

DEVELOPING BUSINESS ENGLISH AND MANAGEMENT STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION BY USING CONTEXT CLUES

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Abstract

This study was purposed to develop the students' reading comprehension of D class students of second semester of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017. This classroom action research was conducted in two cycles. Field note and test were employed to collect the data. The test consisted of pre-test and progress test. The data of the students' pre-test and progress test score were analyzed to get mean score and the data of observation was analyzed descriptively. Based on the analysis, it was found that the students' reading comprehension developed from pre-test to progress test from cycle to cycle. The mean score of the students' pre-test was 44.1 and then that of the students' progress test in the first and the second cycle were 48,9 and 77,2 respectively. Finally, it can be concluded that the action hypothesis was proved in that context clues developed the students' reading comprehension of D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator Pontianak in academic year 2016-2017.

Keywords: reading comprehension, context clues, classroom action research.

Abstrak

Penelitian bertujuan untuk mengembangkan kemampuan membaca mahasiswa kelas D semester II Program Studi Bahasa Inggris Konsentrasi Business English and Management Politeknik Tonggak Equator Pontianak. Penelitian merupakan penelitian tindakan kelas yang dilakukan dalam dua siklus. Subjek dalam penelitian adalah mahasiswa kelas D semester 2 Program Studi Bahasa Inggris Konsentrasi Business English and Management Politeknik Tonggak Equator tahun ajaran 2016-2017. Dalam mengumpulkan data, peneliti menggunakan catatan lapangan dan tes. Tes terdiri dari pre-test dan progress test. Data hasil pre-test dan tes kemajuan/progress test dianalisis menggunakan nilai rata-rata dan data dari hasil observasi dianalisis secara deskriptif. Berdasarkan penelitian yang telah dilakukan oleh peneliti, peneliti menemukan hasil bahwa pemahaman membaca mahasiswa meningkat dari mulai pre-test sampai progress test dari siklus pertama dan siklus kedua. Nilai rata-rata pre-test mahasiswa adalah 44,1. Kemudian, nilai rata-rata progress test mahasiswa pada siklus pertama adalah 48,9 dan nilai rata-rata progress test mahasiswa pada siklus kedua adalah 77,2. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa hipotesis kerja dalam penelitian terbukti bahwa context clues dapat mengembangkan pemahaman membaca mahasiswa kelas D semester 2 Program Studi Bahasa Inggris Konsentrasi Business English and Management Politeknik Tonggak Equator tahun ajaran 2016-2017.

Kata Kunci: pemahaman membaca, context clues, penelitian tindakan kelas.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of language skills that must be studied by all students since it is a receptive skill that will effect the development of productive skills such as speaking and writing. For university students, reading is an important activity since they have to read their compulsory books or other materials related to their lesson. Besides, reading can increase students' knowledge, improve analytical thinking, stimulate creativity, etc.

The importance of reading was not realized by a lot of students. Based on the observation conducted by the researcher, the researcher found that many students are classified as poor readers. Many of them have difficulty in understanding the meaning of words, finding the main ideas, finding the general and specific information from the text and understanding reading text.

Based on the problem explanation, the researcher thinks that students need strategy to help them overcome their reading problem. Confronted with long reading texts, language learners may be stuck by shortage of vocabulary inventory and then be unable to understand what the texts are about. The first thing that a learner does to understand a difficult word is to look up using dictionary. However, there are techniques which learners may use to get the meaning of such vocabulary items. One of these techniques is context clues. Therefore, the researcher interested to conduct a research entitled *Developing Business English and Management Students' Reading Comprehension by Using Context Clues*.

Based on the problems found by the researcher in the classroom, the researcher formulated the problem formulation as follow: (1) Does the use of context clues develop the reading comprehension of D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017; and (2) How significant the use of context clues develop the reading comprehension of D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017.

The objective of this research were: (1) Find out whether the use of context clues in teaching reading can develop reading ability of D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017; and (2) Find out how significant context clues in developing the reading comprehension of D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017.

Silberstein, Patel and Jain define reading definitions. According to Silberstein (1994: 120), "reading is an active process". Describing reading as an active process means that when students read a text, they preview the text by activating their background knowledge, make predictions about the content and the message that the author try to convey. Then, Patel and Jain (2008: 113) states that "reading is the most important activity in language class. Reading is a source of information and pleasurable. It also a means of consolidating and extending one's knowledge."

