ANALYZING OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS’ ABILITY IN UNDERSTANDING REFERENCES IN PARAGRAPH AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY

Laila Maqhfirah¹ Welya Roza¹ Fatimah Tanjung¹
¹ English Department, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Bung Hatta University
E-mail: lailamaghfirah12@yahoo.com

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to describe the ability of the second year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University in understanding references in paragraph. The design of this research was descriptive method. The population members of this research was 48. In selecting the sample, the researcher used simple random sampling technique. The number of sample members was 24 students one among two classes. The instrument to get the data was reading test in the form of multiple choice. The researcher did try out to the students out of the sample. The result of the try out test was used to analyze item difficulties, item discrimination, and reliability of the test. To validate the test, the researcher used content validity. The researcher found that the coefficient correlation was high (0.63). It means that the test was reliable. The result of the data analysis showed that the ability of the second year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University in understanding references in paragraph was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 15 students (62.5%) had good ability. In specific, short the researcher suggests the lecturer should give more exercises and motivation to the students. For the students, they are expected to do more exercises about guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words through context clues. For the next researcher, it is suggested to do the research on other aspects like errors faced by students in understanding references in paragraph.

Key words: Students ability, understanding references, paragraph

INTRODUCTION

In this globalization era, where there is no real boundaries seen, people need a language to communicate. English had been chosen as the language to unite the world in globalization.

Reading is one of the language skills which is an important part in English. It is an important activity for students. Everyday, the students often face to read like reading announcement, advertisement, pamphlet, magazine, and newspaper.

Nowadays, many technology and books are written in English. Automatically, the students need skill in reading English text. Through reading learners can pay all of their curious about world and everything in their mind. Knowledge information, science, motivation, religion, life guide and available in paper or internet if the learners want to search and read it. The learners
need to have competency in reading in order to be able to enrich their knowledge in absorbing all information, because reading is window of the world. It is also one of the language skills that are examined in national final examination.

In learning reading especially the skills in reading, the reader is also learning about the paragraph. The paragraph to the original words of something written, printed, or spoken in contrast will a summary or paraphrase. Paragraph or written, prose or verse, dialogue or monologue.

According to Alyousef (2013:69), the reader interacts dynamically with the text as he/she tries to elicit the meaning and where various kinds of knowledge are being used: linguistics or systemic knowledge as well as schematic knowledge. Reading comprehends the ability to read text, process it and understand its meaning. An individual’s ability to comprehend text is an influence by their traits and skills, one of which is the ability to make inferences.

Learning the reading text is connected to learning about reference. Reference is used to indicate the information that retrieved from the same things which stated in the text at second time. As a technical skill, reference should be comprehended by the students because understanding reference can improve the students understanding in reading. According to Droga & Humphrey (2005:104), reference is referring word that point to something in text. There are three types of references: personal reference, demonstrative reference, and comparative reference.

Example of personal pronoun reference, demonstrative reference, number 1, 2, in paragraph and comparative reference number 3:

A surprising fact about sailboats is that they can move against the wind. No matter which way the wind blows, you can move your boat in any direction you like. This is possible because of the shape and action of the sails.

1. Personal reference
   They refers to: sailboats
2. Demonstratives reference
   This refers to: move your boat in any direction you like
   Octopuses are easily tamed and can be trained to take food from the hand of attendants or visitors. Some will even pull your hand open to get at a tightly held bit of food.
3. Comparative
   a. It’s same cat as the one we saw yesterday.
   b. It’s similar cat to the one we saw yesterday.
c. It’s a different cat from the one we saw yesterday.

d. He’s better man than I am

Reference can be used in personal reference, demonstrative reference and comparative reference. The researcher thought that there is an understanding references reading in paragraph.

Based on the researcher’s observation by asking the Second Year Students at English Department of Bung Hatta University about understanding references in paragraph, she found that many students were unable to understand or comprehend the paragraph. The researcher also found that the students have faced difficulty to identify the reference in paragraph. Most of students just read the paragraph given but they are not able to comprehend the detail of the paragraph. They have lack in reference and to catch the meaning of the paragraph. They are lack of motivation to read a lot, lack of vocabulary, and lack of background knowledge of the paragraph.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The design of the research is descriptive research. According to Gay (1987:189), descriptive method involves collecting data in order to answer question concerning the current status of object of the study. It meant that descriptive method does not control subjects being studied. It measured what has already existed of the subject.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that descriptive research just gives facts or real information about the sample of the study without manipulation or treatment. In this research, the researcher described the ability of the second year students in understanding references in paragraph at Bung Hatta University.

