

POTRAYING STUDENTS' LANGUAGE PROBLEMS IN COMPREHENDING NARRATIVE READING TEXT

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed at recognizing language problems faced by the students in comprehending narrative reading text. The investigation includes the students' language problems and the teachers' solution regarding to his students' language problems while comprehending narrative reading text. This research was carried out in one of Junior High School in Bandung and involved 20 students as research sample. In gaining the research data, the writers used several instruments including observation sheets, semi structured interview questions for both students and teacher, and a set of narrative reading comprehension test. The finding showed the students were poor in vocabulary, pronunciation, difficulties search about character in the text, difficulties search about generic structure in the text, difficulties search a moral value in the text, difficulties in answering the reading comprehension question. In addition, the finding of interview data showed solution for those problems were that teacher used teacher give particularly in reading skill comprehension and do repetition to give the mean of the words and then give the students clues for some information and make the students create map-brain.

Keywords: *EFL student, language problem, narrative reading text..*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of four language skills in English and it is important to be mastered. Many students have difficulties in reading. For example, when the students read a text from the beginning to the end, not all of them are able to find the correct information based on the text they have read. According to (Grabe, W., & Stoller, 2002) reading is also an interactive process in at least two ways. First, the various processes involved in reading are carried out virtually simultaneously.

According to (Westwood, 2008) the most fundamental problem found in the Junior High School students in reading narrative text is the lack mastering vocabulary. Most of students easily forget the word meaning since they do not use English routine. In addition, the activities that can support and help the students establish their vocabulary. Furthermore, the students have been very much thinking that learning to read English text is a distressing task. The students do not seem to understand what they read. Their lack of exposure in acquiring English words and grammars made them were not ready enough to deal with text genres, especially narrative.

Based on the writer's experience teaching practice, most of the students' difficulties in learning reading, especially in learning narrative text. It is difficult for them to find both the main ideas and the supporting ideas in a text. Most of the students think that learning to read is simply reading, but actually reading in this context is more than just

to read a paragraph or texts and it involves understanding or comprehending the meaning of the text.

In fact, so many problems or obstacles in learning language skills that faced by Junior High School students. Exceedingly reading comprehension of narrative text. (Westwood, 2008) acknowledge that comprehension problems can be caused by a variety of different factors, including those intrinsic to the individual and others related to insufficient instruction or to inappropriate materials, such as limited vocabulary knowledge, studies have confirmed that reading comprehension is closely related to a student's level of spoken language competence. For example, studied the language and literacy skills of 11-year-old students in an inner-city disadvantaged school in the United Kingdom. They found that 58 per cent of these students had comprehension problems closely related to poor oral language skills.

To solve problem, teacher strategy plays a very important role in helping students to overcome the students' reading difficulties. The teacher needs to find the right technique to make the students understand a text such as the ability to recognize and infer meanings of unfamiliar words, the ability to understand the text structure, and the ability to recognize relations of meanings through the use of cohesive devices.

This research expected can help the students to fix the way they learn reading, so they can have a good reading comprehension and help teacher to understand the difficulties that the students face in learning narrative text.

Concerning on the explanation above, the writer wants to investigate the problems faced by the students in reading comprehension of narrative text. Thus, to find out the answer, this research steered by two research questions, those are: (1) What are the language problems faced by the students in comprehending narrative reading text? And (2) What are the solution that the teachers undertake to solve students' language problems?

METHOD

Research Design and Participant

In this study, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative research. (Cresswell, 2012) said that qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observe the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

Population and Sample

The population of the research is the third grade of SMP Plus YPI Al-Islamiyyah, consisting of two classes, with 20 Students each. The total number of students is 40 students. In order to have a representative sample and to avoid biases, in drawing the sample of this research will interview English teacher, low students and the researcher will observation in the class.

Five low achiever students who fall into the category of low achiever are taken randomly from the population as the sample. The choice falls into class VIII B.

Instruments

The instruments used in this study are observation sheet, semi-structured interview, and a set of reading test.

Observation

The researcher conducts observation when the students learning reading. During the observation, the researcher made some important notes about learning reading comprehension. The notes focused on some aspects such as language problem faced by the students in reading comprehension of narrative text.

The observation method is the most commonly used method especially in studies relating to behavioral sciences. In a way we all observe things around us, but this sort of observation is not scientific observation. Under the observation method, the information was sought by way of investigators' own direct observation without asking from the respondent.

