34	79.6471	3.96868
Valid (listwise)	34		

The above table shows that the mean score of the post-test is higher than the mean score of the pre-test. The gain score of students' reading comprehension test is 17,05 which shows that there is an improvement of students' reading comprehension. In the other words, the students' reading comprehension improved.

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

After the implementation of the POSSE strategy, there were some improvements in the teaching and learning process of reading as well as the students' reading comprehension. The findings of the research in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 resulted in some points such as. First, the implementation of the POSSE strategy improved students' participation. The students were encouraged to be active in giving their ideas. They discussed their reading and used the strategies of predicting, organizing, searching, summarizing, and evaluating to comprehend the text. Second, the implementation of the POSSE strategy improved students' interaction. The steps of the strategy were conducted both in pair and in group. These activities allowed students to interact with their classmates. The researcher also could interact closely with the students when she gave guidance and assistance during the discussion activities. Third, using LCD, the POSSE strategy sheet, and the accompanying actions such as word search puzzle, true false game, and crossword puzzle engaged students' enthusiasm. It changed students' behavior toward the lesson. They paid more attention toward the lesson and enjoyed the reading activities provided. Fourth, the use of POSSE strategy could facilitate students to enrich vocabulary. In the

predicting step, students predicted as many ideas as possible related to the topic. Meanwhile, in the evaluating step, they wrote the new vocabulary they found during the implementation of the strategy. The last, the implementation of the POSSE strategy improved students' reading comprehension. It helped the students read strategically and allowed them to have practices in predicting the text, organizing the prediction, searching the main ideas of each paragraph, summarizing the text, and evaluating their understanding by following the steps of the POSSE strategy. In brief, students' reading comprehension improved as displayed in the increase of the gain score gained by deducting the mean score of the pre-test from the mean score of the post-test.

In connection with the conclusions and implications above, some suggestions are directed to the English teacher, the students and other researchers. English teachers should be more creative in choosing the activities. The teachers should know what students need to improve students' weakness. If they want to use the POSSE strategy, they should consider the situation of the class so that they can manage the class well. They also should consider on the topic of the text that influences students' enthusiasm in reading. The students should manage themselves to always have positive attitude toward English lesson. They should know what is really important for them to comprehend the text. Always practicing and equipping the right reading strategies are useful to comprehend the text better and improve their vocabulary. Furthermore, they should participate more active in the process of teaching and learning. They should also manage themselves to work in pairs, in groups, or individually. This research only deals with the use of POSSE strategy to improve students' reading comprehension. Therefore, it is suggested that the other researchers may explore this strategy using different type of research such as experimental or correlational ones.

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