EFL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S ABILITY IN COMPREHENDING SHORT STORIES

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Abstract: The objective of this research was to describe tenth graders' ability in comprehending short stories text in SMA Negeri 1 Lage. This research was qualitative in nature. The data were collected from observation and documents. The result of this research shows that students increased their scores of comprehending narrative short stories after three meetings. Some suggestions are proposed in this article for future inquiry.

Keywords: *reading comprehension, narrative text, short stories*

Teaching reading using short story is very interesting to students. Students can improve their reading and are not feel bored when they read, and they can also understand the story and learn from the moral of the story.

Reading is important skill to learning in english language. Without this skills, student cannot read and write english text very well. A short story is a work of fiction that usually writen in prose, often in narrative format. This format tends to be more appointed the longer works of fiction, such as novellas and novels or books.

Reading in *Bahasa Indonesia* is much easier because the student have mastered vocabulary and structure of the language, yet reading in English is really difficult for student since they have to master the component of the language such a structure, vocabulary, pronounciation and spelling system.

Reading

Dubin (1986) explains that reading is one of must important basic skill in learning English language besides writing, listening, and speaking. Reading activity is the way to get information, knowing enough science conception, knowing more knowledge, understanding scientific book, and technological written English language. By reading we can improve our knowledge and get information that other people which dont like read and we get a pleasure.

The essence of reading act is comprehension: it becomes a primary challenge in teaching or learning of reading skill. In order to learn or understand the massage of the author, the students are hoped to have the ability to comprehend the written textbook. Comprehension means understanding the meaning or the point of a topic, show a more specific explanation, comprehension means relating what we do not know or new information, which is not random collection of facts but a "theory of a world" in each of our heads.

Reading with comprehension means to understand what has been read. Dubin (1986) states reading comprehension is a complex intellectual process involving a number of abilities. The two major abilities concern word meanings and reasoning with verbal concepts. English has been taught as a foreign language in our country, however, it does not mean that the result of teaching English in our school is satisfactory.

The fact that it is taught continuously for six years at the high school, three years at SMP, and three years at SMA. Ramelan say that most SMA graduates are still very poor in their reading comprehension, since they cannot usually read or understand articles in English dailies.

Good readers expect to understand what they are reading. Therefore, texts should contain words and grammatical structures familiar to the learners. According to Dubin (1986), there are six factorst hat have an impact on one's reading behaviour:

a. The expansion of vocabulary, word meaning and concepts.
b. The acquistion of wider knowledge or background in various american foreign policy, etc.
c. The elimination of proposal bias (economic, politic, social, etc).
d. An increased ability to deal with figurative language, sative, paragraph, authors, purpose, etc.
e. An increase in the rate at which you found read printed material.

The other theory of reading is one of the basic skill in learning a language. in this sense, De Boer (1964) assumed that reading is viewed as an active process where the reader employs visual symbol of printed written language to search for and to reach out meaning. Its mean that reading is not only get the information from the next passively but also to process it on mind to understand the meaning. Reading is a process of getting maning from printed word symbols; it is no merely a process

of making conventionalize noise associated with these symbol.

Based on the definitions above, reading is not only getting meaning from word to word or line to line to understand what we read. But also reading is a process of thinking. So for each definition has its own activity, it depends on the reading purpose of the reader.

Purposes of Reading

According to McDonough and Christopher (1993), there are many purposes in reading activity. The purpose for reading will help the reader focus on information, consequently such purpose are most effective when establish by the reader. Obviously, the purpose for reading should be established before a selection is read. Afterward, the stated purpose can be used as a basic for discussion to determine whether the reader has achieved his goal and quoted that usefully classified reading into getting general information from the text, specific information from a text, and reading pleasure or interest.

