

USING AUTHENTIC MATERIAL FROM MAGAZINES TO ENHANCE THE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENTION

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Abstract: Although English has been taught in schools starting from kindergarten/elementary to junior high school levels, the fact shows that many student still difficult to read English texts. They may read fast but get nothing or they need a very long time to understand the texts. It means that they are not effective readers. It can be assumed that their comprehension skill is not good. Dealing with these phenomena, the teacher be given another authentic material from magazine to make their student to be effective readers. Because of that the teacher uses other material from magazine to solve the students' problem. So we expect that this material helps students to deepen their reading comprehension and ability to apply this material.

Keywords : Reading, Authentic Material

Nowadays, English becomes the most important language to learn because English is the most common language used in international communication. No language is more broadly studied and applied as a Foreign Language than English. English is intended to give a great help to students who want to continue their study in a higher education or institution. It has also a great function in helping them to comprehend the literatures that are written in English Language is a means of communication to human life. In daily use, communication is process that people use language for exchanging important messages and shares the meaning about their ideas and feeling with others (Hoy and Miskel: 2001:357). Students need to communicate with others to get information. In the fast development of science and technology, students can get the latest information from various media of communication, such as internet, television, radio, newspaper, magazines and also books. In getting the information from a written source, students must have a good reading comprehension in order to comprehend what they are reading.

Reading is one of four important skills in English. Reading is regarded as a decoding skill, that is interpreting codes into ideas. Wallace (1991:37:4) states that reading is interpreting, which means reacting to a written text as a piece of communication. In other words, we assume some communicative intents on the writer's part in which the reader has some purposes in attempting to

understand. Students consider reading as an important activity, so that people usually say that reading is the window of the world. It is a means to see the world. By reading, students can get the information widely without going anywhere.

The success of learning any subject matter depends mostly on the competence of reading comprehension. It functions as a major tool for finding and understanding information in terms of what is already known. Reading also has the value of helping the students learn to express their own thoughts and making them familiar with the language patterns and ways of using language efficiently. As stated by Williams (1996: 13) below:

“The teachers’ reasons of having the learners read a foreign language (i.e. English) are as follows: First, learners can have further practice of language that they have already met through listening and speaking, second learners can practice language in order to re-use it in writing, third learners can learn how to make sense of texts, in order to extract the information they need from them, fourth, they can find enjoyment through reading, fifth, the teachers can relax from the time to time in the classroom..”

In order to enhance students’ reading comprehension, our government has set an approach that is suitable to enhance students’ interest of reading what the so-called Genre-based Approach. This description, procedure, spoof, news item, recount, narrative, analytical exposition, etc. The aim of this approach is to introduce text’s genre in order to enable the students to identify its social purpose and its generic structure, and also to enhance students’ comprehension in reading.

Most of the students feel that reading activity is burdensome and boring. Some of them delay the reading activity so long. Some of them carry out the reading task, but they are not able to comprehend the contents of the text due to their limited vocabulary. It can be seen from the fact that the way they answer the questions is only by repeating the sentences they find in the questions. In other words, they cannot produce their own sentences as expected by the teacher. If they don’t find the same words, phrases, or sentences in the passage they will get difficulty. So there are many wrong answers and finally they get bad mark.

In the fast development of science and technology, people need to follow the latest information. This situation results in an awareness of the important role of English as a language, which is broadly used to communicate a wide variety of information. The exchanges of information are influenced by media of communication, such as internet, television, radio, newspaper, magazines, and also books. In getting the information from a written source, people must have a good reading comprehension ability, in order to comprehend what they are reading.

However, it is understood that the most of the information is presented in printed materials. By reading, students can absorb a lot of information can be gained from books, magazines, newspapers, and bulletins. It can be assumed that the success of obtaining information depends on reading itself. Consequently, reading seems to be very important in a modern society today.

Certain people read for getting information, while some others do not read for the sake information only, but also for enjoyment.

Learning to read is a continuing process (Burns et. al, 1984: 21). As has been stated previously, students' past experience, their language competence, and their background of knowledge determine their own reading ability. These factors are closely interrelated to the students' prior capacity in reading, because reading is a continuing process. We often hear or read news about the lack of reading interest in society especially for students. In fact, this reading interest has close relationship with reading skill. The more a person does reading activity, the more he increases his reading skill. Related to the statement above, we need to see the reality that learning language specially learning reading has been not effective yet. Students argue that learning reading is boring. Therefore, teachers should be aware of this situation and they have to create a new solution for this problem.