Population and Sample

According to Gay (1987:102), population is the group to which the researcher would like the results of study to be generalized. In this research, the population of this studied the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University who register in 2015/2016 academic year. The researcher chosed them as population because they have studied a series of reading subject. The number of population members is 48 students and they are distributed into two classes, class A 24 and class B 24 sample, as shown in Table 3.1:

Table 3. 1 : The Distribution of Population by Class
Due the numbers of the population, the researcher used sample in conducting this study. It means that just study a group of the population. Therefore, one of the two class become the sample for this research. According to Gay (1987:103), states that a good sample is one that is representative of the population from which it is selected. Gay (1987:114), states that minimum sample size is 10%.

In selecting sample the researcher used simple random sampling technique. Creswell (2012:142), states that simple random sampling technique is a technique that selects the participants for the sample randomly so that any individual an equal probability of being selected from the population.

To choose the sample, the researcher wrote the name of population members in 48 pieces of the paper. Then, the researcher rolled them and put them into a box. After shaking it, the researcher took 24 pieces of paper randomly with closed ayes. The students who names were selected became the sample of this study. The other sample used as sample for try out.

**Instrumentation**

In this research, the researcher used reading test in the form of multiple choice. It became the researcher’s reason to used this form of the test. The test consists of reading paragraph. There are 30 questions and the researcher asked the students to answer the question in 60 minutes to answer the questions. The researcher took try out test to the students out of sample whether it was reliable or not.

**Validity of the Test**

The criteria of good test are valid and reliable. The test is valid if it measures what is supposed to be measured. To validate the test, the researcher uses content validity in which the materials are constructed. It is supported by Arikunto (2012:82). He says that one of the characteristics of a good test is content validity in which the test materials are constructed based on the curriculum and syllabus.

After the researcher got the result of the item difficulties and item discrimination it
found that 30 items be the items that gave
to the student in real test. table 3.2

Specification of Try Out Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>The total number of items</th>
<th>Item distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Personal reference</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Demonstrative reference</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Comparative reference</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reliability of the Test

Reliability is the degree to which is
test consistently measures what it is
supposed to be measured (Gay, 1987:135).
To had the reability of the test, researcher
used split-half method. It meant that the
test items were grouped into odd item and
even items. To correlated the two sets of
scores, the researcher used Pearson
Product Moment Formula as suggested by
Arikunto (2012: 87).

\[
R_{xy} = \frac{N\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum x^2-(\sum x)^2][N\sum y^2-(\sum y)^2]}}
\]

Where:
- \(R_{xy}\) = the coefficient correlation between x and y variable
- \(N\) = the total number of students who follow the test
- \(x\) = the score of the odd items
- \(y\) = the score of the even items
- \(\sum xy\) = the total scores of cross product \(xy\)
- \(\sum x^2\) = the sum of \(x\)
- \(\sum y^2\) = the sum of \(y\)

Then, to determined the reliability of
the whole test, the result is analyzed by
using Spearman Brown Formula (Gay,
1987:139) as follows:

\[
rii = \frac{2r_{xy}}{1+r_{xy}}
\]

where
- \(r_{ii}\) = the realibility coefficient for the
total test
- \(r_{xy}\) = the coefficient correlation odd and
even items

The researcher used the degree of
coefficient correlation based on Arikunto’s
idea (2012:89) as follows:
- .81 - 1.00 = very high correlation
- .61 - .80 = high correlation
- .41 - .60 = moderate correlation
- .21 - .40 = low correlation
- .0 - .20 = very low correlation
The result of calculating coefficient correlation was 0.63. It meant that the test was categorized as high correlation (see appendix 8). It can be classified as reliable one.

**Item Difficulties**

Item difficulty analysis is conducted to know whether the items were easy or difficult. To analyzed the item difficulties, the researcher used formula suggested by Arikunto (2012: 223) as follows:

\[ P = \frac{B}{JS} \]

Where:
- \( P \) = item difficulty
- \( B \) = the number of high score students who are given the answer correctly
- \( JS \) = the number of students who were given the test

The result of difficulty index is classified into the followings:

- \( P = .00 - 0.30 \) → difficult
- \( P = .31 - 0.70 \) → moderate
- \( P = .71 - 1.00 \) → easy

According to Brown (2010:71), a good item of the test is an item that has difficulty index between .15 - .85. Therefore, the researcher used difficulty index between .15 - .85. Based on the finding, the researcher found that 10 items were easy(1, 2, 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 29), 18 items were categorized as moderate(4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30), and 2 items were difficult (20, 24) (see Appendix 5).

