

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS' ABILITY TO COMPREHEND NEWS ITEM TEXT AT SMAN 7 PADANG.

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Abstract

Reading is one of the skills that is very important especially for students who learn English as a foreign language in process of language acquisition. This research was aimed at describing the ability of the first year students' at SMAN 7 Padang in comprehending news item text. The design of this research was descriptive method. In collecting the data, the researcher used reading test on news item text in form of multiple choice. The result of this research showed that in general the ability of the first year students of SMAN 7 Padang in comprehending news item text was moderate. It was proved by the fact that (66.67%); had moderate ability. In detail, the students' ability in comprehending generic structures was moderate. It was proved by the fact that (66.67%); had moderate ability. Then, the students' ability in comprehending language features was moderate. It was proved by the fact that (75.76%); had moderate ability. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that, the students' ability in comprehending news item text was moderate.

Key word: Ability, Comprehension, News Item Text.

Introduction

Reading is one of the skills that is very important especially for students who learn English as a foreign language in process of language acquisition. Patel and Jain (2008: 114) state that reading activity can help the students in comprehending a target language. It means that they can learn

the target language and the foreign culture through reading activity.

Besides, reading activity is close to the student's daily life; for examples, in looking for a job, to get the information, and also to get pleasure.

In addition, it is necessary for the readers to comprehend the text in reading. Reading will be useless if the readers

cannot catch the idea from what they read. To catch the idea or to get the information from the text, it is important to understand the genre of the text. Text can be classified into descriptive, recount, narrative, exposition, procedure, anecdote, news item and discussion text (Pardiyono, 2007:2). News item text is one kind of text that has a purpose to inform the newsworthy event to the readers. It is useful for the readers especially for students because it can give them the important information that is useful in expanding their knowledge. Besides, in our lives there are some information or interesting events that are important to report to the others. They are commonly informed in printed media, like newspaper, and magazine.

In general, the purpose of this research is to describe the students' ability in comprehending the news item text. The specific purposes of this research were to find out:

1. The ability of the first year students of SMAN 7 Padang to comprehend the generic structures of news item text.
2. The ability of the first year students of SMAN 7 Padang to comprehend the language features of news item text.

Reading comprehension is reading the text for fully understanding. According to Richards and Renandya (2002: 277), reading comprehension is reading activity which the readers get full understanding toward the text with concerning to the main idea of the text and exploring organization of the text.

To understand the text, the strategies of reading should be understood. According to Brown (1994: 293), there are four strategies in reading that should be mastered by the students. They are skimming (reading strategies for getting main ideas of text.), scanning (strategy to find out specific information), intensive (reading strategy that focusing on the linguistic or semantic detail of passage.) and extensive reading (reading strategy to get the general understanding of the longer text).

To find out the meaning of the text, the students should be aware to the processes of reading (Nunan, 2003: 70). They are Bottom- up (the lower level of reading process which the students begin with the fundamental basic of letter and sound recognition), Top- down (process of reading that the students start with the idea which is the students construct the comprehension by themselves), and

Interactive model (This process combines the two reading processes).

Text can be defined as a whole unified language that can be written and spoken (Buttet.al, 1995: 13-14).

Every text has characteristic. According to Pardiyono (2007: 2), there are some characteristics that should be involved in the text. They are the purpose of the text, rhetorical structure (generic structures), and the grammatical pattern (language features) of the text.

In addition, to consider the effectiveness of the use of language, every written text should be constructed based on the genre (Pardiyono, 2007: 2). Meanwhile, according to Pardiyono (2007: 2) there are some kinds of genre. They are narrative, recount, descriptive, news item, exposition, procedure, anecdote, news item and, discussion.

News item text is kind of text which has a purpose to inform the readers or listener about the newsworthy event or event that is considered important (Sudarwati and Grace, 2010: 130).

In addition, Pardiyono (2007: 252) states that similar with the other genre of text, news item text has the purpose, structure and sentence patterns. The purpose of news item text is to give

information about news. Sudarwati and Grace (2005: 130) state that the generic structures of the news item text use headline, newsworthy event, background event, and the sources. In addition, sentence pattern in news item text is using saying verb, action verb, adverb, and the last is using passive sentence.

News item text has a function as communicative purpose that informs the readers or listener about the important information of the day (Pardiyono, 2007: 246).

Text organizations of the news item cover newsworthy event, background of event and the sources (Sudarwati and Grace, 2005: 130). First, the newsworthy event is a recount of summary of the event. Second, background event is elaboration of the event that tells what happened, to whom and in what situation. Last, source is the people who get involved, the witnesses of the event, the authorities, and the expert involved in that event.

In news item text, the language features that are commonly used are action verb, saying verb, passive sentence, and adverb.

Methodology

The design of this research was descriptive one. Darmadi (2011: 151) states that descriptive research is an activity to collect data for answering the questions concerning the current status of the research. This research described the ability of the first year students of SMAN 7 Padang in comprehending news item text.

The population of this research was all of the first year students at SMAN 7 Padang. The population was distributed into 10 classes. Each class consisted of more and less than 36 students.

Because of the large number of population in this research, the researcher used sample. Sample is a group of individual that is considered representative of the larger group of population (Gay, 2009: 124). Researcher used cluster random sampling to select the sample of this research. Cluster random sampling was used because the population was distributed in groups or classes and they were homogeneous. Reading test was used as the instrument to collect the data of this research. The test was constructed in form of multiple-choice. It covered the generic structures of news item text consisting of headline, newsworthy event,

background event, and sources. It also covered the language features.

