

**STUDENTS' EFL LEARNING OBSTACLES AND STRATEGIES IN READING
NARRATIVE TEXT AT THE SECOND GRADE OF MTS RAUDLATUTTHOLIBIN
NW PAOKMOTONG**

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ABSTRACT

The research was about students' EFL learning obstacles and strategies in reading narrative text, it was conducted at MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong. The purpose of the study was to find out; (1) the students' obstacles in learning reading narrative text, (2) the students' dominant obstacles in reading narrative text, and (3) the cognitive and social mediation strategies were applied by the students in facing their obstacles. In this study, The main theory based on O'Malley and Chamot in language learning strategy. The design of this study was quantitative and qualitative design or mix method. The data was collected through reading narrative test, interview and questionnaire. The result of the study showed that the students' obstacles were in generic structure of narrative text such as orientation, complication, resolution and vocabulary, but the dominant obstacle of the students were in vocabulary. The strategies was applied by the students were cognitive and social mediation strategies in terms of resourcing and cooperation. 90% students applied resourcing and 95% applied cooperation for their learning strategies.

Keywords: EFL, obstacles, strategies, reading narrative text.

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mempelajari tentang hambatan dan strategi belajar siswa dalam mempelajari teks narrative di MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan; (1) hambatan siswa dalam mempelajari teks narrative, (2) hambatan siswa yang paling dominan dalam mempelajari teks narrative, (3) jenis strategi apa diantara kognitif dan social mediation strategi yang mereka gunakan dalam menghadapi hambatan mereka. Dalam penelitian ini, teori dasar yang digunakan adalah teori yang dikemukakan oleh O'Malley and Chamot tentang strategi belajar bahasa. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan tiga instrumen yakni reading narrative test, interview dan kuesioner. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah bahwa hambatan siswa ditemukan di struktur teks narrative seperti orientation, complication, resolution, dan vocabulary, namun hambatan siswa yang paling dominan adalah vocabulary. Diantara dua strategi yang diterapkan dalam penelitian ini, siswa cenderung menggunakan cooperation dan resourcing. 95% siswa menerapkan cooperation dalam cognitive strategy dan 90% siswa menerapkan resourcing dalam social mediation strategy.

Katakunci: Bahasa asing, rintangan, strategy, membaca teks narasi

INTRODUCTION

Nowdays many people try to learn English because English is important as a means of communication in all over the world. As we know, English is as an international language which can be used by all humans to communicate with other people all over the world. With mastering English well, we can be able to get so much knowledge from books, newspapers, magazines and so on so forth because most of them are written in English. Besides that, it is significance and dominant role in the world affair be getting more crucial along with vast growth of sciences and technologies. We realize that the majority of science and technology and other information are written in English. No wonder, many people are motivated to learn this language. That's not at all, English in teenagers' environment has been made as a life style to communicate with each other or their friends mainly at educational world.

However, concerning of English as a foreign language. Most students complain that English is not easy to learn and to understand since English is different from Indonesian in reading, especially in reading narrative text. Reading is one of the skills that the students should learn. To get information from the source, the learners have to be able to read the text effectively and efficiently. The fundamental goal of reading activities is to enable the students to read scientific text. Besides, narrative text is one of the text types that should be learned by students. Narrative text is interesting text and the students can learn from it. The purpose of narrative text is to entertain, to tell a story or to provide literary experience. Because of the case, this study focuses on the students' EFL learning obstacles and strategies in reading narrative text.

Reading comprehension means how the students find the information from the text. Narrative texts are the texts that must be learned by the students as reading materials. In these texts, they have to comprehend the main idea and other information of narrative text. In narrative text, the students should find the main ideas or contents of Orientation, Complication, Resolution and Reorientation (Cohen, 2000). In Orientation the students need to know the scene and the participants. Then, in complication, the students should find the problems occur in the story. For the resolution, the students will find how the problems are solved. Last, reorientation refers to the conclusion of a story. Comprehending narrative texts, the students need to have enough vocabulary so that they are able to gain knowledge by reading texts. According to Harmer (2001) one of reading techniques can be used by the students in order to be able to find the main idea of a text is through skimming. Skimming means reading quickly three to four times faster than normal reading.

Language learning strategy plays an important role in learning a foreign language. Chamot, (2005: 112-130). O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 99) classify the learning strategies into metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies and affective strategies. On the other sides, almost all learning strategies that is categorized by Oxford (1990: 109) either direct strategies-memory, cognitive, and affective and social strategies are employed by successful learners, but in this study the researcher focuses on cognitive strategies and social mediation strategies by O'Malley and Chamot.