Furthermore, Brown (2004: 186) states that there are three common genres of reading, they are academic reading such as articles, technical reports (lab reports), reference materials, dictionaries, textbook, thesis, essays, papers, test directions, etc. Second, job-related reading such as letters/emails, memos, job evaluations, project reports, schedules, labels, signs, announcements, forms, applications, financial documents, etc. Then, personal reading such as newspapers, magazines, greeting cards, invitations, novels, short stories, drama, comics, etc.

Linge (2000) states that reading comprehension is the ability to think words together into sentences and to understand the idea that the author is trying to convey in those sentences. Therefore, reading comprehension is an ongoing process of developing thinking. When readers read, they try to understand the author's idea by thinking and making correlation among the words, sentences and paragraphs, they also carry on a conversation with the text. They respond with happiness, amazement, wonder, sadness, etc. They make connection, ask

questions and draw inference for better understanding and learning from what they read.

Mohamad (1999) states that there are actually three main levels of comprehension-literal, interpretive and critical comprehension. The levels are: (1) Literal comprehension. Comprehension at this level involves surface meanings. At this level, teachers can ask students to find information and ideas that are explicitly stated in the text; (2) Interpretive or referential comprehension. At this level, students go beyond what is said and read for deeper meanings and understanding. They have to be able to read the text critically and analyze it carefully. Students need to be able to see relationship among ideas, for example how ideas go together and also see the implied meanings of these ideas. Interpretive or referential comprehension includes thinking processes such as drawing conclusions, making generalizations and predicting outcomes. At this level, teachers can ask more challenging questions to students, for example asking students to re-arrange the ideas or topics discussed in the text, explain the author's purpose of writing the text, summarize the main idea when this is not explicitly stated in the text, and select conclusions which can be deduced from the text they have read; and (3) Critical reading. The third level of comprehension is critical reading which by ideas and information are evaluated. Critical evaluation occurs only after our students have understood the ideas and information that the writer has conveyed. At this level, students can be tested by differentiating between facts and opinions, recognizing persuasive statements, and judging the accuracy of the information given in the text.

Teaching reading comprehension to English Foreign Language (EFL) students is not an easy work. Nuttal (1982: 21) states "the aim of teaching reading comprehension are to develop the students' ability to extract the message from the content. In teaching reading comprehension, the teachers are trying to put something in the students' mind to take the information by them." In teaching reading, the teacher should make the students know and develop the ability to read by themselves. An independent reader must be able to read and overcome the text that he/she has never seen before and the reading teachers have to facilitate the

students to do so. The teachers' role in reading is not to remain the students but to make the students have their own ability to read and understand.

Obviously, students do not allow to check dictionary in the exam so there are likely to be a lot of words from the reading text that they do not understand. If they come across a word they do not understand, then they cannot spend a lot of time working out its meaning because they have a very limited time for reading, so they need strategy to overcome it. Therefore, context clue is necessary.

Hancock (1987: 2) states that "using context clues in word recognition means figuring out the meaning of a word based on clues in the surrounding context. These clues could be found in the sentence with the word, in the sentences before, or in the sentences following the word." It means that context clues is finding or guessing the word meaning by using clues surrounded context that the context can be found in the sentence with the word, in the sentences before, or in the sentences following the word.

According to Hancock (1987: 2), "context clues will be easier if the readers are familiar with some kinds of clues often found in sentences." There are six common kinds of clues, they are: (1) Restatement, Hancock (1987: 3) states that "restatement is merely stating the word in another way, usually in simpler term. A restatement clue is usually set off by commas." (2) Synonyms, Hancock (1987: 3) states that "a synonym is one of two or more words that have the same or similar meaning. "When an author uses a difficult or unfamiliar word, he often also uses an easier or more familiar word to make it easy to understand by the readers. (3) Antonyms, Hancock (1987: 3) states that "an antonym is a word of opposite meaning." When an author uses a difficult word in a text, he often helps the readers by giving antonym with more familiar word. (4) Definitions, Hancock (1987: 3) states that, "it is unusual for an author to put in a statement that clearly defines a difficult word." He usually helps the readers by giving clue such as giving definition. (5) Explanation. Hancock (1987: 4) states that, as a help for the readers, an author usually explains the difficult words to make the meaning clearer. The explanation can be found in the same sentence with the difficult word, in the sentence before, or in the sentence following the word. (6)

Relationships. Relationship is kind of clue which is less concrete and require more thinking on the part of the readers. Here, the readers must see a relationship between the difficult word and something the author has stated. This explanation also must be seen with little explanation and few clues (Hancock, 1987: 4).