This observation was intended to know the external factors of student problem in reading comprehension generally. By observing the class activity between students and the teacher, the researcher hopes could know some factors made students hard to learn reading comprehension.

During the observation, the researcher used observation sheets as the instrument. It is used to find out the language problem faced by students in reading comprehension of narrative text.

Interview

In interview session, the researchers asked the participants of the research by an in-depth interview which aimed to find out the data that cannot be collected by the observation before, during, and after the implementation. The interviews were guided, but the researchers were allowed to ask further question to get the data in depth from the responses. And then, the interview was hold with teacher and students who learning reading. The result of the interview will be collected and analyzed and used to support the finding of the field problems. The questions including:

Students' Interview Questions

1. What are the language problems in learning narrative text?
2. What is the difficult of text beauty and the beast?
3. Do you understand the teacher explain about text beauty and the beast?

Teacher's Interview Questions

1. What is the method used in teaching reading skill on narrative text?
2. What is the weakness of teaching reading comprehension?
3. What do you do to handle the student who do not understand of narrative text?
4. How many percent of student who give respond on learning reading comprehension?
5. How does student's ability about reading comprehension in this school?
6. What are the solutions from the teacher of language problem in reading comprehension of narrative text for student?

In addition, for reading test, the researchers gave a set of narrative texts to measure the students' ability in comprehend narrative text.

Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researchers analyzed the data. Data analysis and data interpretation were based on data mainly from observation that consist of classroom observation, and interview. In analyzing data, the researcher used Miles and Huberman model. According to (Huberman, A. M., & Miles, 1994) there are some components that build up model of analyzing the data: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. suggest there are three data analysis activity flow; data reduction, data display and conclusion drawings.

(Huberman, A. M., & Miles, 1994) suggest there are three data analysis activity flow; data reduction, data display and conclusion drawings.

- a. Data reduction is the process to select, focus, simplify, abstract and transform the raw data from collected data of field note and video transcription. This would help the researcher in reviewing it, and then selecting the data needed to answer research question of what are language problems faced by students in reading comprehension of narrative text and what are teacher solutions to language problems faced by the students in reading comprehension of narrative text.
- b. Data display is the phase the collected and reviewed data were displayed in many forms such as graphs, charts, matrices that will give hints to the conclusion drawing and action taking. This study, field notes, video transcription, and interview were presented in extended text.
- c. Conclusion drawing. The researcher could get the result and conclusion of langue problem faced by students in reading comprehension of narrative text.

To analysis the data, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative research is development of concept which help us to understand social phenomenon in natural (rather than experimental) setting, giving due emphasis to the meanings, experiences and views of the participants (Pope & Mays, 1995).

All of data is collected by using interview, observation, and which are analyzed and reported descriptively. From the observation, the researcher described the teaching learning process, included students perceive toward teaching narrative text to the students of eight grade. Observation is also used to collect the data by the teacher in teaching reading comprehension of narrative text.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Classroom Observation Data

Based on the observation which the researcher has done. The first meeting, the teacher gave new material to the students about narrative text, she reminded the students about previous material was given before. Then, she explained the material about narrative text, text beauty and the beast would be given clearly such as the teacher explaining the generic structure of narrative text, identification generic structure of beauty and the beast, Teacher call some students for read the first paragraph, Teacher asked the students pronounce difficult word and vocabulary (see Table 1).

Table 1. Students' Language Problems (Initial meeting)

No	Language Problem Items	Description
1	Pronunciation	Students' difficult words to pronoun such as servant, prince, lived in, upon, stuff.
2	Vocabulary	The students do not know the meaning of the second paragraph, such as instead, traveling, turned, fairy, ugly, arrogant.
3	Lack of fluency	The students lack of fluency when reading the text beauty and the beast.
4	The lack of familiarity with the subject matter	The students do not understand what teacher said
5	Weak verbal reasoning	Teacher help the students when read the text beauty and the beast such as "now listen and repeat after me".
6	Difficult level of the text	Students comprehend about the text beauty and the beast and they are request other text such as <i>Sangkuriang</i> .
7	Problems with the processing information	Teacher just focus to the students who active in the class

In the second meeting, the teacher gave reading test to the students and should be done within the specified time because the teacher would be discussed the answer together in front of class. And then the teacher explains the questions and the teacher asked the students mention one by one for answer question and students correcting the results friends and the students have difficulties in search structure of narrative text, search a value in the text, and answering the reading comprehension questions (see Table 2).

