



USING HUMOR STORY TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT AND MOTIVATION IN READING

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ABSTRACT

Employing various reading techniques is a crucial thing for teachers to motivate their students to read. This paper discusses a way of increasing students' achievement and motivation in reading by using humor story. This study provides a data on students' reading achievement and an analysis on students' motivation in reading, as well.

Reading is a process of applying a number of reading text processing skills in order to understand the content. However, many students find difficulties in comprehending reading since teachers use single way of presenting it and use monotonous or uninteresting reading materials. This study aimed at improving students' reading achievement and motivation by using humor story. This pre-experimental study involved 17 eleventh-grade students of vocational school that were purposively selected to help them to enhance their achievement and motivation in reading. The data were collected through two instruments; (1) test; to get the students' achievement in reading, and (2) questionnaire; to get their motivation type by using Motivation Reading Questionnaire (MRQ). The results showed increases in students' reading achievements on literal and interpretative and students' motivation tend to Competition in reading as their dominant motivation from the other ten types.

Keywords: humor story, achievement, motivation, and reading

INTRODUCTION

As one of the four skills in language learning, reading is essential for students to get information. Unfortunately, many students feel reluctant and uninterested to read. It is revealed when conducting preliminary research in one of the vocational schools that there are some factors of students' difficulties in learning English, especially in reading comprehension skill. First, students had difficulties in comprehending English texts because they were lack of vocabulary. Second, the students did not have motivation to read, especially long texts. Third, students had difficulties to identify explicit information in a text and it was hard for them to find the main idea of a text. The other factor is the teachers always use the same method to teach English like using direct method. In learning process, the students were not active and did not pay attention to the materials. In addition, students felt bored and passive in the class because the teachers dominated in the classroom activities. Those problems then can be concise into two main issues as the focus of this study which bothering students' skill in reading namely; students' motivation and teacher's method or strategy.

Students' motivation is a crucial thing to consider in reading. When students have motivation they will be easy to get information and comprehending the text. As Guthrie and Wigfield (2000: 403) noted that reading motivation has a determining effect on students



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concerning how much they will read". Motivation in reading is not only to predict students' achievement and understanding, but also to show how many students are motivated to read and how much time they will spend.

Motivation in teaching and learning process is one of the supporting elements for the creation of educational goals. In terms of teaching and learning if students are unmotivated, they will not reach the target. If one learns without any encouragement or motivation, then the situation is unpleasant to learn and even faster bored. Ryan and Deci (2000: 54) point out that motivated means to be moved to do something. Someone is called as unmotivated person if he/she gets no inspiration, on the contrary, someone who feels inspiration to do something, it means he/she is motivated.

Motivating and keeping students interested in reading are challenging thing even for the most experience teachers. Motivation could be a stronger one for students' success. Therefore, it is essential that teachers use effective strategies for motivating students to read and increasing their learning achievement in reading. One of them is by using humor story.

Humor is a unique, though universal part of human experience and is fundamentally manifested and expressed through language. It is prevalent in all languages and cultures. Therefore, the employment of humor within the context of second or foreign language learning offers great advantages to both language teacher and learner. Hayati et.al (2011: 652) says that using Humor Story as materials in reading comprehension class is beneficial to facilitate a relax atmosphere and enjoyment for the students, so they will have strong motivation in reading. As a result, they will try to comprehend the content of the reading passage.

The purposes of this study were to enhance students' achievement and motivation in reading by using humor story.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning involving the written language by interpreting textual information in the light of prior knowledge and experiences using appropriate and efficient comprehension strategies (Snow, 2002: 11). Using appropriate strategies in reading should be considered especially when teachers want to enhance their students' motivation to read.

Motivation refers to the reasons individuals take action. Motivation to learn is a willingness or desire to gain information, develop skills, and attain mastery. Motivation is tied to the belief that learning is interesting and relevant and therefore of value. The reason for learning something must be perceived as worth the effort and emotional investment required to accomplish the learning (Jalongo, 2007; Covington, 2000; Hootstein, 1994).

Some studies reported that motivation was a stronger predictor of student to learn than grades or standardized achievement and aptitude tests (Shih & Gamon, 2001; Miller & Meece, 1999). Therefore, it is crucial that educators use effective strategies for motivating students and increasing their appreciation for the value of learning.

In term of using humor story in reading, some researchers have conducted studies and reported that using humor in language course can motivate students to learn, attract their



attention toward reading text, besides, it also can reduce learning anxiety (Orekoya, 2014; Piaw, 2012; Hayati, et al, 2011; Halima, 2002; Zabidin, 2015).

Moreover, humor story in reading can be used to promote a relaxed learning environment that motivates students to learn and gain information. “Students are more likely to learn if they are happy and amused than if they are feeling anxious and threatened” (Martin, 2007: 350). Furthermore, humor story can reduce classroom anxiety (Shibinski & Martin, 2010; Lems 2011),

In learning activity, motivation in any kind of dimensions plays an important role that influences the success of learning activity. Uno (2016: 23) stated motivation is a critically important factor for learning, why students learn and how they learn is influence by their level of motivation to learn.

According to Williams and William (2010), there are five key ingredients which impacts students’ motivation namely: student, teacher, content, method/process, and environment. Student motivation is an essential element that is necessary for quality education. Meanwhile, Palmer says that there are ways of knowing students when they are motivated namely; they pay attention, they begin working on tasks immediately, they ask questions and volunteer answers, and they appear to be happy and eager (Palmer, 2007).