The teacher who teaches English in MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong also explained that some of his students find some obstacles in learning English. Hence, this illustration brings this study becomes highly needed to be investigated since this study may solve the students' obstacles in learning narrative text. Thus, investigating the learning obstacles and learning strategies used by second grade students of MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong in order to develop their competences and to develop the way their teacher teaches them.

For EFL learners whose exposure to English is quite limited, reading becomes one of the most crucial means by which academic knowledge is transmitted. The ability to read academic text is considered to be one of the most important skills that EFL learners need to acquire (Levine, et al., 2000). There are several obstacles in reading comprehension such as a lack of vocabulary, lack of reading approaches, and lack of effective reading skill. A lack of Vocabulary Knowledge is one of the largest obstacles to efficiently comprehending academic texts in EFL (Levine &Reves, 1990). Cheng (2010) further stated that most EFL learners of learning English texts are insufficient and their efficacy in reading to learn from texts in the EFL context is questionable.

O'Malley and his colleagues (1990: 144-118) conducted a study on language learning strategies by using interviews with EFL beginning and intermediate levels students. They then identified twenty six language learning strategies. They categorized these strategies into three broad categories: cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and social/affective strategies.

METHODS

Three instruments were applied : reading narrative test, interview and questionnaire. In relation to reading narrative test, all the second grade students of MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong were engaged to collect the data and information about the the students' obstacles in reading narrative text. The test consisted of multiple choice which was constructed for the purpose of this research.

The reading test in this research was multiple choice item test from which the students mean score would be analyzed using the formula as follows:

a. Mean Score

The formula obtain students' mean score is:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where:

M = the average of students' score

$\sum X$ = the sum of total score

N = the number of the students being observed

(Adapted from Sumadia, 2015: 43)

b. Classical competences

The percentages of classical competences is counted by using formula bellow:

$$KK = \frac{P}{N} \times 100\%$$

(Adapted from Sumadia, 2015: 43)

Interview

The researcher only took several students in the interview and the aimed of the interview was to emphasize what the dominant obstacle was found by the students in reading narrative test. The interview question based on the students' obstacles that were found by using reading narrative test.

Questionnaire

The researcher took all the second grade students of MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong to collect the data and information about the strategies that the students used in their obstacles. It would be given after the researcher found the students' obstacles in learning reading narrative text. The questionnaire consisted of two types of learning strategies, they were cognitive strategies and social mediation strategies. The researcher gave the questionnaire sheet for the 20 second grade students of MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong.

Data Collection Procedure

There were two steps were taken to collect the data in this study. The researcher prepared the test to collect the students' obstacles data and to take the participants' personal data. Specific instructions would be given orally to avoid the technical mistake before conducting the test. They would not be allowed to use dictionaries and any of electronic tools such as smart phone, electronic dictionary, laptop, note book, etc.

Administering the questionnaire was the next step in collecting the data. Specific instructions would be given to avoid the technical mistake before conducting the questionnaire. The researcher also personally watch over the whole the test and questionnaire sessions. The result of the questionnaire and test would be analyzed based on the system explained in research instrument.

Quantitative data were analyzed and displayed in many different ways. Some familiar ways of reporting numerical data include percentages and proportions (David nunan, 2009 : 372). The data in this study is turning them into percentage then creating the table base on them. The scoring system applied in this study based on the formula as mentioned on the instrument of the research.

Qualitative data was taken from the questionnaire. The researcher used two steps to analyze the data; describing and clasifying.

All of the data that were collected from the questionnaire would be described in order to answer the research question. The data collection would be classified based on research question. The researcher classified all the qualitative data into categories that represent different aspects of the data. It was classified into a group or table.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data in this study was taken from MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong. The number of samples in this study was 20 students or all the second grade students. They were given a reading narrative test to find their obstacles in reading narrative text. The reading narrative test was 10 questions, which were divided into four subcategories orientation, complication, resolution, and vocabulary. Then, the questionnaire was 9 items about the strategy in facing the obstacles. The following table showed the summary of the result.