Table 2. Students' Language Problems

No	Language Problem Items	Description
1	Characters included in the text	Students confused answer question about character in the text.
2	Generic Structure of the text	Students confused answer question about Generic Structure in the text. They are just supposed to answer the questions. Such as in the text beauty and the beast.
3	Answering reading questions	Many of students confused answering the reading comprehension question

Based on the data observation above, the researcher found some factors that influenced the students' language problem in reading comprehension of narrative text. The researcher used WestWood and Swam & Smith Theory to analyzed students' language problem in reading comprehension of narrative text at this class. (Westwood, 2008) states that the factors can cause students are hard to understand reading include: Limited vocabulary, Lack of fluency, Lack of familiarity with the subject matter, Difficulty level of the text (readability), Inadequate use of effective reading strategies, Weak verbal reasoning Problems with the processing information, Problems in recalling information after reading.

(Chang, 2010) identified the linguistic problems that students may encounter in learning and using the English language are phonological aspects, English phonological system is very different, English has 22 vowel and diphthongs and 24 consonants, and Indonesian has only six vowels, which are [í], [ə], [á] [ò] [ù]. The students' lack of knowledge of correct pronunciations and the meaning of English words.

The researcher found that the students lack of knowledge of correct pronunciations and the meaning of English words (Chang, 2010) such as from the first paragraph.

Furthermore, the students had limited vocabulary. The students have difficulty understanding new words, when teacher gave the text *beauty and the beast*, in the second paragraph the difficult words did not understand such as *instead*, *travelling*, *turned*, *fairy*, *ugly* and the students did not understand what they read, when the students read the text in front of class. The students did not know how to pronounce correctly.

Then, the problems were the students Lack of fluency, it was observed when two students read the text *beauty and the beast* in the front of class, the first student who read very slowly because they shame and fear wrong read it. and the second student who read much too fast, confident and he wrong in pronouncing the words.

And the lack of familiarity with the subject matter, when learning narrative text, the teacher using the school textbook as the medium for first introducing new information to students about narrative text in the class, the student does not understand what teacher said, this method is not effective for students' weaker reader.

Then, Difficulty level of the text (readability), some students difficult comprehend about the text *beauty and the beast* and they are request others text such as the text about *Sangkuriang*.

And Inadequate use of effective reading strategies, in the class the teacher read one sentences and the students followed what the teacher read, and the students just read the sentences not paragraph because according to students read the English text is so difficult.

And weak verbal reasoning, the teacher guided reading activities in which give a time to students for reading text *beauty and the beast*. Afterwards, the students reading the text and then the teacher read text *beauty and the beast* and teach to students how to read it correctly and the teacher read text *beauty and the beast* with recurring, such as the teacher said to students "now listen and repeat after me".

Then problems with the processing information, when the teacher give information about narrative text, explanations about text *beauty and the beast* the teacher just focus to the students who active in the class, and other students not pay attention to the teacher such as they are scrawled in the paper, daydream. And in the second meeting some students do not understand about narrative text, especially generic structure of narrative text. Such as difficulties search about character in the text, difficulties search about generic structure in the text, difficulties search a moral value in the text, and difficulties in answering the reading comprehension question.

and problem recalling information after continue to the new material when teacher reviewing material about descriptive and recount text, teacher asked to the student about the material, the students was forgetting what they taught week ago and from the result of reading test which the researcher given to the student was average score.

Reading Test Data

Based on the data findings of reading test, the researchers found the students' problem to answer the first question, the students did not understand the text tell about the imaginative story and the second and third questions students did not understand what the purpose of narrative text, and structure of narrative text, and the fourth until fifth questions the students did not know the language feature of the narrative text, and the six question, students did not understand about part that we can take a lesson from the story of the narrative text. And the seven questions until fifteen the student did not read

carefully, their ability was too bad, so they could not answer the question with the right answer.