From the statement above it can be concluded there are two kinds purpose of reading activity. Reading for information usually used in reading task, it is probably seen an as a type of reading ability. Reader read because they have to read. It included the material which are classified as nonfiction, sciences, social studies, articles, newspaper, etc. Weather reading for pleasure, the reader may read either quickly or slowly based on the way he/she likes, associated largely with novel, short stories and poems.

The others purpose of reading according to Grabe and Stoller (2002). It has been classified into four purposes as follows:

1. Reading to search for simple information and reading to skim: It is common reading ability, here the reader scan the text to find out a specific piece of information or a specific word. Meanwhile, reading to skim is the strategy to form the general idea using basic reading comprehension and guesses the important point.
2. Reading to learn from text: It happens in academic and professional context, it also requires remembering the main idea and the supporting idea, making a relation with the reader's knowledge. This activity could bring stronger inference because it is to help remember information.
3. Reading to integrate information, write, and analyze text: this skill needs critical evaluation where the reader integrate and decide the information that she/he. Then, it involves abilities such as composing, selecting, and making critique from the material.
4. Reading for general comprehension: It can be done by fluent readers very fast and automatically in the processing word, and effective coordination in many process of the text.

In addition, Rivers (1993:38) lists the following examples of some the reason that L2 student may need or want to read:

5. To obtain information for some purpose or because we are curious about some topic.
6. To obtain instruction how to perform some text for our work or daily life.
7. To keep in touch with friends by correspondence or to understand business letters.
8. To know when or where something will take place or what is available.
9. To know what happening or has happened (as reported in newspapers to magazines, reporters).

In teaching and learning process the teacher should know the aim of teaching reading, its principle, and some activities while teaching reading. According to Linse (2005:71) teaching of reading is the process to drive the meaning as well as analyze and synthesize wha the students have read. Besides that, Linse (2005:71) adds the aim of teaching reading is to help the students get adequate reading competence. Nation (2009:5) states that there are some activities of teaching reading, such pre-reading activities, while-reading activities, and post-reading activities.

Narrative Text

Anderson (1997: 8) states that narrative is a piece of text tells a story and in doing so, entertains or informs the reader or listener. There many different types of narrative text according to Neo (2005):

1. Humour. A humorous narrative is one of that aims to make audience laugh as a part of telling story. Here is its typical structure:
   a. Orientation: the narrator tells the funny characters names in unusual setting.
   b. Complication: in this part, something crazy happen.
   c. Sequence of event: there are many imaginative ideas here funny things said by characters and extraordinary things happening to ordinary people.
   d. Resolution: All's well that end well.
2. Romance. The romance narrative typically tells of two lovers who overcome difficulties to end up together. Here are the usual features:

a. Orientation: it contains hunk male and female who is looking for love, exotic setting, sunset, beaches, and moonlight.
b. Complication: boy meets girl.
c. Sequence of event: it contains the development relationship, jealously, love, hurt, pain, warm, sharing, and overcoming problems.
d. Resolution: boy gets girl, marry and live happy ever after (Neo, 2005: 59).

3. Historical Feature. There are features of a typical historical fiction text:
a. Orientation: a setting in the past and description of a period in history.
b. Complication: good meets evil.
c. Sequence of event: action related to a period in history, character's lives affected by the events of history, description of live at the time.
d. Resolution: characters survive the chaos of the time (for example, the war ends) (Neo, 2005: 59).

4. The Diary Novel. This type of narrative has the text presented like diary entries. Here are the features of a typical diary- novel:
a. Orientation: main character is the narrator. Time setting is given by diary entries.
b. Complication: given one of diary entries. It can be related to romance, adventure, humour, mystery, or other type.
c. Sequence of event: diary entries tell of feelings, hopes, and happening.
d. Reorientation: the narrator tells what happens to solve the complication (Neo, 2005: 60)

5. Fantasy. Below are the features of a typical fantasy narrative:
a. Orientation: setting may be in another dimension with goals, witches, wizard, and so son. Hero who may has magical power.
b. Complication: evil forces affect the goodies.
c. Sequence of event: use of magic. Action includes elves, dragons and mystical beasts, heroism.
d. Resolution: God defeats evil forces (Neo, 2005: 60)

6. Science Fiction. Science fiction narratives are the setting involving science and technology. Here are the typical features of the text type:
a. Orientation: a feature setting and a world with technology.
b. Complication: an evil force threatens the world.
c. Sequence of event: imaginative description. Action involves technology, science, and super invention.
d. Resolution: good defeats evil.

e. Coda: take care that science is used for good or not.

