AN ANALYSIS ON THE ABILITY OF THE THIRD YEAR STUDENTS IN COMPREHENDING UNSTATED-MAIN IDEA PARAGRAPHS AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to describe the ability of the third year students in comprehending unstated-main idea paragraphs at English Department of Bung Hatta University. This research aimed at decribing whether or not students could identify topic, identify major supporting details, and formulate main idea as an estimation of their ability in comprehending unstated main idea of paragraphs. The design of this research was descriptive. The population of this research was the third year students of English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Bung Hatta University. The number of population members was 112 students. Twenty six of them were taken as the sample of this research by using cluster random sampling. Based on the result of data analysis, it was found that 17 students (65.38%) had moderate ability in comprehending unstated main idea of paragraphs. Then, the result of the study also showed that 15 students (57.69%) had moderate ability in identying topic. Next, the result showed that in identifying major supporting details 15 students (57.69%) had moderate ability. Furthermore, the result demonstrated that the students' ability in formulating main idea 17 students (65.38%) had moderate ability. Based on those findings, it could be concluded that the students' ability in comprhending unstated main idea of paragraphs could be categorized into moderate ability.

Key Words : Analysis, Unstated-Main Idea, Students Ability

A. Introduction

Reading is an interactive process between the readers and the writer. An interactive process happens when the readers try to understand the text. While understanding the text, the readers are communicating with the writers. Therefore, reading is a process of communication between readers and the writer. One of the unit of compositions commonly read as reading materials in the process of teaching reading is paragraph. A paragraph is a collection of related sentences dealing with a single topic. McWhorter (2006:193) states that there are four parts of paragraph: topic, main idea, supporting details, and transitions. Topic is the subject of the whole paragraph. The main idea is the explanation of the topic and what the paragraph is about. Supporting details are facts, statements which guide the readers to get a full understanding of

the main idea in the paragraph. Supporting details can be categorized into major details and minor details. Transitions are linking words or phrases that lead readers to grasp the relationship among the supporting ideas in paragraph.

Finding main idea is an important part of developing reading comprehension. In addition, if the readers can find main idea quickly, it means that they can read the whole paragraph much faster and can understand it better. McWhorter (1992: 171) defines that main idea is the broad important idea developed, explained, and described throughout the paragraph. The main idea is frequently, but not always in topic sentence. Therefore, the readers can identify the main idea at the beginning, in the middle, at the end, as well as both at the beginning and at the end of paragraph.

However the main idea of a paragraph is not always directly stated clearly, and it is called unstated main idea. (McWhorter, 2006: 193) states that, unstated main idea paragraph is one in which the main idea is not directly stated and it does not appear in any particular sentence. It is more difficult to identify a main idea when it

is implied or inferred. It can be implied through other words in the paragraph. The readers have to think carefully about what the author is saying. To comprehend unstated main idea paragaraph, they can guess it by making inference.

However, many students still got difficulties to comprehend the unstated main idea paragraphs. Based on the informal interview that the researcher did toward some of the third year students. They could not identify the topic, classify the supporting details into major and minor ones, and formulate the main idea. The purpose of this research was to describe the third year students' ability of English Department of Bung Hatta University in comprehending unstated main idea paragraphs.

B. Research Method

The design of this research was descriptive research. Gay (1987:189) states that, descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. The population of this research was the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University who registered

in academic year 2012/2013. The total population members was 112 students. So, the researcher took 23% as sample.

In this research, the researcher used cluster random sampling to select the sample. Gay (1987:110) says that cluster random sampling is a sampling technique in which the sample in group and not individual is randomly selected and all members selected group have similar characteristics. The students have studied with the same material, same syllabus, by the same curriculum. In a word, the population in this research is homogeneous.

In this research, the researcher used reading test as the instrument in collecting data. It consisted of 21 items that covered identifying topic, identifying major supporting details, and formulating main idea. The researcher tried out the test to the students out of sample before she gave the real test to know the reliability of the test.