Table 3. The Students' Obstacles Percentages based on the test

| No. | Items of Narrative Test | Right Answer | Wrong Answer |
|-----|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1 | Orientation | 70% | 30% |
| 2 | Complication | 65% | 35% |
| 3 | Resolution | 80% | 20% |
| 4 | Vocabulary | 40% | 60% |

Table 3 displayed what obstacles were found by the students in reading narrative text and what the most difficult obstacles of the students in reading narrative text, as the table displayed, the students have obstacles in orientation, complication, resolution and vocabulary but the most difficult obstacle of the students in narrative text was lack of vocabulary. There were 30% of the students got wrong answer in orientation, 35% in complication, 25% in resolution and 60% in vocabulary. In other words, from twenty students or all of the students at second grade of MTs Raudlatutholibin NW Paokmotong, there were six (6) students got wrong answer in orientation,

seven (7) students got wrong answer in complication, four (4) students got wrong answer in resolution and twelve (12) students got wrong answer in vocabulary. So that, the result as the table displayed, it has answered the first research question “what the obstacles are found by the students in reading narrative text?” and the second research question “what is the most difficult obstacles for the students in reading narrative text?.”

Table 4 the interview of the students

| No. | Students' Names | Students' Responses |
|-----|------------------------|--|
| 1 | Dani Ansori | Saya tidak tahu |
| 2 | Fitriani | Saya tidak mengerti maksud soalnya |
| 3 | Haerul Anam | Saya tidak tahu artinya |
| 4 | Hasmiati | Saya tidak bisa mnegartikannya |
| 5 | Ilmiyawati | Saya tidak tahu artinya |
| 6 | M. Thalib Rida Maskur | Saya tidak bisa, dan saya tidak tahu artinya |
| 7 | Nispulaili | Saya tidak bisa mengartikannya |
| 8 | Novianti | Saya tidak tahu dan soalnya sangat sulit |
| 9 | Nur'aini | Saya tidak tahu artinya |
| 10 | Rahmatun Nufus | Saya tidak bisa mengartikannya |
| 11 | Rohaini | Soalnya sulit untuk saya pahami |
| 12 | Siti Hawa Mutiara Hati | Saya tidak mengerti dengan soalnya |

Table 4. Displayed the students responses in interview. This interview aimed to emphasize the students' obstacles in readin narrative text. Almost all the students have same response in interview section. It meant that, the students face same obstacle. English learning students' obstacles questionnaire are as follows:

Table 5. The students' responses on the questionnaire

| STUDENT RESPONSE | CATEGORY | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|----------|------------|---------|---------------------------|-------------|
| | COGNITIVE STRATEGY | | | | SOCIAL MEDIATION STRATEGY | |
| | Resourcing | Grouping | Refetition | Imagery | Clarification | Cooperation |
| YES | 90% | 50% | 70% | 25% | 90% | 95% |
| NO | 10% | 50% | 30% | 75% | 10% | 5% |

Table 5 displayed the students' percentages of learning cognitive strategies and social mediation strategies and what kinds of them are mostly applied by the students in facing their obstacles. It was gained from the questionnaire instrument. As the result, in the terms of cognitive strategy such as; resourcing, grouping, refetition and imagery. The percentages of students who applied the cognitive strategy in terms of resourcing was 90%, grouping was 50%, refetition was 70%, imagery was 25%. Then, in social mediation stratgey there were 90%

students applied clarification and 95% applied cooperation. So that, if we look into the percentages as the number of all the students, there were 20 students (all the second grade) of MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong who are involved as participants in this research. Twenty students are called as 100%, in other words, the students who applied cognitive strategy in terms of resourcing was 18 students, grouping was 10 students, refetition was 14 students , imagery 5 students. Then, in terms of clarification was 18 students and cooperation was 19 students. Clarification and cooperation were terms of the social mediation strategy. So that, in cognitive strategy the students were mostly applied resourcing, there were 18 students applied it, and in social mediation strategy, the students were mostly applied cooperation, there were 19 students applied it.

The data has answered the third research question or the last research question, it was “What cognitive and social mediation strategies are mostly applied by the students in their obstacles?”

The research result showed the data that the researcher got during the research. The researcher needed to discuss all of the result in order to know what obstcales were found by the students in reading narrative text related to the contents in each structure such as; orientation, complication, resolution and vocabulary. By giving three instruments of getting the data, the researcher could find the students’ obstacles in reading narrative text and the strategy of the students in facing their obstacles.

Students’ obstacles

The students obstacle in reading narrative text was found in orientation, complication, resolution and vocabulary but the most dominant obstacle for the students were in vocabulary. It was emphasized by using the second instrument, it was interview. It meant that, the students was lack of vocabulary. Sarwo (2013) stated that the most difficult item for the students in comprehending narrative text was in vocabulary. Item was meant on the Sarwo’s statement were orientation, complication, resolution, and vocabulary.

