AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' ABILITY IN IDENTIFYING KEY IDEA IN A SENTENCE AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This research was attempted to describe students' ability in identifying key idea. The design of this research was descriptive. The population of this study was the second year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University. The members of this population were 108. To get the sample, the researcher used cluster random sampling. The number of sample was 40 students. The data of this study were gathered by using reading testin identifying key idea in the short answerform. Before the researcher gave the real test, she tried out it. The result of the try out was used to analyze item difficulties, item discrimination and the reliability of the test. It was found that the reliability of the test was very high (0.94). Based on the result of this research, the ability of the second year students in identifying key idea was moderate(72.50 %). It was found that the ability of students in identifying simple key idea in simple sentence was moderate (67.50%). Then, the ability of students in identifying combined key idea in compound sentence was moderate (82.50%). And, the ability of students in identifying related key idea in complex sentence was moderate(85%). Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the ability of the second year students in identifying key idea was moderate. In line with this conclusion,the lecturers are suggested to improve students' ability in identifying key idea through asking the students to look for printed or online material about key idea exercises.

Key words: Ability, Reading,Key Idea

Introduction

Reading is one of the important ways to get information. Many information are served in reading text like newspaper, journals, websites, books, magazines, etc. In fact reading is not a simple process, not just open the book, read the book and then close the book, but the reader must understand what the writer tells about.

In learning English, there are four skills that should be mastered by the learners. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. They are related each other. The sequences of the skills are basedon our lives. Live begins from baby who just listens. After that, she/ he learns to speak, read, and write. In addition, language

learners are also required to master such language components as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Among the four basic skills, reading skill is regarded as animportant skill that should be mastered as well as possible.

Nowadays, reading is required in various aspects of our lives, for example, education, business, politics, science, technology, and culture. In educational aspects, possessing reading skills has become one of requirements for getting successful in learning. In short, it is a must for learners to master reading skill to get a good achievement.

In reading comprehension, the students will learn about understanding sentence patterns. There are some problems faced by learners in understanding sentence patterns. One of them is in identifying key idea. Key idea is something that is helpful to you for finding your situation (Wikipedia: 2014). In other words,key idea is something that helped you.Students in a university have learned key idea since the second year. However, there are many students that still cannot identify key idea in a sentence.

Based on the researcher's interview with some second year students of English Department about January 30, 2014, when they studied reading II, they have been introduced to key idea and are given exercises for identifying and comprehending them. However, many students still got difficulty to identify the key idea in a sentence. It is still hard for them to find the subject and the verb of the sentence, which composed the key idea.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher was interested in conducting the research entitled: "An Analysis of the Second Year Students' Ability in Identifying Key Idea in a Sentence at English Department of Bung Hatta University."

In general, the purpose of this research was to describe the ability of the second year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University to identify key idea. In more specific, the purposes of this study were aimed to describe:

1. The ability of the second year students of Bung Hatta University in identifying key idea in a simple sentence.

2. The ability of the second year students of Bung Hatta University in identifying key idea in a compound sentence.

3. The ability of the second year students of Bung Hatta University in identifying key idea in a complex sentence.

Research Method

This study was aimed to describe the student's ability in identifying key idea in a sentence. Relating to this, the researcher used descriptive research. Gay (1987: 189) says that descriptive research involves collecting data to test hypothesis or to answer the questions concerning the currents status of the subject. In descriptive research, the researcher only describes the variable as it is. It means that the researcher did not do any manipulation toward the object being studied. In this research the researcher would describe the second year students' ability in identifying key idea in a sentence at English Department of Bung Hatta University.

Gay (1987: 102) states that the population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the result of the study to be generalized. The population of this study was second year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University who are registered in academic year 2012/2013. The total members of the population were 108 students. The members of population were distributed into three classes; class A, class B, and class C. The researcher chose the second year students as the population because they have passed three series of reading; Reading I, Reading II, and Reading III. The distribution of population members by class is shown in the following Table 1.