Table 3. Students' Score

No	Name	Correct Answer	Incorrect Answer	Percentage of score
1	Student 1	3	11	21
2	Student 2	2	12	14
3	Student 3	10	4	71
4	Student 4	11	3	78
5	Student 5	5	9	35
6	Student 6	11	3	78
7	Student 7	13	1	92
8	Student 8	11	3	78
9	Student 9	6	8	42
10	Student 10	8	6	57
11	Student 11	5	9	35
12	Student 12	13	1	92
13	Student 13	7	7	5
14	Student 14	11	3	78
15	Student 15	12	2	85
16	Student 16	4	10	28
17	Student 17	5	9	35

Snow (2002: 13) said that: to comprehend, a reader must have a wide range of capacities and abilities. These include cognitive capacities (e.g., attention, memory, critical analytic ability, inferencing, visualization ability), motivation (a purpose for reading an interest in the content being read, self-efficacy as a reader), and various types of knowledge (vocabulary, domain and topic knowledge, linguistic and discourse knowledge, knowledge of specific comprehension strategies)

Then, the researcher found the students' problem in reading test was they used the top-down process incorrectly. They predict the meaning carelessly without recheck the meaning. While reading the necessary process is involving the brain activity to process every single word that is read to reach the purpose of the text. Grimes (2006: 5) stated that: "Reading is an active process of constructing meaning". So, based on the theory above they have problem in construct the meaning of the text.

Students' Interview

The researcher used WestWood to analyzed students' interview. (Westwood, 2008) states that the factors can cause students are hard to understand reading include: Limited vocabulary, Lack of fluency, Lack of familiarity with the subject matter, Difficulty level of the text (readability), Inadequate use of effective reading strategies, Weak verbal reasoning Problems with the processing information, Problems in recalling information after reading.

Interview is conducted to find out the language problems faced by the students in reading comprehension of narrative text. There are three questions asked in interview.

Language problems in learning narrative text

Based on the data, the researchers found the students' interview just five problems that is limited vocabulary, Lack of fluency, Lack of familiarity with the subject matter, Difficulty level of the text (readability) (see Table 4).

Table 4. Students' Language Problems

No	Language Problems	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Frequency
1	Limited vocabulary	√	√	√	√	√	5
2	Lack of fluency	√	√	-	√	√	4
3	Lack of familiarity with the subject matter	√	√	√	√	√	5
4	Difficulty level of the text (readability)	-	-	-	-	-	
5	Inadequate use of effective reading strategies	-	-	-	-	-	
6	Weak verbal reasoning	-	-	-	-	-	
7	Problems with the processing information	-	-	-	-	-	
8	Problems in recalling information after reading	-	-	-	-	-	

limited vocabulary

(Westwood, 2008) In his study study found that the student has difficulty understanding what he or she is reading, it is worth considering whether there is a serious mismatch between the student's own knowledge of word meanings (expressive and listening vocabulary) and the words used in the text. The students may be able to read a word correctly on the page nit not know its meaning.

R#1 until R#5 difficulty understanding what he or she is reading. Limited vocabulary can be caused by lack of reading interest that made students unable to produce same unfamiliar vocabularies.

When we read the text is so difficult and then we did not know the vocabulary (R#1, R2, R3, R4, R5 November 30, 2017)

Based on those five respondents, they had similar problems. Their problem was weak in vocabularies, and they are doing not know how to read the text.

According to Nunan (2005) as cited in (Syarifudin, Marbun, & Novita, 2014) acknowledged that vocabulary is the content and function on words of a language which are learned so through that they become a part of people's understanding, speaking, listening, reading and writing. Vocabulary is the words having meaning when heard or seen through proceed even not proceed by the individual himself to communicate with other.

lack of fluency

(Westwood, 2008) Students who read very slowly or much too fast, often comprehend poorly. Slow reading tends to restrict cognitive capacity to the low-level processing of letters and words rather than allowing full attention to be devoted to higher order ideas and concepts within the text. But very fast reading may result in inaccurate word recognition, and important details being over locked.

R#1 *"I did not understand about the text beauty and the beast because the vocabulary is strange (R#1, November 30, 2017)"*

R#2 *"I don't know the text word by word. But, when the teacher gives us the text. and then, teacher explain the text in Bahasa, I understand (R#2, November 30, 2017)"*

R#4 *"I am confused when I was reading the text. I don't know how to pronoun it correctly (R#4, November 30, 2017)"*

R#5 *"I did not confident when teacher mention my name to come in front of class to reading the text. I am fear wrong when read this text (R#5, November 30, 2017)"*

R#1, R#2, R#4 R#5 had the problem with difficulties in reading the vocabulary such as pronouncing, students were confused how to read the text and students did not confident when they read in front of class. Students who read very slowly or much too fast, often comprehend poorly.

lack of familiarity with the subject matter

"It is so difficult search about character in the text (R#1 November 30, 2017)"

"Difficulties in arrange the text and my writing weaknesses (R#2 November 30, 2017)"

"Difficult search generic structure from the text beauty and the beast (R#3 November 30, 2017)"

"Difficult search moral value from text beauty and the beast (R#4 November 30, 2017)"

"Difficulties in answering the reading comprehension question (R#5 November 30, 2017)"

Based on those five respondents, they had a problem. Their problems were difficult search about character in the text, Difficulties in arrange the text and my writing weaknesses. Difficult search generic structure from the text beauty and the beast. Difficult search moral value from text beauty and the beast. Difficulties in answering the reading comprehension questions.