One solution is the use of authentic materials in teaching reading. Jones and Louise (2001: 218) state that teachers can facilitate learning by implementing varied instructional approaches that respond to the learning styles of all learners. In this case they may choose which one of the ways of teaching reading comprehension is the best. Ellis and Johnson (1994: 157) state, "authentic material is any kind of material taken from the real world and not specifically created for the purpose of language teaching."

Enjoyment of reading should be considered of prime importance (Burns et al, 1984:23). We should prove that reading is not a boring activity even though the materials deal with scientific topic. We should try to present them in such a way that they could make the students enjoy the activity.

THE NATURE OF READING

Reading as one of language skills is a process that involves reader, text, and interaction between reader and text. Reading is the most important skill among the four language skills that should be acquired by the English learners in learning English. It has been described as an interactive process to understand and to extract required information from the text.

There are many definitions of reading stated by linguists and experts based on their own view. Dallman (1964: 17) states that reading is defined as an activity which involves the comprehension and interpretation of ideas symbolized by written or printed language. According to Bond and Wagner (1963: 5) reading is a process through which the reader tries to share an author's point of view, his ideas, and experiences in order to communicate with him. R.R Jordan (1997: 143) mentions reading purposes include:

- a. To obtain information (facts, data, etc).
- b. To understand ideas or theories, etc.
- c. To discover authors' point of view.
- d. To seek evidence for their own point of view (and to quote) all of which may be needed for writing their essays, etc.

THE MEANING OF READING COMPREHENSION

In this case, reading that will be discussed is reading comprehension. Reading without comprehension of the written text is useless since the reader cannot get the information stated in the text, either implicitly or explicitly. Talking about reading cannot be separated from comprehension, because in understanding and interpreting the printed symbols to get the information, one must comprehend the text. According to Bloomfield taxonomy, there is a level of cognitive domain namely comprehension that is a type of understanding such that the individual knows what is being communicated. Comprehension takes place while the person is reading and it needs a set of skills that let him find information and understand it in terms of what is already known. This idea is supported strongly by Yoakam in Smith and Dechant (1961:213) who state that:

“Comprehending reading matter involves the correct associations of meanings with word symbols, the evaluation of meanings which are suggested in context, the selection of the correct meaning, the organization of ideas as they are read, the retention of these ideas, and their use in some present or future activity.”

From the above theories, the writer comes to the definition of reading comprehension. There are many definitions of reading comprehension stated by many linguists and experts based on their own discipline. Kennedy (1981: 192) defines reading comprehension as a thought process through which readers become aware of an idea, understand it in terms of their experiential background and interpret it in relation to their own needs and purpose. While Grellet (1998: 182) states that reading comprehension means understanding a written text to extract the required information from it as efficiently as possible. From the definitions above, reading comprehension can be concluded as the act of one's mind to understand or interpret written or printed material containing information. It involves the activity of the mind to comprehend the meaning intended by the writer.

MODELS OF READING

In looking for ways to describe the interaction between reader and text, scientists have also created models that describe what happens when people read (Aebersold and Field, 1997: 17). Barnett (in Aebersold and Field, 1997: 17-18) provides a thorough summary of three main models of how reading occurs. They are bottom-up theory, top-down theory, and interactive school of theorists.

- a. Bottom-up theory argues that the reader constructs the text from the smallest units (letters to words phrases to sentences, etc) and becomes automatic that readers are not aware of how it operates.
- b. Top-down theory argues that readers bring a great deal of knowledge, expectation, assumption, and questions to the text and given a basic understanding of the vocabulary and check back when new information appears.
- c. The interactive school of theorists argues that both top-down and bottom-up processes are occurring either alternately or at the same time. It describes a process that moves both bottom-up and top-down depending on type of the

text as well as on the readers' background knowledge, language proficiency level, motivation strategy use, and culturally shaped beliefs about reading.

TECHNIQUES OF READING

Different readers may have their own ways and technique in reading in accordance to their favor and purpose. Some linguists have proposed many ways of reading, which the mainly used is Francoise Grellet (1998: 4) summarized as follows:

- a. Skimming : quickly running one's eyes across a whole text (an essay, article, or chapter) to get the gist of it. Skimming gives readers the advantage of being able to predict the purpose of the passage, the main topic or message, and possibly some of the developing or supporting ideas (Brown, 1994: 293).
- b. Scanning : quickly going through a text to find a particular piece of information. The purpose of scanning is to extract certain specific information without reading the whole text (Brown, 1994: 293).
- c. Extensive reading: reading longer text, usually for one's own pleasure. This is a fluency activity, mainly involving global understanding.
- d. Intensive reading : reading short text to extract specific information. This is more an accuracy activity involving reading for detail.