A lack of Vocabulary Knowledge is one of the largest obstacles to efficiently comprehending academic texts in EFL (Levine & Reves, 1990). Cheng (2010) further stated that most EFL learners of learning English texts are insufficient and their efficacy in reading to learn from texts in the EFL context is questionable. Being unable to deal with large amount of text, they might painstakingly rely on word-by-word reading. As a result, most of the students often moan and groan about the complicated texts and the huge number of reading assignments during a week. Another problem is that some EFL teachers are called upon to teach these courses with little or no training in education (Huang, 2006). It is usually the teacher’s school-related knowledge which subjectively determines what they teach in the classroom.

A lack of vocabulary is caused by The size of the task, The differences between spoken English and written or “literate” English, The limitations of sources of information about words, and The complexity of word knowledge.

Students’ Strategies

The strategy that the researcher wanted to investigate in the study was two strategies: cognitive strategy and social mediation strategy in terms of resourcing, imagery, Grouping, refetition, it’s for the cognitive strategies and question for clarification and cooperation for social mediation strategy (O’Malley et al, 1990: 119).

The students in this study tended to applied the term of resourcing in their cognitive strategy and cooperation in their social mediation strategy. As the table 4 displayed, there were

90% or 18 from 20 students applied resourcing and 95% or 19 from 20 students applied cooperation. In other words, the students tended to applied the social mediation strategy.

There are many factors affect the choice of learning strategies. Those factors might include degree of awareness, age, sex, nationality, learning style, personality traits, motivation, learning context, and language proficiency (Zare & Nooreen, 2011). Studies have shown significant gender differences between males and female language learners in which females have demonstrated to use more and wider range of strategies than males (Zare, 2010).

Based on the previous studies mentioned in chapter 2, there were some differences and similarites between this study and previous study. The differences of this study and previous study was in the participant, the participant on this study was the second grade students of junior high school and this study only focused on some terms in cognitive strategy and social mediation strategy. In other words, not all terms in cognitive and social mediation strategy was investiaged in this study. On the other hand, the previous study investiaged all the terms in the learning strategy but not all kinds of learning stratgey such as metacognitive strategy, cognitive strategy, social mediation strategy was investigated. As for the similarity of this study and previous study was in the instrument. Cahyani (2010) in her study, she used questionnaire to find the students strategy, so did in this study.

In previous study, the researchers used some different measurements to measure learning strategies used by students, therefore the result of their studies also shown that different level of students need different treatment of learning strategies to increase students' ability or achievement in some specific subjects. Thus, in this study, the researcher not only learned the students strategy but before the researcher learn about the student's strategy, he learned about their obstacles first. So, This study conducted quantitative and qualitative research dealing with the learning obstacles and strategies employed by the students at MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong. The researcher also limited the study on the students' obstacles in reading narrative text and their strategies in facing their obstacles.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the research result, the most dominant obstacles of the students in reading narrative text was in vocabulary. The data get from reading narrative test and interview. By using reading narrative test, the result could be seen bellow:

In vocabulary item, there were 60% of the students got the wrong answer the and 40% of them got the right answer.

- a. In observation item, there were 70% students got right answer and 30% of them got wrong answer.
- b. In complication item, there were 65% students got right answer and 35% of them got wrong answer.
- c. In resolution item, there were 80% students got right answer and 20% of them got wrong answer.

In interview, almost all the participants have similar answer and their answer indicated that the students were lack of vocabulary.

Students' Strategies

The term of strategy that the students applied in cognitive strategy was resourcing. There were 18 (90%) students applied resourcing. On the other hand, in the terms of social mediation strategy, there were 19 (95%) students applied cooperation. It meant that, the second grade students of MTs Raudlatuttholibin NW Paokmotong more likely applied the social mediation strategy.

Suggestion

Further researcher

This research focused on the investigation of the students' obstacles in reading narrative text and their strategies in facing their obstacles. There are many aspects and factors can be involved for further study. The further researcher can analyze factors affecting the students in using cognitive and social mediation strategy.

English teacher

The suggestion can be given to the English teacher base on the strategy that mostly used by the students. The teacher can build cooperative learning in which the teacher divides the students become some groups.

Secondary students

Students of secondary school should read more text to build their vocabulary knowledge, not only that, the students also expected to master the generic structure of narrative text in order to understand it easily.

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