

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARD THE USE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIAL IN TEACHING READING

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ABSTRACT

Teachers often have difficulties in finding the appropriate learning materials in teaching reading. Without appropriate reading texts that suit them, students spend long hours in the classroom with poor achievement in reading comprehension. This research aims to describe students' responses toward the use of the authentic material. This research employs descriptive qualitative method since it is suitable to give a clear description of this study. This study involved twenty-nine students of Al Ilyas Vocational High School. The data was obtained through classroom observation and questionnaire. The result of the study reveals that the students had the positive perception toward the use of authentic material in the reading class. The data of questionnaire showed that most of the respondents are interested in reading English text using authentic material. They thought that learning reading using authentic texts is very easy. It is supported by classroom observation data that the students became more active participated in the classroom.

Keywords: Authentic Material, Reading Comprehension

A. INTRODUCTION

English teaching in Indonesian vocational schools is different from other high schools due to different goals. The Education and Culture Ministry of Indonesia develops a different curriculum for both schools. The curriculum developed for vocational schools tends to contain more functional materials than the one developed for ordinary high schools. However, similar to the other kinds of high schools, English teaching in vocational high school identifies four skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing as an integral aspect.

In studying English, the ability to read is one of the most important things in learning English because by reading we will be able to improve science and will obtain the latest information. Reading is something that we do every day, and it is an integral part of our daily lives, taken very much for granted and generally assumed to be something that everyone can do (Berardo, 2006).

However, generally, many students have difficulties in reading comprehension. For example, they have problems in comprehending the text and getting the main idea of the text, students knew how to pronounce the word, but it occurred without understanding the meaning. Some students who have tried to comprehend the text by reading it many times, but they failed because they did not know its meaning. So, the students could not find good impressions from the text they read, and they did not know the reason for reading. Based on the researcher

observations, students of SMK Al Ilyas Malangbong have many difficulties in reading comprehension, because each student has different background knowledge. For example, they have difficulties in understanding and finding the main idea in a text. They know how to pronounce the word but not understand the meaning of the sentence read. Therefore, teachers must have the appropriate material to help students' in reading comprehension. The material used should increase students' interest in reading.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Reading

Reading cannot be separated from comprehension because the purpose or the result of the reading activity is to comprehend reading material (Astiyandha, 2012). In addition, Berardo (2006) claims that reading can have three main purposes, for survival, learning or pleasure. Reading for survival is considered to be in response to our environment, to find out information and can include street signs, advertising, and timetables. It depends very much on the day-to-day needs of the reader and often involves an immediate response to a situation. In contrast reading for learning is considered to be the reading done in the classroom and is goal orientated. While reading for pleasure is something for enjoyment.

2. Authentic Material

Authentic material refers to those taken from real-life sources, and they do not design for teaching and learning purposes. According to Tatsuki (2006) word "authenticity" considers as being synonymous with genuineness, realness, truthfulness, validity, reliability, undisputed credibility, and legitimacy of materials or practices." MacDonald et al. (2006) content, if there is a correspondence between the texts used in the classroom and types of texts used outside the classroom, then it is possible to call such texts authentic. A newspaper article, a rock song, a novel, a radio interview, and traditionally fairy stories are examples of authentic texts. Furthermore, MacDonald states that we can see such texts from television, newspaper, and magazine. In that mass media, information is spread widely from a place to many other places. In communicating in such media, people naturally use and apply their language as of how they communicate and use their language in their daily lives. One of the main purposes of using authentic materials in the classroom is to "expose" students to as much real language as possible.

In addition, Wallace (1998) cited in Apsari (2014) defines authentic texts as "real-life texts, not written for pedagogic processes." Furthermore, Jacobson et al. (2003) define that authentic materials as printed materials, which used in classrooms in the same way they would use in real life. Therefore, by using authentic materials, a teacher can bring the students the factual data from real-world context into the classroom. They can practice reading authentic and genuine language used in real life. For another purpose, foreign language learners also can be introduced to the culture of the native people through authentic materials.

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was a descriptive qualitative. The research was conducted in Al Ilyas Vocational High School, to be more specific in one class of eleventh-grade students of TKJ 1. This class consists of 29 students, 15 boys, and 14 girls. To get the data, during the research, this study employed classroom observation and questionnaire. The questionnaire is used to measure students' responses toward the use of authentic materials. Each question provided five options; strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section elaborates the findings of the research based on the data gathered from the instruments used.

Findings on Students' Responses

The questionnaire was given at the end of the research to find out students' responses about the use of authentic materials. The purpose of this questionnaire was to determine the students' responses to authentic materials used during the treatment. In this questionnaire, eight positive statements and seven negative statements were asked to the students.

Table 3.
Frequency and percentage of students' responses

NO	STATEMENTS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un Decided	Dis agree	Strongly disagree
1	Using authentic material in reading English text makes me easier in learning English reading	6.89%	68.96%	17.24%	6.89%	0%
2	I am more interested to read English text using authentic material	3.44%	62.07%	31.03%	3.44%	0%
3	Using authentic materials in reading English text makes me difficult in learning reading	3.44%	48.2%	37.93%	10.34%	0%
4	I am not interested to read English text after being taught using authentic texts.	0%	10.34%	55.1%	31.03%	3.44%
5	I am not willing to ask questions when the lecturer using authentic materials	3.79%	13.79%	34.4%	31.03%	0%
6	I don't like studying English if the lecturer using authentic materials	0%	13.79%	41.37%	37.93%	6.89%
7	It is easy to remember vocabularies using authentic materials	0%	13.79%	27.58%	58.62 %	0%
8	I always feel sleepy in the class when the teacher uses the material.	3.44%	17.24%	13.79%	51.72%	13.79%
9	I think the material improve my motivation to read more on the 'real' English texts.	37.93%	41.37%	13.79%	3.44%	3.44%
10	I hope the lecturer closes the meeting as soon as possible when using authentic texts	10.34%	13.79%	58.62%	17.24%	0%

The findings above show that most of respondents have the positive perception towards the use of authentic material in reading class. It can be seen from the table that 62.07% of the respondents agree that they are more interested to read English text using authentic material than using the previous one. In addition, 58.62% of the respondents agree that learning reading using authentic texts is very easy. This is supported by the data from observation that although the students had difficulty in comprehending the text in the earlier day of the class, they then became more relaxed afterward.

In addition, the data from observation also revealed that the use of authentic materials attracted students to read. Students are directed to read as a pleasure and for communication so that they do not feel burdened by the requirement to answer questions once they have read. The other good thing in its use was that the students also have the freedom to choose reading materials that they enjoy. Furthermore, it allows students the opportunity to obtain it by themselves and bring it in the classroom. In short, by giving the impression to the students that the purpose of this reading is based on pleasure and enjoyment, students showed the power of excitement and enjoyed the process of the reading, which in turn improved their motivation to learn.

E. CONCLUSION

This research revealed that the students have the positive perception toward the use of authentic material. It can be seen from the data of questionnaire that the use of authentic material can increase students' motivation to read English text. They became more interested in reading English text. It might be due to the opportunity that they have in selecting the text to be read. Furthermore, the students seem to enjoy the process of the reading and they are very enthusiastic during the lesson.

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