In reading comprehension, the message to be imposed in written form is the most important element that the students must recognize, because the primary purpose of reading is to know the thoughts express in the printed material. When students read humorous texts, they engaged in a “cognitive play”, “where words and concepts are used in ways that are surprising, unusual, and incongruous, activating schemas with which they are not normally associated” (Martin, 2007: 109)

The essential purpose of reading generally is to get new information and/or pleasure. Everyone has a different purpose in reading, and that purpose helps to understand more of what they read. When someone reads to fill in leisure time, he or she may read quickly or slowly based on the way he likes or feels, but if he or she is reading for learning or information such as news, science or other fields, which is part of his lesson or task, it is very slow and cautious.

Anderson in Uno (2016: 11) classifies the purposes of reading activity into seven purposes, they are: (1) reading for details or fact; (2) reading for main ideas; (3) reading for sequence or organization; (4) reading for inference; (5) reading for classify; (6) reading for evaluate; and (7) reading to compare or contrast.

METHODOLOGY

This study which employed pre-experimental design to investigate students’ achievement and motivation in reading comprehension by using humor story, involved 17 eleventh-grade students of vocational school that were purposively selected. The data were collected through two instruments; (1) test (pre and posttests); to get the students’ achievement in reading in terms of literal comprehension (main idea) and interpretative comprehension (conclusion), and (2) questionnaire; to get their motivation by using Motivation Reading Questionnaire (MRQ). Students who participated in the study were given reading texts using humor stories for six meetings. Before treating them with humor stories, they were given a test as pre test to get their prior knowledge and after having the treatment, the post test was administered to find their achievement and a questionnaire, to get the students’ motivation type which is called Motivation Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) developed by Guthrie and Wigfield



(1997). This questionnaire is reliable and valid since it has been validated by experts. The aspects or types of Motivation Reading Questionnaire are reading efficacy, challenge, curiosity, involvement, importance of reading, and reading work/avoidance, competition, recognition, reading for grades, social reasons and compliance.

The questionnaire consisted of 53 items and each item has four options on a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 (very different for me), 2 (a little different for me), 3 (a little like me), 4 (a lot like me). To be clear, before asking the students to fill the questionnaires, they were given detail explanation and direction on what should be done with the questionnaires.

DISCUSSIONS

There are two main focuses of students' achievement in reading comprehension namely; in term of literal comprehension which refers to the main idea and interpretive comprehension which refers to drawing conclusion. It is seen that students' scores on literal comprehension and interpretive comprehension are different before and after the treatment by using humor Story.. The score of students' reading comprehension on literal comprehension in term of main idea in post-test was higher than pre-test where the post-test was 7.64 and pre-test was 5.14.

Meanwhile, students' score on the interpretive comprehension in the pre test was 5.73 which was different from the post-test that was 7.35. It means that the mean score of the post-test was greater than the pre-test.

Based on the findings it was seen that the students' score percentage in reading comprehension before using humor story was in poor category. It can be seen from the pre-test result of the students' score in reading comprehension in term of content: of the 17 students, none of them got excellent and very good score. There were 3 students (17.64%) got "very poor" score, 7 students (41.17%) got "poor" score, 6 students (35.4%) got "fairly", and only 1 student (5.9%) got "fairly good" category. It was because most of them were lazy to read the text and found difficulties to answer the question especially in interpretive comprehension. Burn in Hastuti (2013: 15) stated that interpretive reading identifies the way to read between the lines of making inferences. This is the process of deriving ideas that implied rather than directly stated. However, in fact the students' reading comprehension was poor.

On the other side, in the post test could be seen that there was 1 student (5.9%) in "excellent" category, 4 students (23.52%) in "Very Good" category, 8 students (47.05%) in "Fairly Good" category, 2 students (11.8%) in "fairly" category, 2 students (11.8%) in "poor" category and none of the students in "good" and "Very Poor" categories. Those tests result indicated that there was a significance improvement before and after the treatment. In other words, the students' reading comprehension especially in term of interpretive comprehension was enhanced after using humor story. It is relevant with Hayati et.al (2011) stated that using humor in language courses, in particular making class more enjoyable, can contribute to improving students' proficiency and by using humor story teachers can motivate students and attract their attention toward reading text

While the result of the questionnaire data analysis seemed that the mean score of type 1 (Reading Efficacy) was 39, type 2 (Reading Challenge) was 44, type 3 (Reading Curiosity) was 55.7, type 4 (Reading Involvement) was 43.14, type 5 (Importance of Reading) was 47.5, type 6



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(Reading Work Avoidance) was 38, type 7 (Competition in Reading) was 65.25, type 8 (Recognition for Reading) was 42.5, type 9 (Reading for Grades) was 43.25, type 10 (Social Reasons for Reading) was 31.14, and type 11 (Compliance) was 43.2. From the eleven types of motivation in reading it is clearly seen the *competition in reading* type was 65.25 as the highest dominant motivation from the other ten types motivation. While the *social reason for reading* type was 31.14 as the lowest one from the other 10 types of motivation. This data is in line with what Chik (2005) noted that the humorous English reading could increase students' motivation.

CONCLUSIONS

Motivation is one of the factors that affects students' activity in learning. Therefore, using humor story could motivate students to learn and to read. Motivated students will be more enthusiastic and interested to learn. Besides, motivation is also as a trigger for students which drive them in learning. When students have motivation to read, meaning that they enjoy learning, they tend to know, understand, and have confidence in their reading abilities which will result in better achievement. Based on the findings, then the conclusions of the study are: there were increases in students' reading achievements on literal and interpretative comprehension and students' motivation tend to *Competition in reading* type as their dominant motivation from the other ten types.

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