Table 1

The Distribution of by Class

No	Class	Number of Students
1	A	40
2	B	40
3	C	28
Total		**108**

Because the number of population members was large, the researcher used sample. According to Gay (1987:114), the minimum sample for a descriptive research is 10% out of the total number of members of population. The class selected as class sample was class A, and all members of class A (40 students) become the sample of this study. It means the percentage was about 37 %.

To select the sample, the researcher used cluster random sampling technique. Gay *et al* (2009: 129) state that cluster random sampling may be the only feasible method of selecting a sample when the researcher is unable to obtain a list of all members of the population. The researcher

used cluster sampling because the members of population were distributed into groups or classes and they were homogenous. The members of population have the same curriculum, syllabus, material, and lecturer in reading subject.

In selecting sample, the researcher followed the following procedures. First she used three small pieces of papers and writes the name of each class (A, B, or C) on it. Then, she rolled it up and put them into a box. After shaking the box, she took one of the papers with closed eyes. Finally, the selected class was class A and it was all members of the sample class become the sample of this study.

In this research, the researcher collected the data using reading test. It was constructed in the form of short answer. The test consists of 30 sentences and it took 60 minutes to do the test. The test was aimed to find out the students' ability in identifying key idea in a sentence; in identifying simple key idea in simple sentence, identifying combined key idea in complex sentence, and identifying related key idea in complex sentence.

A good test should be valid. A test is said valid if it is able to measure what it wants to be measured. To validate the tests,

the researcher constructed it based on syllabus and teaching material and constructed with lectures who taught reading subject. To make it clear, the item specification of the test was down in Table below:

No	Identifying Key Idea	The Number of Items	Item Specification
1	Simple Key Idea	10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.
2	Combined Key Idea	10	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.
3	Related Key Idea	10	21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.
	Total	**30**	

Before giving the real test, the researcher tried out the test to the students out of the sample. It was done to know whether the students understood the instruction or not and whether the time allocation was sufficient or not. Besides, the result of the try out was also used to find out the reliability of the test, the difficulty of the test, the difficulty index and discrimination index. To analyze the item difficulties, the researcher used formula suggested by Arikunto (2006: 208) as follows:

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$$P = \frac{B}{JS}$$

Where:

P = Item Difficulty

B = The number of students answer correctly

JS = The number of students are given the test

Arikunto (2006: 214) classifies of item difficulty as follows:

Item with P 0.00 until 0.30 is difficult

Item with P 0.30 until 0.70 is moderate

Item with P 0.70 until 1.00 is easy

To analyze the item discrimination, the researcher used formula suggested by Arikunto (2006: 213) as follows:

$$D = \frac{BA}{JA} - \frac{BB}{JB}$$

Where:

D = Item discrimination

BA = The number of high group students who answer correctly

JA = The number of high group students

BB = The number of low group students who answer correctly

JB = The number of low group students.

Arikunto (2006: 218) classifies the classification of item discrimination is as follows:

D: 0.00 – 0.20: Poor

D: 0.20 – 0.40: Satisfactory

D: 0.40 – 0.70: Good

D: 0.70 – 1.00: Excellent

According to Arikunto (2006: 218), a good test item is an item which has difficulty in the range 0.30 – 0.70, and the discrimination in the range of 0.20 – 0.80.

From the result of try out test, 30 test items fulfilled the criteria of a good test from point of view of item difficulties and item discrimination. The researcher discarded five items (2, 1, 19, 23, 25). She discarded five items because the item discrimination was poor category.

A reliable test is consistent and dependable (Brown: 2010). In the psychometrics, reliability is used to describe the overall consistency of a measure. A measure is said to have a high reliability if it produces similar results under consistent conditions (Wikipedia: 2013).