SKILLS OF READING

According to De Boer and Dallman (1964: 134), there are various skill that make up the ability to comprehend what is read. According to the reader's purpose, the skills are: reading to find the main idea, reading to select significant details, reading to answer the question, reading to summarize and organize, reading to arrive at generalizations, reading to follow directions, reading to predict outcomes, reading to evaluate critically, and reading graphs, tables, charts, and maps.

Questioning Techniques in Comprehension Skills

There are some questioning techniques in comprehension skill, namely main idea, detail, vocabulary, sequences, and inference. Burns et al (1984: 203) defines them as follows:

- a. Main idea, the students are asked to identify the central theme of the selection.
- b. Detail, the students are asked for bits of information conveyed by the material.
- c. Vocabulary, the students are asked for the meaning of words used in the selection.
- d. Sequence, the students are asked for required knowledge of events in their order of occurrence.
- e. Inference, the students are asked for information that is implied but not directly stated in the materials.
- f. Evaluation, the students are asked for judgments about the material.
- g. Creative response, the students are asked to go beyond the material and create new ideas based on the ideas they have read.

Factors Affecting Comprehension Skills

Dawson and Bamman (1963: 220-223) state that there are five factors, which are affecting the comprehension skills. They are:

a. Intelligence

The number of ideas that he or she understands and the depth of his or her understanding will be largely depend upon his or her general capacity to learn. The slow learning or dull-normal students cannot be expected to show the same reactions nor gained the same appreciation as the bright students when they read together for pleasure or to gain information. The rate at which he or she associates what he or she reads with his or her knowledge or experience will be influenced by this thing, which we commonly call intelligence.

b. Experience

Much of the teaching of comprehension skills is concerned with providing experiences for students through whom they may respond to books. The boy or girl with limited experiences may have difficulty in comprehending many of the ideas and activities with which other students are familiar before they come to school.

c. Mechanics of reading

If our students have all mastered the skills of word attack and word meaning, if they have learned to handle books properly, if they have learned to read from left to right on a line of print, and if all these skills are performed smoothly, then comprehension should be easier for them.

d. Interest and interest span

It is true that we all respond quickly to what we read if we are interested in the topic or at least familiar with it. The average person is interested in those things, which are related to his best aptitudes.

Interest span is related to the personality factors. Interest span in the students is almost directly related to the purposes he has for reading at early stages of reading, the teacher will establish those purposes carefully, through discussion of student's experience, visual aids, and relating to immediate needs.

e. Skills of comprehending

Another factor, which influences the depth and amount of comprehension, is the skills, which the student has developed for that purpose. Like all reading skills, the ability to comprehend what we read develops gradually from the simple to the complex skills.

The writer tries to provide a method to enhance the students' reading comprehension. She decided to use instructional materials in teaching language. Printed mass media like magazine and newspaper that are included in instructional materials. Magazine and newspaper can be used on enhancing reading comprehension. When we teach a reading lesson to the students, we hope that text material can accepted by students and interested. So, various text materials can make the students enjoy in the reading class. By understanding what the students need and like, we can choose text that interested for students. To understand on printed mas media especially magazines as instructional material, the writer explain the definition of Printed mass Media, Definition of Instructional Materials, reading materials, Printed Mass Media as Instructional material.

DEFINITION OF PRINTED MASS MEDIA

Many experts have defined about the definition of media. Gagne and Briggs (1979: 175) give their opinion that media is the physical means of communication (books, printed modules, programmed texts, computers, slide/tape presentation, films, videotapes, and so on) which enable students to learn. There are some similar perceptions about media. Media is such of things that can be used to distribute the message from sender to receiver stimulate the sense, mind, attention and the students interest to build the teaching learning process happened. Another expert Wittich and Schuller (1979: 2) give their opinion about another advantage of using media in teaching-learning process. They say:

“ When more information is communicated by learning media, teacher can give more attention to the uniquely human aspect of education, to understanding the need of individual students, helping them to set and realize goals, and stimulating them to use the information available from educational media.”