The researcher gathered data through multiple-choice. The procedures as follows:

- a. The researcher checked the students answer sheets.
- b. The researcher gave 1 for correct answer and zero for wrong answer. Therefore, the highest score of the test was 30.

To define the student's ability to comprehend news item text, the researcher used the following steps to analyze the data:

- a. The researcher calculated mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD), by using the following formulas (Arikunto, 2009: 264)

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

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{N} - \left(\frac{\sum x}{N}\right)^2}$$

- b. The researcher classified the students' ability into high, moderate, and low ability, by using the formula suggested by Arikunto, (2009: 264):

> M + 1 SD High ability

Between (M - 1 SD) until (M + 1 SD)

Moderate ability

< M - 1 SD Low ability

- c. The researcher determined the percentage of the students who get

high, moderate and low ability. The researcher used this formula

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100 \%$$

Findings and Discussions

Findings

The Students' Ability to Comprehend News Item Text

It was found that the lowest score was 15 and the highest score was 23 with mean 18.36 and standard deviation 2.13. After that, the researcher calculated the percentage of students who were included into high, moderate and low group. It could be shown in table below:

Table of the Classification of Students' Ability to Comprehend News Item Text.

Classification	Frequency	Percentage %
High	5	15.15
Moderate	22	66.67
Low	6	18.18

Table above shows that the students' ability to comprehend news item text dealing with generic structures and language features was moderate. It was proved by 5 students (15.15%) had high ability, 22 students (66.67%) had moderate category, and 6 students (18.18%) had low ability.

The Students' Ability to Comprehend the Generic Structures of News Item Text.

In calculating the students' ability to comprehend the generic structure of news item text, the researcher counted the students' score. It was found that the lowest score was 8 and the highest score was 12 with mean 10.48 and standard deviation 1.06. After that, the researcher calculated the percentage of students who were included into high, moderate and low group. It could be shown in table below:

Table of the Classification of Students' Ability to Comprehend Generic Structures of News Item Text.

Classification	Frequency	Percentage %
High	5	15.15
Moderate	22	66.67
Low	6	18.18

Table above shows that the students' ability to comprehend the generic structure of news item text was moderate. It was proved by 5 students (15.15) had high ability, 22 students (66.67%) had moderate category, and 6 students (18.18%) had low category.

The Students' Ability to Comprehend the Language Features of News Item Text.

By calculating the students' ability to comprehend the language features of news item text. It was found that the lowest score was 5 and the highest score was 13 with mean 7.88 and standard deviation 2.05. After that, the researcher calculated the percentage of students who were included into high, moderate and low group. It could be shown in table below:

Table of Classification of Students' Ability to Comprehend the Language Features of News Item Text

Classification	Frequency	Percentage %
High	6	18.18
Moderate	25	75.76
Low	2	6.06

Table above shows that the students' ability to comprehend the language features of news item text was moderate. It was proved by the 6 students (18.18%) had high category, 25 students (75.76%) had moderate category, and 2 students (6.06%) had low category.

In general, the data showed that the students' ability to comprehend the news item text was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 22 students (66.67%) had moderate ability to comprehend news item

text, 22 students (66.67%) had moderate ability to comprehend generic structures and 25 students (75.76%) had moderate ability to comprehend language features of news item text.

Discussions

The Students' Ability to Comprehend Generic Structures of News Item Text.

Based on the result of data analysis as already discussed previously above, 5 students (15.15 %) with score higher than 11.54 had high ability, 22 students (66.67%) with score between 9.42 - 11.54 had moderate ability and 6 students (18.18%) with the score lower than 9.42 had low ability to comprehend generic structures of news item text. It means that the students still did not understand well how to comprehend the generic structure of news item text. The researcher assumed that, many students did not have enough knowledge about the generic structure of news item text. It proved by the following example:

- Some students still did not understand about the background event of news item text. They should understand the background event of news item text which tells what happened, to whom,

and it what situation (Sudarwati and Grace, 2005: 130).

The Students' Ability to Comprehend Language Features of News Item Text

Based on the result of data analysis revealed that, 6 students (18.18%) with score higher than 9.93 had high ability, 25 students (75.76%) with the score between 5.83 – 9.93 had moderate ability and 2 students (6.06%) with the score lower than 5.83 had low ability to comprehend language features of news item text. It means that the students still did not understand well how to comprehend the language features of news item text.

The researcher assumed that, many students did not have enough knowledge about the language features of news item text. They should understand the language features that commonly uses in news item text for example: action verb, saying verb, adverb, and passive sentence (Sudarwati and Grace, 2005: 130).

Conclusions

Based on the result of data analysis, it can be concluded as follows:

1. In general, the ability of the first year students of SMAN 7 Padang to comprehend news item text was

moderate. It was proved by the fact of 22 students (66.67%) with the score range between 16.23 until 20.49 had moderate ability.

2. The ability of the of the first year students of SMAN 7 Padang to comprehend the generic structures of news item text was moderate. It was proved by the fact of 22 students (66.67%) with the score range 9.42 until 11.54 had moderate ability.
3. The ability of the of the first year students of SMAN 7 Padang to comprehend the language features of news item text was moderate. It was proved by the fact of 25 students (75.76%) with the score range 5.83 until 9.93 had moderate ability.

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