(Westwood, 2008) acknowledged that using the school textbook as the medium for first introducing new information to students is not usually the most effective method of delivery. It is better to provide information first by the other means (e.g. video, poster mini lecture, discussion) to build firm background knowledge before student are expected to read about that theme in printed texts. This is particularly important for weaker readers.

Teachers' Solution of Students' Language Problems

The second research question: What are teacher solutions to language problem faced by students in reading comprehension about narrative text. To find what the teacher solutions to language problem faced by students in reading comprehension about narrative text.

Teachers' interview

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Table 5. The Result from Teachers' Interview

Teacher	Solution
The Solutions from the teacher of language problem in reading comprehension of narrative text for student	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the students to read various kind of text. 2. Repetitioning the meaning of the words 3. Giving clue 4. Mind mapping

Based on the data above, the result the result showed that the teacher gives solutions to language problem faced by students in reading comprehension of narrative text. The researcher used (Brown, 2001) states that the solutions of reading comprehension is identifying the purpose of reading, skimming for main idea, Scanning the text for specific information, Semantic mapping or clustering, guessing meaning and analyzing vocabulary.

Ask the students to read various kind of text

Teacher solutions when teaching in the class, she gave particularly in reading skill comprehension especially, narrative text. And then, teacher give two text such as beauty and the beast, and the man who wanted to live forever, the text gives to the students so that they have high curiosity of something on it. Then, reading interest will grow by themselves

First is identifying the purpose of reading (Brown, 2001). By knowing the reading purpose, the reading will be efficient because the reader knows what they want to find and they can sort unimportant information. Therefore, before the teacher teaches reading technique, she or he has to be sure that students know their purpose of reading the texts.

Repetitioning the meaning of the words

Based on the interview, teacher said *"Before, I'll asking about what he/she do not understand on it, for example, they have difficulty to understand because they do not know the mean of word by word. So, I'll do and do repetition to give the mean of the words"*

The researcher found that the teacher always does repetition reading text such as text beauty and the beast. The teacher reading the text beauty and the beast in front of class, she does repetition and she said to the students *"listen to me and repeat after me"*

Giving clue

Teacher give the students clues for some information they are look for. So that the students understand what they are read. Such as text about beauty and the beast, when learning narrative text teacher give clues to the students about text beauty and the beast, some of students understands what is the text about beauty and the beast. Maybe they know about this text was watching in the movie or listening other information,

Based in the interview, teacher said *"give the students clues for some information they are look for example give them the context of the text. This solution may help them to find out the information they are needed without read the text word by word."*

Third is scanning the text for specific information. Scanning is to search quickly for the specific information of the text (Brown, 2001). The aim of scanning is that the students do not have to read every word of a text to get information that they want and show the students how to read a text based on the purpose of reading the text.

Mind mapping

Fourth is semantic mapping or clustering. This strategy can be done by letting the students create map based on the text (Brown, 2001). It is very useful for students because it will facilitate them to understand the text, moreover when the text is a bit long.

When learning reading comprehension many of students did not understand what is purpose or moral value in the text beauty and the beast. And then teacher solution makes the students create map brain because the students should know the purpose of reading text or moral value, with give then information about what should students get information about what should they get from the text.

CONCLUSION

Regarding to the research questions was mentioned earlier, the researcher did the research at Junior High School in Bandung. To answer that research question, the research gave the observation, interview, and reading test to the students to find out the students' language problem in reading comprehension of narrative text.

The first research question that concerned to find out the reason of students' language problem in reading comprehension of narrative text, the finding showed the students were poor in vocabulary, pronunciation, difficulties search about character in the text, difficulties search about generic structure in the text, difficulties search a moral value in the text, difficulties in answering the reading comprehension question.

The second research which was ask what are teacher solutions to language problems faced by the students in reading comprehension of narrative text. The finding of interview data showed solution for those problems were that teacher used teacher give particularly in reading skill comprehension and do repetition to give the mean of the words and then give the students clues for some information and make the students create map-brain.

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