To see the reliability of the test, the researcher used inter-rater method. It means that there were two scorers. The researcher calculated the correlation coefficient between the odd and even test items by using Pearson Product Moment Formula.

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

According to Gay (1987: 139) if the coefficient is high, it means the test is reliable and the test could be used as an instrument to collect the data of this research. The researcher found the correlation of the test was 0.99. The researcher analyzed the data by counting the percentage of the students' grade in comprehending unstated main idea paragraph. There were some phases to be followed:

1. The researcher presented the raw scores from two scorers
2. The researcher counted the average score of two scorers
3. The researcher calculated Mean (M) by using formula suggested by Arikunto (2009: 264):

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

To calculate Standard Deviation (SD), the researcher used the following formula:

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

4. To classify the student's ability into high, moderate, and low

ability, the researcher used the criteria below:

>M + 1 SD

High Ability

(M- 1 SD) ➔ (M + 1 SD)

Moderate Ability

< M -1 SD

Low Ability

5. The researcher calculated percentage of the students who get high, moderate, and low ability, by using the following formula:

$$\text{-- x } 100\ \%$$

C. Findings and Discussion

The result of data analysis showed that there were 5 students (19.23%) had high ability, 17 students (65.38%) had moderate ability and 4 students (15.39%) had low ability bility. In order to be clear, see the Diagram 4.1 below:

**Diagram 4.1: Students' Ability in Comprehending Unstated Main Idea of Paragraphs**
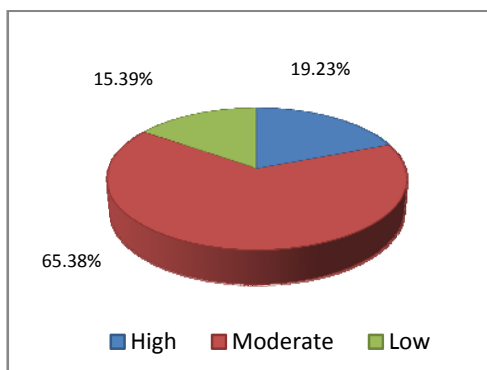
Based on the Diagram 4.1 above, It can be said that more than half students had understood unstated main idea paragraph.

Students' Ability in Identifying Topic of Unstated Main Idea Paragraphs.

The result of the study revealed that there were 7 students (26.92%) who could be categorized into high ability, 15 students (57.69%) were classified into moderate ability, and 4 students (15.39%) were classified as students who had low ability

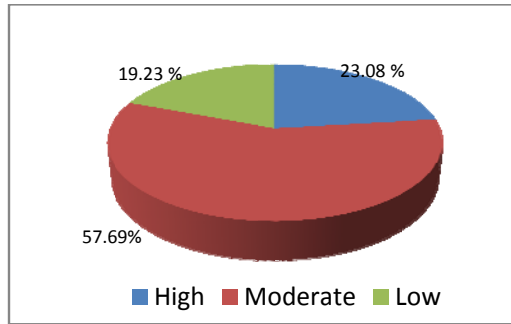**Diagram 4.2: Students' Ability in Identifying Topic of Unstated Main Idea Paragraphs**
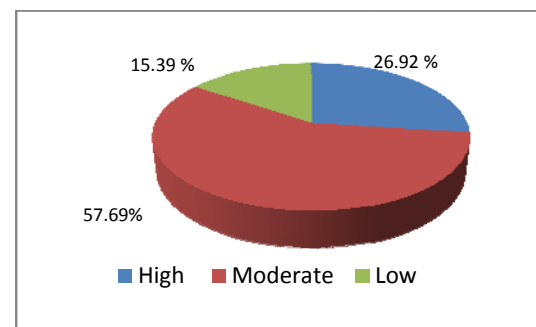
Based on the Diagram above students ability in identifying topic of unstated-main idea paragraphs can categorized into moderate.