Gay (1987: 135) says that reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures. To find out the reliability of the test, the researcher used split-half method. To find out the coefficient, she used Pearson Product Moment formula as suggested by Arikunto (2006: 72):

$$r_{xy}$$

$$= \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2\}\{N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2\}}}$$

Where:

r_{xy} : The coefficient of two half of the test (odd and even items)

N : The number of the students who follow the test

X : The odd item score

Y : The even item score

$\sum XY$: The total scores of cross product XY

$\sum X^2$: The Square of X

$\sum Y^2$: The Square of Y

Then, to determine the reliability of the whole test, the result was analyzed by using Spearman Brown formula (Gay, 2009: 161) as follows:

$$r_{total\ test} = \frac{2rxy}{1 + rxy}$$

Where:

$r_{total\ test}$: The reliability coefficient for the total test

r_{xy} : The correlation coefficient of the two halves of the test

Finally, the researcher used the degree of coefficient correlation based on Arikunto's idea (2006: 75):

0.81 – 1.00 : very high correlation

0.61 – 0.80 : high correlation

0.41 – 0.60 : moderate correlation

0.21 – 0.40 : low correlation

0.00 – 0.20 : very low correlation

According to Gay (1987), a good test has coefficient correlation at least 0.70

After analyzing the data, the researcher found that the coefficient of correlation of the test was 0.88 and the coefficient of reliability of the test was 0.94.

The data of this research were students' scores in reading test. The students' scores refer to students' ability in identifying key idea in a sentence. The data were analyzed by following steps:

1. Presenting the raw scores of each sample.

2. Calculating Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) by using the following formula (Gay 1987: 140) :

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

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

Where: Mean Score

$\sum X$ = Sum of all score

$(\sum X)$ = The square of the sum; add up all the score and square

$\sum_X 2$ = The sum of all the squares; square of each score and add up the entire sum.

N = Number of students

SD = Standard Deviation

3. Classifying the students' ability in identifying key idea based on the following the criteria (Arikunto, 2006: 264):

>M + SD	= High ability
M − SD → M + SD	= Moderate ability
<M − SD	= Low ability

4. Calculating the number and percentage of the students who get high, moderate, and low ability. The researcher used the following formula below:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \text{ X } 100\%$$

Where:

P = percentage of student's score

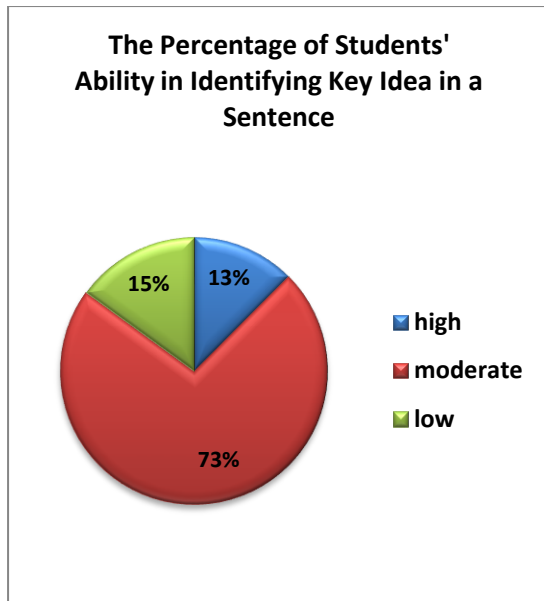R = the sum of the students who get high, moderate, and low ability

T = the sum of the students (sample).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. **Findings**

   Students' Ability in Identifying Key Idea in a Sentence

   The result of data showed that the highest score based on the answer sheet of the students was 30 and the lowest score was 9. Then, the researcher calculated the mean and standard deviation. The researcher got that the mean was 23.63 and standard deviation was 4.44. The result showed that 5 students (12.50%) had high ability, 29 students (72.50%) had moderate ability and 6 students (15%) low ability. The result of analysis showed that students' ability in identifying key idea in a sentence was moderate. The percentage of students' ability in identifying key idea in a sentence is described in the chart below:

The Percentage of Students' Ability in Identifying Key Idea in a Sentence

- high
- moderate
- low

13% 15% 73%

Percentage of Students' Ability in Identifying Simple Key Idea in Simple Sentence