The action hypothesis of this research is context clue will significantly develop the reading comprehension of D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017. The result of this research will give many advantages, they are: (1) The finding of this research will give additional reference for another research related to developing reading comprehension; (2) The finding of this research will give more knowledge and insight for the reading teacher/lecturer in teaching reading. In other words, it may help them in improving their professionalism; and (3) For students of Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator, the researcher hope that the finding of this research will improve the students' reading ability.

METHOD

This research is classroom action research. In doing this research, the researcher used action research design introduced by Kemmis and McTaggart (Burn, 2010: 9) which is set out in the figure below.

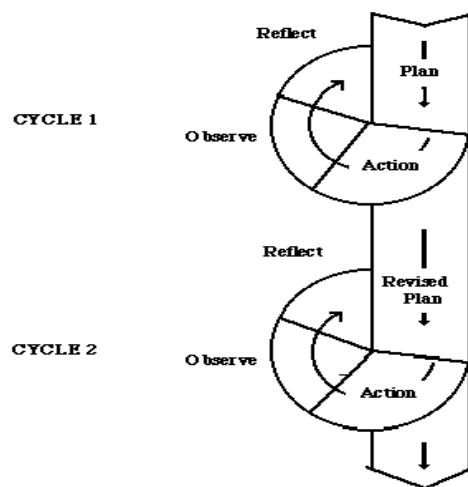


Figure 1 Cyclical AR Model based on Kemmis and McTaggart

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (Burns, 1999: 32), “action research occurs through a dynamic and complementary process, which consists of four essential “moments”: of planning, action, observation and reflection.” These improvements are fundamental steps in spiraling process through which participants in an action research group undertake to: (1) Develop a plan of critically informed action to improve what is already happening; (2) Act to implement the plan; (3) Observe the effect of the critically informed action in the context in which it occurs; and (4) Reflect on these effects as the basis for the further planning, subsequent critically informed action and so on, through a succession of cycles (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988).

In the stage of planning, the researcher planned the teaching-learning activities to solve the problem in her previous teaching-learning process. The plan included the preparation before the teaching-learning activities, they were lesson plan, instrument to collect the data such as field notes and test (pre-test and progress test). Then, in the stage of acting, the researcher applied the plans she had. In the stage of observing, the researcher observed the learning process objectively. In the stage of reflecting, the researcher reflected the action that has been done and try to overcome the problem happened in order avoid the same problem happen in the next cycle.

This research was done with some procedures, they were the big cycle and small cycle. The big cycle in this research is 6 meetings in which the researcher applies this technique in teaching learning process, those are cycle 1 which consists of three meetings and cycle 2 which consists of three meetings. Then, the small cycle which consists of a meeting which lasts in about 150 minutes.

This research was done in the researcher own class that was D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017. The data collection process was finished within 7 weeks. The subject of this research was the D class second semester students of Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017.

In gathering the data, the researcher used field note and test. Field note was used to record what happened in the classroom and tests that were consisted of pre-test and progress test. The pre-test was used to know the students' reading comprehension before the researcher gave the treatment while the progress tests were used to know the development of the students' reading comprehension each cycle.

In analyzing the data, the students' reading comprehension was measured by using mean score formula bellows:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N} \quad \dots 1$$

Note:

M = the students' mean score

$\sum X$ = the sum of students' score

N = the number of students

The result will be categorized as follow:

Table 1 Categorize of Score

Numeric Scores	Relative Scores	Marking Quality
85 – 100	A	Very good
81 – 84	A-	Almost very good
77 – 80	B+	Better
73 – 76	B	Good
69 – 72	B-	Almost good
65 – 68	C+	More than fair
60 – 64	C	Fair
45 – 59	D	Less
0 – 44	E	Bad

(Buku Pedoman Politeknik Tonggak Equator, 2014)

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In the first cycle, researcher designed the planning, prepared the teaching learning process such as the learning material, the exercises, field note and progress test. After designing the planning, she applied the planning in teaching learning process, the researcher taught the learning material then gave reading comprehension exercise to students. In doing the exercise, students were not

allowed to check dictionary. Therefore they had to apply context clues in answering or finishing the exercise. The researcher did observation while the students were doing the exercise and applying context clues. At the third meeting of first cycle, researcher gave progress test to students. Researcher did observation while the students were doing the progress test. Based on the observation, the researcher found that students still had difficulty in understanding the reading text in the first cycle. The researcher reflected the result of the first cycle. Based on the reflection of the first cycle, researcher found that she had to explain context clues reading strategy again to students since they were many students were confused the types of context clues and how to apply it in understanding reading text.