**Item Discrimination**

Item discrimination analysis was to find out whether the items can differentiate between high and low of students’ score. Relating to this, the researcher divided them into two groups; high group and low group. To analyzed the item decrimination, the researcher used following formula to determine the item discrimination (Arikunto, 2012: 228):

\[ D = \frac{BA \cdot BB}{JA \cdot JB} \]

Where:
- \( D \) = Item discrimination index
- \( BA \) = Sum of students in the high group who answer the item correctly.
- \( BB \) = Sum of students in the low group who answer the item incorrect.
- \( JA \) = The number of students in the high group
- \( JB \) = The number of students in the low group

Item discrimination is symbolized as "D" that refers to “discrimination”. According to Arikunto (2012:232), the classification of item discrimination is as follows:

- \( D = .00 - .20 \) = Poor
Brown (2010:71) states that practical used from item discrimination indices to select items from a test that includes more items than you need. He also states that you might decide to discard or improve some items with lower item discrimination because you know they did not powerful an indicator of success on your test. Therefore, among the ranges of item discrimination above, the researcher used the items that have $D > 0.21 - 0.80$ as test items which are included in the instrument in order to find a good test item for real test. Based on finding, the researcher found 20 items were categorized as poor (1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30), 3 items were satisfactory (19, 22, 27), 5 items were good, and 2 items were excellent (8, 17) (see Appendix 6), relating to both of analysis above the accepted items were 26 items good (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30), and the discarded were 4 items (1, 2, 8, 11). However, to have a balance number of item for each aspect, the number of items used for real test was 26 items (see Appendix 7).

Table 3.3
Specification of the Real Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>The total number of items</th>
<th>Item distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Personal reference</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Demonstrative reference</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Comparative reference</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Techniques of Gathering Data

As already discussed previously, the researcher collected the data by using a reading test. There were several steps in collecting data from test as follows:

1. The researcher administered the test to the students.
2. The researcher collected the students’ answer sheets.
3. The researcher collected the test.
4. The researcher checked the students’ answer sheet.

The researcher gave the score on students answer sheet based on the Criterion Evaluation of Bung Hatta University

Table 3.4
The Range of Grade and Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-84</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-80</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-75</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤44</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Bad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The researcher gave the score 1 for the correct answer and 0 for the wrong answer.

Technique of Analyzing the Data

The researcher analyzed the data of this study by using the following steps:

1. The researcher presents the raw scores of each student.
2. The researcher converses the students’ grade by using the following formula:
   \[
   \text{Student's grade} = \frac{\text{student's score}}{\text{maximum score}} \times 100
   \]
3. The researcher classified the students’ score based on the criterion that is used in Bung Hatta University:
   - The students who grade ranging from A- to A were considered to had very good ability, the students who had grade ranging from B- to B+ were considered to had a good ability, students who had grade ranging from C to C+ were considered to had a moderate ability, and the students who had grade ranging to D are considered to had bad ability.
4. The researcher counts the number of students who were in each categories as mention it in table 3.4
5. The researcher calculated the percentage of students who got very good, good, moderate and bad by using the following formula:
   \[
   P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100 \%
   \]
6. Finally the researcher interpreted the result of data analysis.

Findings

By classifying the students’ ability into very good, good, moderate and bad ability, the result of the data analysis showed that there was 1 student (4.17%) who got very good ability, 15 students (62.5%) who had good ability, 4 students (16.67%) who had moderate ability, 4 students (16.67%) who had bad ability, (see appendix 13). It meant that the ability of the second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in understanding references in paragraph was
categorized good one because more than half students had understood understanding references in paragraph. In order to make it clear, it can be seen on the following figure.

**Figure 2: Students’ Ability in Understanding References in Paragraph**

The students’ ability of second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in Understanding Personal References in Paragraph was very good. The result of data analysis showed that the highest score was 7 and the lowest score was 3 (see appendix 14). Then, the researcher calculated the average score, the result demonstrated that average score was 16.01 (see appendix 14). In addition, the result of study presented that there were 10 students (41.7%) who had very good ability, 5 students (20.8%) who had good ability, 3 students (12.5%) who had moderate ability, 5 students (20.8%) who had bad ability (see appendix 15).

**Students’ Ability in Understanding Demonstrative Reference**

The students’ ability of the second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in understanding demonstrative references was good. The result of data analysis showed that highest score was 9 and the lowest score was 4 (see appendix 16). Then, the researcher calculated Average Score, the result demonstrated that average Score was 64.80 (see appendix 16). In addition, the result of this study presented that there were 1 students (4.17%) who had very good ability, 13 students (54.17%) who had good ability, 7 students (29.17%) who had moderate ability, 3 students (12.5%) who had bad ability (see appendix 17).