- High
- Moderate
- Low

17% 15% 68%

Students' Ability in Identifying Simple Key Idea in Simple Sentence

The result of data showed that the highest score was 10 and the lowest score was 4, and then the researcher calculated the Mean and Standard Deviation. The result of Mean was 7.75 and Standard Deviation was 1.79. The result showed that 7 students (17.50%) had high ability, 27 students (67.50%) had moderate ability and 6 students (15%) had low ability. The result of analysis showed that students' ability in identifying key idea in a sentence was moderate. The percentage of students' ability in identifying simple key idea in simple sentence is described in the chart below:
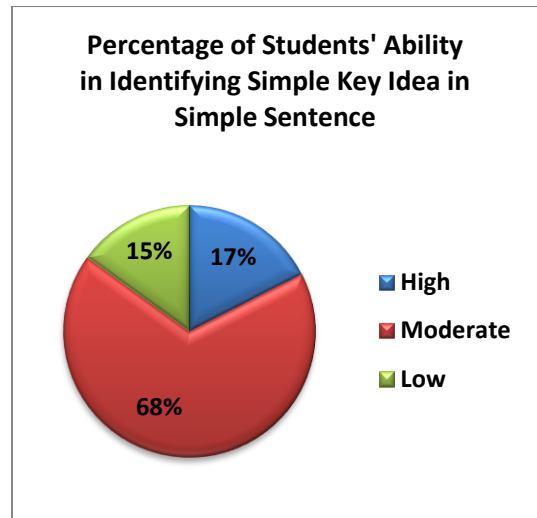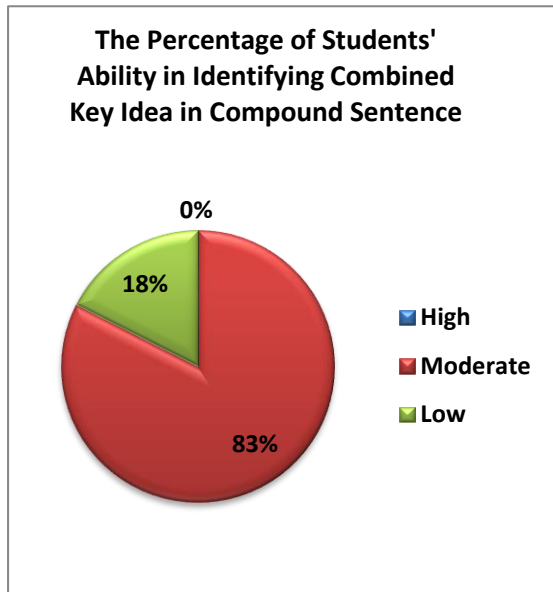
Students' Ability in Identifying Combined Key Idea in Compound Sentence

This part presents the students' ability in identifying combined key idea in compound sentence. The result showed that the highest score was 10 and the lowest score was 0. Then, the researcher calculated the mean and standard deviation. The researcher got that the mean was 7.7 and standard deviation was 2.36. The result showed that 0 students (0%) had high ability, 33 students (82.50%) had moderate ability, and 7 students (17.50%) had low ability. The result of analysis showed that students' ability in identifying combined key idea in compound sentence was moderate. The percentage of students' ability in identifying combined key idea can be seen in

The Percentage of Students' Ability in Identifying Combined Key Idea in Compound Sentence

The Percentage of Students' Ability in Identifying Related Idea in Complex Sentence

Students' Ability in Identifying Related Key Idea in Complex Sentence

The result showed that the highest score was 10 and the lowest score was 0. Then, the researcher calculated the mean and standard deviation. The researcher got that the mean was 8.18 and standard deviation was 1.99. The result showed that 0 students (0%) had high ability, 34 students (85%) had moderate, and 6 students (15%) had low ability. The result of analysis showed that students' ability in identifying related key idea in complex sentence was moderate. The percentage can be seen in the chart below:
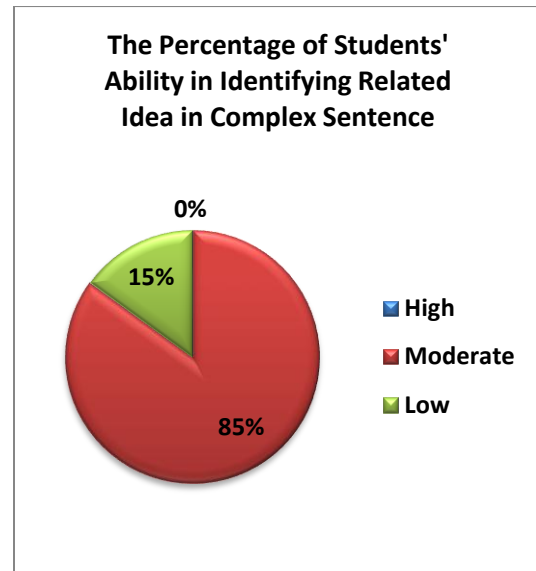
Discussions