In the second cycle, researcher designed the planning, they were the learning material, the exercises, field note and progress test. After designing the planning, she applied the planning in teaching learning process. She delivered the learning material, explained context clues reading strategy again to students clearly and then, gave reading comprehension exercise. At the third meeting of second cycle, researcher gave progress test. The researcher did observation while the students were doing the progress test. Based on the observation done by the researcher, the researcher found that students began to understand the type of context clues and how to apply it in understanding the reading text. After doing observation, the researcher did reflection based on what happened in the second cycle. The result of reflection was the students have understood the type of context clues and could apply it in help them understanding the reading text. Furthermore, reading comprehension also developed since they could apply context clues reading strategy well. Then, the researcher decided to finish collecting data in the second cycle since the target was achieved that was the students' reading comprehension were developed.

Besides analyzing the data of planning, acting, observing and reflecting qualitatively, the researcher also analyzed the data of pre-test and progress test. The result of pre-test and progress test can be seen in the table below.

Table 2 The Result of Pre-test and Progress Test

Students' Code	Pre-test	Progress Test	
		1 st Cycle	2 nd Cycle
Student 1	42,5	45	82,5
Student 2	33	40	77,5
Student 3	25	40	62,5
Student 4	25	47,5	75
Student 5	47,5	57,5	75
Student 6	22,5	50	80
Student 7	32,5	35	57,5
Student 8	50	45	82,5
Student 9	47,5	50	82,5
Student 10	37,5	52	72,5
Student 11	50	42,5	-
Student 12	30	50	77,5
Student 13	80	82,5	75
Student 14	40	45	75
Student 15	35	27,5	72,5
Student 16	52,5	37,5	85
Student 17	27,5	52,5	-
Student 18	47,5	67,5	90
Student 19	45	40	75
Student 20	42,5	67,5	82,5
Student 21	50	37,5	65
Student 22	37,5	57,5	80
Student 23	47,5	47,5	80
Student 24	47,5	37,5	77,5
Student 25	52,5	37,5	80
Student 26	57,5	65	82,5
Student 27	37,5	50	75
Student 28	35	27,5	75
Student 29	95	90	85
Student 30	72,5	47,5	82,5
Student 31	52,5	45	77,5
Mean score	44,1	48,9	77,2
Score category	E Bad	D Less	B+ Better

In collecting the data, the researcher conducted a pre-test in order to know the reading comprehension of the students. Then, the mean score of the pre-test was only 44,1 that categorized as E. Therefore, based on the pre-test conducted by the researcher, it can be known that the students' reading comprehension was low. In the first cycle, researcher gave progress test in the third meeting. The result

of the progress test in the first cycle was 48.9 that was categorized D. Then, the researcher also conducted a progress test in the second cycle, the result of the progress test in the second cycle was much better than the first cycle that was 77.2 that was categorized as B+.

From the research finding, it could be seen that the students' reading comprehension developed from cycle to cycle. In the first cycle, the mean score of students' reading comprehension was 48.9. In the second cycle was 77.2. The improvement was considered as the result of treatment that was context clues in developing students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, the result of the treatment indicated the action hypothesis was accepted. Context clues developed the reading comprehension of D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion on the previous chapter, the conclusion can be drawn as follows: (1) Context clues could develop reading comprehension of D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017; (2) Context clues developed the reading comprehension of D class second semester students of English Department of Business English and Management Concentration, Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator in academic year 2016-2017 within two cycles, they are the first and second cycle. Then, the suggestion can be drawn based on the discussion are (1) In order to make the students understand context clues, researcher/lecturer need to explain the definition and type of context clues to students clearly. (2) Researcher/lecturer need to tell the learning objective clearly in order to make the students know and understand the purpose of the learning.

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