Mass media as part of visual aids are used as a teaching aid in teaching English reading at junior high school. It gives a lot of contribution because with mass media, we can find authentic texts that are used for reading material. According to Michael (1998: 14), the mass media teach, and their lessons are cumulative. The mass media guide us in establishing, extending, or displacing meanings, lead us in approving or disapproving portrayals, and encourage us to reinforce or replace our system of values. Mass media provide us with information and entertainment. The mass media perform a number of essential functions in our lives. First, they serve an information or surveillance function. Second, they serve an agenda setting and interpretation function. Third, they help us to create and maintain connections with various groups in society. Fourth, they help to socialize and educate us. Fifth, they persuade us to purchase certain items or accept certain ideas. And sixth, they entertain us. (Michael, 1998: 15). In this case the writer limits mass media only on magazines. The writer will discuss about magazines in the following explanation.

DEFINITION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Instructional materials means all materials that are designed for use by pupils and their teachers as a learning resource and help pupils acquire facts, skills, or opinions or develop cognitive processes. Instructional materials may be printed or no printed, and may include textbooks, technology-based materials, other educational materials, and tests ([Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.](#)).

An instructional material may be defined as any medium of communication used by teacher and pupil to advance learning. Under this definition, all teaching tools are instructional materials. Library books, audio visual aids, television and radio, glass slides, filmstrips, flat pictures and map, real object, and community resources are some of the classes of teaching tools of extreme importance to education (Shores, 1960: 3). Based on the definition above, it can be concluded

that instructional materials include all media which is used as teaching tools in teaching learning process.

READING MATERIALS

Reading material for use in the English language classrooms may come from: integrated course books which include reading texts, supplementary reading comprehension and reading skills books, texts from 'real life' often called 'authentic texts' (Williams, 1994: 23):

DEFINITION OF TEXTBOOKS

"A true textbook", according to the American Textbook Publishers Institute, "is one especially prepared for the use of pupil and teacher in a school or class, presenting a course of study in a single subject, or closely related subject" (Shores Louis, 1960: 38). It means that textbook is a book used for the genuine of instructional process of any branch of study. Engler (in Brown, et al, 1972: 207) comments:

"The most accurate statement one can make about our present methods is that they are an old technology. The basic media of instruction, such as textbooks, chalkboards, and teachers, have been used for many years. Today, teachers are better prepared, textbooks are better written, and chalkboards have changed color, but their function and their relationships to learners have not changed essentially in over a hundred years. Moreover, the process by means of which instruction is carried out has not changed in any fundamental respect during this period. It remains teacher-centered, group-oriented, and textbook based ..."

It means that textbooks have been used for many years and known as one of the basic media of instruction. And the use of textbooks, their functions, and their relationships toward learners do not change for many years even though they have changed in color variations and designs. The instructional processes are mainly textbooks based. Harmer (in Nunan and Lamb, 1996: 181) also points out that:

"Good textbooks often contain lively and interesting materials: they provide a sensible progression of language items, clearly showing what has to be learnt and in some cases summarizing what has been studied so that students can revise grammatical and functional points that they have been concentrating on. Textbooks can be systematic about the amount of vocabulary presented to the student and allow students to study on their own outside the class. Good textbooks also relieve the teacher from the pressure of having to think of original material for every class. Indeed there is a greater variety of published material for teaching and learning English than ever before".

It means that a good textbook contains some requirements. First, it contains lively and interesting materials. Second, it provides a sensible progression of language items and shows clearly what students have to learn and give summary of what have been learned. Third, it contains a great amount of vocabulary, which can be studied independently by students. Fourth, it relieves

teachers to think of original material for every teaching process because the materials are concluded. Therefore teachers are relieved from the obligation to search other materials out of textbooks.

From all of the definition above, it can be concluded that textbooks have been used for many years to runaway the instructional process and known as one of the basic media of instructions that contain lively and interesting materials, provides a sensible progression of language items, clearly shows what has to be learnt and in some cases summarize what has been studied.

Advantages of Textbooks

Brown, et al (1959: 98) state that textbooks make several contributions to classroom instruction. They are:

a. Textbooks are economical

Compared to pamphlets, charts, flat picture sets, textbooks are relatively inexpensive.

b. They help to individualize instruction

Textbooks enable different students to study different things at the same time, or to repeat or restudy as often as is necessary.

c. They help to organize and provide unity for class instruction.