Students' Ability in Identifying Key Idea in a Sentence

From the analysis, the researcher found that the students' ability in identifying key idea in a sentence was moderate. The researcher discusses as follows:

Students' Ability in Identifying Simple Key Idea in Simple Sentence

Students' ability in identifying simple key idea was moderate. This statement was supported by the fact that there were 27 students (67.50%) had moderate ability. It means that there are many students still confused about the simple key idea in simple sentence.

Example:

Food prices have risen drastically in the past four years.

Students' answer: Have risen.

The correct one: Food prices have risen.

Students' Ability in Identifying Combined Key Idea in Compound Sentence

Students' ability in identifying combined key idea was moderate. This statement was supported by the fact that there were 33 students (82.50%) had moderate ability. It means that there are many students still confused about the first key idea and the second key idea in a compound sentence

Example:

Scientists describe atoms with two important quantities (mass and charge), and we have to know them before discussing them.

The students' answer:

First key idea: Two important quantities.

Second key idea: Know them

The correct one:

First key idea: Scientists describe

Second key idea: We have to know

Students' Ability in Identifying Related Key Idea in Complex Sentence

Students' ability in identifying related key idea was moderate. This statement was supported by the fact that there were 34 students (85%) had moderate ability. It means that there are many students still confused about the more important idea and the less important idea in a complex sentence.

Example:

If a department store is too crowded, I cannot concentrate on what I am trying to purchase.

Students' answer:

The more important idea: If a department store is too crowded

The less important idea:I cannot concentrate on what I am trying to purchase

The correct one:

The more important idea:

I cannot concentrate on what I am trying to purchase

The less important idea: If a department store is too crowded

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Conclusions

In general, the finding of this study could be drawn that the ability of the second year students' ability at Bung Hatta University in identifying key idea in a sentence was moderate. This conclusion was indicated by the fact that there were 5 students (12.50%) who had high ability, 29 students (72.50%) who had moderate ability and 6 students (15%) who had low ability.

In specific, the conclusion can be seen as follows:

1. The ability of the second year students' ability in identifying simple key idea in simple sentence at Bung Hatta University was moderate. There were 7 students (17.50%) who had high ability, 27 students (67.50%) who had moderate ability and 6 students (15%) who had low ability.
2. The ability of the second year students' ability in identifying combined key ideas in compound sentence at Bung Hatta University was moderate. There were 0 students (0%) who had high ability, 33 students (82.50%) who had moderate

ability, and 7 students (17.50%) who had low ability.

3. The ability of the second year students' ability in identifying related key ideas in complex sentence at Bung Hatta University was moderate. There were 0 students (0%) who had high ability, 34 students (85%) who had moderate, and 6 students (15%) who had low ability.

2. Suggestions

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher gives several suggestions as follows:

1. The lecturer is expected to improve students' ability in identifying key idea in a sentence through:
- For identifying simple key idea in simple sentence, the lecturer should explain more about the subject and predicate.
- For identifying combined key ideas in compound sentence, lecturer should explain more about the first key idea and second key idea.
- For identifying related key idea in complex sentence, lecturer should explain more about the more and the less important key idea.

- Ask the students to look for printed material or online material about key idea exercises. The materials of all students are bundle and then discuss the material.

2. For the students, they are expected to do more exercises about key idea.

3. For further researcher, the researcher suggests to find out the difficulty of students in identifying key idea in a sentence.

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