Using Authentic Reading Materials from Internet to enhance the Eighth Grade Students` Reading Comprehension

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Abstract: This article describes the improvement of students` reading comprehension achievement by using authentic reading materials from internet. The research design is classroom action research and the research area was at SMPN 9 Jember chosen by using purposive method. The data collection methods were a test, observation, interview, and documentation. The research subjects were the students of VIII-C at the school chosen purposively. The results of observation showed that the students` participation was improved from 77% in Cycle 1 to 82% in Cycle 2. The students` reading comprehension achievement was also improved from 77% in Cycle 1 and 89% in Cycle 2. It can be concluded that the use of authentic reading materials from internet can improve the eighth grade students` active participation and their reading comprehension achievement. Therefore the English teacher should use authentic reading materials from internet to teach reading comprehension.

Key words: reading comprehension, authentic reading materials from internet

In English, there are four language skills that should be mastered by the students. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. There are also three language components, grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. Canale and Swain (1980) state that learning a new language is usually divided by those in the language teaching field into four large domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It means that reading is one of the English skills that should be learned by the students beside listening, speaking, and writing.

Carrel *et al*. (1995:12) state that reading is psycholinguistics process, which starts with a linguistics surface representation encoded by a writer and ends with meaning

which the reader construction. It means that to decode the writer`s thought, the readers need a process to construct meaning based on the visual information in the text. Here, each reader has different constructions of the text meaning.

Nowadays, there are so many collections of interesting texts written in English from every country all over the world. This proves that English is a very essential part of learning. For that reason, the students have to comprehend the text well. Bernhardt (2011:7) defines that reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language in the text. It means that the students have to be able to understand the idea in the text, which is sometimes written implicitly.

Actually, many students not only fail in understanding an English text, but also lack interest in reading an English text. For that reason, it is known that most students experience difficulties in comprehending the reading text. Besides, the material that has been used by the teacher cannot encourage their interest and motivation in reading. In this case, the students seem discouraged to read English textbooks.

Related to the ideas above, a preliminary study was conducted to know the eighth grade students` problem of reading English texts at SMPN 9 Jember. It was conducted on August 20th, 2015 by interviewing the English teacher of the eighth grade at SMPN 9 Jember. Based on the interview, it was found there were some problems in the teaching and learning process of reading. According to the teacher`s explanation, the students translated the reading text from English into Indonesian word by word without comprehending the meaning of the text. It made the students difficult to understand what they read and could not do the reading tasks given by the teacher.

Second, the students` reading comprehension scores in the reading teaching learning process were still low, especially class VIII-C. In this class, only 59% of the students got score $\geq$ 74 was the standard minimum score in the school. Third, the students in class VIII-C had low motivation in joining reading comprehension class that can be seen from their passive participation in the classroom. Another problem was the lack of materials provided by the teacher. In the reading teaching and learning process, the teacher used a textbook and the students` worksheet in the teaching reading. The teacher had never used the variation of reading material source such as authentic reading materials in teaching reading in the classroom.

To solve the problems identified above, the researcher needed to find the appropriate materials that could increase the students` motivation to read and to be active in the reading teaching and learning process, so that they can improve their active participation and their reading comprehension achievement. The reading materials can be from course books or from authentic materials. In this case, the researcher chose authentic materials as the reading materials for the eighth grade students because authentic materials are appropriate quality in terms of goals, objectives, learner needs and interest, and natural in terms of real life and meaningful communication (Rogers ,1988). This means that authentic materials can offer real language to the students in the classroom.

There are some sources of authentic materials that can be used in the classroom, such as newspapers, TV programs, menu, magazines, internet, movies, songs, brochures, comics, literature (novels, poems, and short stories), advertisements for events, course catalogues from schools and so forth (Tamo, D.2009). The authentic

materials above help students to increase their motivation in learning the real language and can make them easier to understand the context of the language.

In this research, the researcher used authentic materials in reading teaching in the form of announcements taken from internet. Authentic reading materials from internet gave some benefits to the students. Firstly, authentic reading materials from internet were easily accessible. Secondly, authentic reading materials from internet were various and interesting. It means that authentic reading materials from internet could help the teacher to improve the reading ability of the students with the large number of various materials, because the students could have more inspiration to use the language and they could exposure the language in real communication.

To support this idea, two previous studies were conducted on the use of authentic reading materials in learning English as a foreign language. The first researcher was Niapasa (2010) who conducted the classroom action research entitled, "Improving Reading Comprehension Achievement by Using Authentic Reading Materials From the Internet for the Year 8-C Students of SMPN Hadi Wijaya Genteng". She found that the use of authentic reading materials adapted from internet as the materials could help the students to improve their reading comprehension achievement and their active participation.