Students' Ability in Identifying Major Supporting Details of Unstated Main Idea Paragraphs.

The result showed that 6 students (23.08%) had high ability, 15 students

(57.69%) had moderate ability, and 5 students (19.23%) had low ability

Diagram 4.3: Students' Ability in Identifying Major Supporting Details of Unstated-Main Idea Paragraph
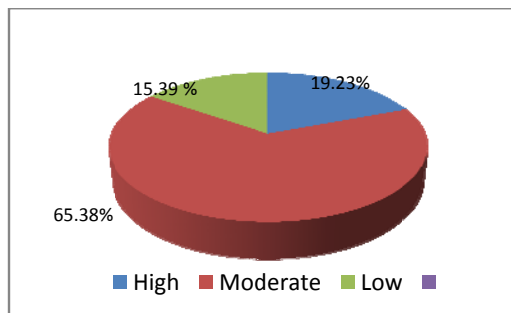

Based on the Diagram 4.3 above, the ability of the third year students in identify major details at English Departement of Bung Hatta University was moderate.

Students' Ability in Formulating Main Idea of Unstated Main Idea Paragraphs.

It was also found that 5 students (19.23%) who had high ability, 17 students (65.38%) had moderate ablity, and 4 students (15.39%) had low ability.

Diagram 4.4: Students' Ability in Formulating Main Idea of Unstated Main Idea Paragraphs

Based on the Diagram 4.4 above, it means that the ability of the third year students in formulate main idea paragraph of unstated-main idea paragraphs at English Departement of Bung Hatta University can categorized into moderate.

Discussion

Based on the result of study, the students' ability in comprehending unstated mian idea of paragraphs was moderate. As a matter of fact, (65.38%) the students had moderate ability in comprehending unstated-main idea paragraphs.

Based on the students' answer sheet, one of factors that made students had moderate ability was that they could not comprehend unstated main idea. It was probably caused by their lack of comprehending the subject matter discussed in a paragraph. Another factor was that some students could not differentiate between major and minor supporting details so that they could not formulate the main idea of unstated main idea paragraph by using their own words.

Students' Ability to Identify Topic of Unstated Main Idea of Paragraphs

Based on the students' answer sheet, the students did not understand what the topic was. They did not understand what the subject matter discussed in

paragraph. In fact, some students still had errors in identifying topic. The example as follow:

- Some students identify Topic in Paragraph 6; Speaking or Grammar
- The correct one; Language use

Students' Ability to Identify Major Supporting Details of Unstated Main Idea Paragraphs

. Based on the data, there are many students had errors in identifyng major details. They could not differenciate between major and minor details. As the result, in some cases, they identify major details as minor details, but in other cases, they identify minor details as major one.

- Some students identify the last sentence in paragraph 6 as major supporting detail.
- The correct one; the sentence is minor supporting detail.

Students' Ability in Formulating Main Idea of Unstated Main Idea Paragraphs

They could not make inference to formulate the main idea of paragraphs in which it is main idea is not stated clearly.

- The students' formulation of the main idea of the paragraph 6 ;
  When speaking, the people should keep the suitable tone to the place or environment
- The correct ; Different situations requires different kinds of speech.

D. Conclusion

In general, the finding of this research can be concluded that the ability of the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in Comprehending Unstated Main Idea Paragraph was moderate. It is indicated by the results that there were 17 students (65.38%) had moderate ability.

The next conclusion of this research was that the ability of the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University to identify topic of unstated Main Idea Paragraph was moderate. It was indicated by the fact that there were 15 students (57.69%) had moderate ability.

Another conclusion of this research was that the ability of the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University to identify major supporting details of unstated Main Idea Paragraph was moderate. It was supported by the fact that there were 15 students (57.69%) had moderate ability.

The last conclusion was that the ability of the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University to Formulate of unstated Main Idea Paragraph was moderate. It was supported by the fact that there were 17 students (65.38%) had moderate ability.

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