Method

This research is a qualitative research and the subjects were 19 students of class VII at SMPN1 Poso. Data were gathered using field notes, observation and test, and described descriptively.

Findings and Discussions
Findings

The researcher observed the students activities in class VII SMP Negeri I academic year 2013-2014. Total students of this class are 19 students, consists of 15 male students and 4 female students. Researcher will describe the steps to collect data needed.

First Meeting

In this meeting, Cinderella was used as reading source in reading activities, taken from English Book for Junior High School Grade VII Semester 1 pp. 33-35. The description is as follows:

1. Pre-activity. In the meeting teacher greeted the students and teacher prayed together with students. After that the teacher checked attendance, from total number 19 students in this class, only 11 students were present and 9 students were absent. Then the teacher explained about objective of learning process.
2. While-activity. The teacher explained about elements of short story such as character, setting, plot, conflict and theme to the students. After that the teacher gave the short stories to the students, and then the student read the stories one by one. Then the students answered the question by writing on the paper.
3. Post-activity. The teacher concluded the material, and then gave homework for the students. After that the teacher thanked them to appreciate their enthusiasm.

Students' achievement in first meeting is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Students' Scores in First Meeting

No	Student's Initials	Student's Score	Total Score	Classification
1	BLR	15	75	Fairly good
2	AAN	13	70	Fairly good
3	JSM	15	75	Fairly good
4	HDP	15	75	Fairly good
5	DYT	14	70	Fairly good
6	TGK	15	75	Fairly good
7	KIT	12	60	Fair
8	TFS	10	50	Poor
9	AIM	14	70	Fairly good
10	RAS	14	70	Fairly good
11	AVR	15	75	Fairly good
	Total		765	

Table 1 shows that there were many students faced difficulty in answering the questions about Cinderella. In this meeting the lowest score was 50 (poor), and the other students gained an average of 75 (fairly good). The average mean score in this meeting was 69.5 (fairly good).

Second Meeting

In this meeting, the teacher taught about Rapunzel, taken from English Book for Junior High School Grade VII Semester 1 pp. 146-148. The description is as follows:

1. Pre-activity. In the meeting teacher greeted the students. From the attendance list, 16 students were present and 3 students were absents. Then the teacher asked some questions to the students about the story and after that the teacher explained the objective of learning process.

2. While-activity. The teacher gave the material about structure of narrative to the students and the teacher explained about the material. After that the teacher gave short story (Rapunzel) to the students and instructed the students to do their assignment by answering the questions about the story.

3. Post-activity. The teacher gave a conclusion about Rapunzel, and then the teacher gave a homework for students. After that the teacher thanked the students for their class participation.

Students' achievement in first meeting is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' Scores in Second Meeting

No	Student's Initials	Student's Score	Total Score	Classification
1	BLR	15	75	Fairly good
2	HIP	13	65	Fair
3	JSM	14	70	Fairly good
4	HDP	18	90	Very good
5	DYT	14	70	Fairly good
6	TGK	17	85	Good
7	KIT	18	90	Very good
8	MAT	10	50	Poor
9	NIB	18	90	Very good
10	RAS	17	85	Good
11	ACT	14	70	Fairly good
12	AVR	17	85	Good
13	AAN	18	90	Very good
14	AIM	17	85	Good
15	TFS	13	65	Fair
16	BAP	17	85	Good
	Total		1250	

Table 2 shows that many students got good results in answering the question about Rapunzel. The lowest score was 50 (poor), while the other students got average scores 85. The average mean score was 78.1 (good) and since the score had not yet reached the target (very

good), the researcher concluded that the teaching had to be continued to the third meeting.