They expertly written textbook gives further unity to classroom learning by introducing new concepts and content in ways which build upon what has preceded and what is to follow.

d. Textbooks help students learn how to study, to read better, to weight evidence, and to solve problem.

Textbooks provide lists of suggested activities, challenging thought questions, and bibliographies of related study materials, which are intended to stimulate 'active' learning.

e. Textbooks are regarded as helpful in improving the skills of teachers.

Special aids provided through teachers' manual and notes often help teacher learn how to handle instructional problem.

Criticisms of Textbooks

Brown, et al (1959: 98) states that there are several common criticisms of textbooks. The presentation of text materials in logical, "predigested" form relieves a learner of any necessity for thinking through and organizing data for himself. Under these circumstances, reading becomes more a matter of "reading to remember" than of reading to obtain data with which to make decisions or to solve problems. In addition, textbooks treat subjects too sketchily. For students with shallow interest, textbooks leave insufficient knowledge of a subject and little enthusiasm for its further pursuit. Textbooks influence teaching more than they should, in which principal activities are a deadly routine of assigned reading and recitations. The last, textbooks become outdated quickly.

DEFINITION OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

Peacock (1997) defines authentic materials as materials that have been produced to fulfill some social purpose in the language community. It means that authentic materials are created or produced to fulfill some social purposes in

language communities such as transferring information, announcing something, giving warning, and etc. Meanwhile Rogers (1988: 467) defines authentic materials as 'appropriate' and quality' in terms of goals, objectives, learner needs and interest and 'natural' in terms of real life and meaningful communication. Authentic materials is significant since it increases students; motivation for learning, makes the learner be exposed to the 'real' language as discussed by Guariento and Morley (2001: 347).

From all the definitions above, it can be concluded that authentic materials are materials that have been produced to fulfill some social purpose in the language community and meaningful communication in terms of real life.

Definition of Magazines

Magazines are kinds of authentic materials. And text from magazines could be made sources of reading materials. A magazine can be defined as a periodical publication, paperback, containing stories and articles by various writers and an assortment of advertisement (Shores, 1960: 126). According to Michael (1998: 498), a magazine is a living-breathing organism and must meet its readers' needs in more fundamental, more emotional, and more empathetic ways. Magazines are cheap. And magazines will have to continue to offer an intelligent perspective on the world. A TV program is often more entertaining than a magazine article; but a magazine article is always more intelligent.

Printed Mass Media as Instructional Material

Media are seen as aids to the teacher. The advantages of using aids are to increase the effectiveness in the communication between the teacher and the students. The use of media as instructional material can stimulate the sense of the students especially their eyes and their ear. And there are some types of instructional materials, such as printed, visual, audio, and audio-visual to develop effective learning experiences. In this case the writer wants to focus on magazines as teaching aids, which are used in teaching reading at junior high school students. It is familiar to the students so that the students can be motivated to learn. In the learning process, instructional material is one of the elements that makes the process successful.

CONCLUSION

Based on the previous explanation, it can be concluded that media plays an important role as teaching aids in the communication between the teacher and the students achieving the instructional objective. At last, printed mass media like magazines can be varitype reading materials. Providing interesting and developmentally appropriate study materials is important if student teams are to work independently. According to Arends (1997: 126) he says that "if the students are to be given text, it is important that it be both interesting and at an appropriate reading level for particular class of the students.

Most teaching materials that we usually find are not authentic. The effective teacher should be careful in observing the situation happening in the class. The main reason is that the use of authentic text helps to gain student's attention and keep their interest in the material being presented. Therefore, the

need to choose interesting material and attractive is very important to persuade students to read more than the comprehension of the text is achieved. From the explanation above, magazines can give authentic information that contains a wide variety of text types; language styles easily found as reading materials, contains many stories, and lots of advertisement that sell products. Beside that magazine is published periodically (weekly or monthly).

Advantages of Magazine are (1) it can select targeted audiences, (2) Ad size flexibility, (3) High quality printing, (4) prestigious editorial environment, (5) long life prospects keeps magazines and reread them, (6) magazines provide authentic information that contains a wide variety of text types, (7) Language styles easily found as reading materials and specialized reading on a variety of topics.

Disadvantages of Magazines, (1) Wide geographic circulation – usually cannot be used to limit recruiting to specific area, (2) long lead time for ad placement, (3) cost can be high (<http://www.ga.unc.edu/NCCN/recruit doc edu>).

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