**Students Ability in Understanding Comparative References in Paragraph**

The students’ ability of the second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in understanding Comparative references in paragraph was good. The result of data analysis showed that highest score was 9 and the lowest score was 4 (see appendix 18). Then, the researcher calculated Average Score, the result demonstrated that average score Was 66.25 (see appendix 18). In addition,
the result of this study presented that there were 2 students (8.33%) who had very good ability, 12 students (50%) who had good ability, 8 students (33.33%) who had moderate ability, 2 students (8.33%) who had bad ability (see appendix 19).

In order to make it clear, the number of students’ ability in understanding references in paragraph that very good, good, moderate, and bad ability according to each aspect was presented on following table:

Table 4.1
Students Ability in Understanding References in Paragraph

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Students’ Ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding personal</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference in paragraph</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding demonstrative</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference in paragraph</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Understanding comparative    | 8.33%     | 50%  | 33.3%    | 8.3%
| reference in paragraph       | %         | %    | %        | %   |

Discussion

Based on the result of the study, in general, the students’ ability in understanding references in paragraph was good. In specific, the students’ ability in understanding personal references in paragraph was very good, understanding demonstrative in paragraph was good, and understanding comparative in paragraph was good. It was probably caused by some factors which could be identified through the students’ answer sheet.

4.2.1 Students Ability in Understanding References in Paragraph

In general the students’ ability in understanding references in paragraph was categorized into good. It was indicated by the fact that 15 students’ (62.5%) who got good ability. It meant that most of students have understood about understanding references in paragraph. Based on students’ answer sheet, some of students could not comprehend references finally. It was probably caused by they lack vocabulary of understanding references. Beside, some of the students could not figure out understanding references in paragraph.
The students’ ability in understanding personal reference in paragraph was categorized into very good. It was indicated by the fact that 10 students’ (41.7%) who got very good ability. It meant that half of students have understood about understanding personal reference in paragraph. Based on students’ answer sheet, some of students could not comprehend references in paragraph finally. It was probably caused by they lack of vocabulary of understanding reference in paragraph. Beside, most of the students could not figure out understanding references in paragraph. It can be shown the answer of students for the question no 15 paragraph K, (see appendix 9). The correct answer for this question was b. part of computer, but some of them answer A and C.

5. What does it refers to?
   a. Flower
   b. Orchid
   c. Parasite

Students Ability in Understanding Demonstrative References in Paragraph

The students’ ability in understanding demonstrative reference in paragraph was categorized into good. It was indicated by the fact that 13 students’ (54.17%) who got good ability. It meant that half of students have understood about understanding demonstrative reference in paragraph. Based on students’ answer sheet, most of students could not comprehend references in paragraph finally. It was probably caused by they lack of vocabulary of understanding

15. What does these refers to?
   a. monitor
   b. part of computer
   c. computers

Students Ability in Understanding Comparative References in Paragraph

The students’ ability in understanding comparative reference in paragraph was categorized into good. It was indicated by the fact that 12 students’ (50%) who got good ability. It meant that half of students have understood about understanding comparative reference in paragraph. Based on students’ answer sheet, most of students could not comprehend references in paragraph finally. It was probably caused by they lack of vocabulary of understanding
reference in paragraph. Beside, some of the students could not figure out understanding references in paragraph. It can be shown the answer of students for the question no 22 paragraph R, (see appendix 9). The correct answer for this question was A. Fruit, but some of them answer B and C.

22. What does refers to?
   a. Fruit
   b. Shrubs
   c. Grape

Conclusions

In general, the finding of this research can be concluded that the ability of the second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in understanding references in paragraph was good. This conclusion was indicated by the fact that there were 15 students (62.5%) who had good ability. In specific, can be seen as follow:

- The ability of the second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in understanding demonstrative references in paragraph was good. This conclusion was indicated by the fact that there were 13 students (54.17%) who had good ability.
- The ability of the second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in understanding comparative references in paragraph was good. This conclusion was indicated by the fact that there were 12 students (50%) who had good ability.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher gives proposed suggestions:

1. For the lecturer, she/he can give more exercise about understanding references in paragraph. It also suggested to the lecturer to give more comprehension explanation about the ways of figuring understanding references in paragraph.
2. For the students, they expected to do more exercises in understanding references in paragraph such as: personal reference, demonstrative reference, comparative reference.

3. For other researcher, it is suggested to do the research on other aspects like errors’ faced by students in understanding references in paragraph.

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