Third Meeting

In this meeting, the story taught was My Best Friend, taken from English Book for Junior High School Grade VII Semester 1 pp. 58-60. The activities are described furthermore.

1. Pre-activity. In this meeting, teacher greeted the students first and then checked the attendance. 15 students were present and 4 students were absent in this third meeting. The teacher asked some questions to the students about short stories and after that the teacher explained the objective of learning process.

2. While-activity. In this activity, the teacher gave the short story about My Best Friends to the students, then the teacher instructed the students to read in pair. One student read one sentence, and then followed by the other students. After that the teacher instructed the students to find out difficult word and translate that word together. After reading the teacher help the students to translate the words that made students confusing the meaning. After that the students answer the question by writing on the paper.

3. Post-activity. In this activity, the teacher instructed student to collect their assignment. Then the teacher give a conclusion about the story and shared the key answers to the questions. The teacher then thanked students for their participation.

Table 3 shows students' achievement in this meeting.

Table 3. Students' Scores in Third Meeting

No	Student's Initials	Student's Score	Total Score	Classification
1	BLR	18	90	Very good
2	HIP	17	85	Good
3	JSM	18	90	Very good
4	HDP	17	85	Good
5	DYT	17	85	Good
6	TGK	17	85	Good
7	KIT	18	90	Very good
8	MAT	16	80	Good
9	PAL	18	90	Very good
10	RAS	18	90	Very good
11	EAT	17	85	Good
12	AVR	17	85	Good
13	AAN	17	85	Good
14	AIM	17	85	Good
15	GRS	17	85	Good
	Total		1295	

Table 3 shows that all students got excellent results. The average mean score of students' achievement in third meeting was 86.3 (very good) and thus had received the learning target.

Discussion

Based on the researcher's observation, the teacher's problems were that the teacher had difficulty in looking for the story with moral value, interesting enough for the students, and were everlasting to them. Also, the teacher had difficulty in getting meaning of difficult words to assist students in understanding the whole pars of the stories. Meanwhile, the students' problems were limited vocabulary, lack of confidents, and reluctant to share their ideas about the stories.

Teaching reading using short story is a good way, since stories can stimulate students' interests in reading. The students can know what the content of the story and know about language skill and language competence and it can improve the student's reading skill. It can also help for the students in study English. They can read the text of English story. The result of teaching reading using short story that the students can speak fluently and can than pronounce the words correctly and learn the correct grammar.

The researcher found out that the problem faced by the students was difficulties in understanding the meaning of difficult words in the stories. During observation, the teacher was more patient to help the students comprehending the stories. The teacher provided meaning for new vocabularies in the story or the main idea of the story. By giving the clues, they could answer teacher's question and thus made them answering the questions more easily.

Conclusion and Suggestion

From the findings, the researcher concludes that the students gained their reading achievement from the first meeting, second meeting, and the third meeting. At the first meeting the total students of class were 11 students, consisted of 7 male students and 4 female students. In this meeting, the average mean score was 69.5 or fairly good. In the second meeting, the students presented were 16 students, consisted of 12 male students and 4 female students. In this meeting, the average mean score was 78.1 or good. In the last meeting, the total students were 15 students, consisted of 11 male students and 4 female students. The average mean score in this meeting was 86.3 or very good. Thereby, seen from the third meeting, the researchers can conclude that the students' ability of class X MIA in comprehending short stories was increased and categorized as very good.

The researcher offers suggestion for the teacher to do provide more comprehension practice to the students and help them to master English reading skill. The teacher must give more attention to less skillful students, and encourage them to practice reading more.

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