The second researcher was Jannah (2014). Her classroom action research was entitled "Improving Class 8-F Students` Active Participation and Their Reading Comprehension Achievement by Using Authentic Reading Materials From the Internet at SMPN 1 Jember". She found that the use of authentic reading materials could give motivation to the students in answering the teacher`s questions and could helpthe students improve their reading comprehension achievement in finding the

meanings of the text. In conclusion, authentic reading materials could be one of the useful materials to improve the students` active participation and their reading comprehension achievement.

Based on the background above, to solve the problems of the eighth grade in reading comprehension was done by conducting a Classroom Action Research entitled "Improving the Eighth Grade Students` Active Participation and Their Reading Comprehension Achievement by Using Authentic Reading Materials from Internet at SMPN 9Jember in the 2015/2016 Academic Year".

Research method

In this research, Classroom Action Research was used as the research design. This research was intended to improve theeighth grade students' active participation and their reading comprehension achievement by using authentic reading materials.According to McMillan (1999:12), that the goal of the action research is to improve practices immediately within one or a few classrooms. Therefore, this Classroom Action Research was a research whichwas done collaboratively betweenthe researcher and the English teacher of the eighth grade at SMPN 9 Jember. This research was conducted in two cycles; each cycle covered four stages of activities. They were: the planning of the action, the implementation of the action, observation and evaluation, data analysis and reflection of the action.

The area of this research was determined by using purposive method. In this research SMPN 9 Jember was chosen because of some reasons; (1) VIII-C students at SMPN 9 Jember still had difficulties in reading comprehension, (2) the English teacher had never used authentic reading materials from internet in this case announcement text in teaching reading comprehension, (3) the headmaster of

SMPN 9 Jember gave permission to the researcher to conduct this classroom action research collaboratively with the English teacher of the eighth grade.

Purposive method was used to determine the research participants. . Class VIII-C was chosen by the researcher as the research participants because this class had the lowest mean score in reading test compared with the five other classes. Only 59% of the students gained the standard score of 74 of reading comprehension achievement used in this school and their mean score was only 69.

The data collection methods that were used in this research were observation, a reading comprehension test, interview and documentation. The observation was done twice in each cycle to get the primary data about the students participation during the teaching learning process of reading by using authentic reading materials from the internet. The observation guide in the form of checklist was used in this research to record the students participation. They were; (1) the students` activity in asking questions to the teacher in the teaching learning process of reading comprehension by using authentic materials, (2) the students` readiness to answer the teacher`s questions by raising their hands in the teaching learning process of reading comprehension by using authentic materials, (3) the students` activity in discussing authentic reading materials with their partner, (4) the students` activity in doing reading exercises with authentic reading materials individually.

Reading comprehension test was used to measure how successful the individual student achieved the goal of the teaching and learning process of reading comprehension. Furthermore, the purpose of conducting the reading achievement test in this research was to measure the students` reading comprehension

achievement covering word compehension, sentence comprehension and text comprehension.

Research Findings

The action in Cycle 1 was conducted in three meetings covering two meetings of teaching reading and one meeting for the reading test. The first meeting was conducted on February 24th, 2016, the second meeting was conducted on February 26th, 2016 and the third meeting (the test) was done on March 2nd, 2016. The result of the students` active participation in the teaching learning process of reading had achieved the research target requirement. The percentage of the students` active participation was 74% in the first meeting and 79% in the second meeting. Therefore, the average percentage of the students` participation in Cycle 1 was 77%. The percentage of the students who got score of 74 or higher in reading comprehension test in Cycle 1 was 77%. Although the actions in cycle 1 had achieved the successful criteria, it was necessary to continue the actions in the second cycle to see the consistency of the students` scores in active participation and reading comprehension achievement by using authentic reading materials.

The action in Cycle 2 was also done in three meetings in Cycle 2, the results of the actions showed improvement. Based on the classroom observation, the percentage of the students' active participation was 79% in the first meeting and 84% in the second meeting. Therefore, the average percentage of the students' participation in Cycle 2 was 82%. Besides, the percentage of the students who got score of 74 or higher in reading comprehension test also increased from 77% in Cycle 1 to 89% in Cycle 2. It means that the results of the students' active participation and the reading comprehension achievement in Cycle 2 had achieved the research target in this research.

Discussion

After conducting both the first cycle and the second cycles in this classroom action research, the evaluation revealed that the use of authentic reading materials from internet improved the students` active participation and their reading comprehension achievement since the authentic reading materials gave condition that the students were learning the real language.  The percentage of the students` active participation in Cycle 1 was 77%. Furthermore the percentage of the students` active participation in Cycle 2 was 82%. This means that the students` active participation in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 had achieved the target language required in this research, that was 74%.

The reading comprehension achievement test were done on March 2nd, 2016 in Cycle 1 and March 16th, 2016 in the Cycle 2. Based on the results of reading comprehension test in two cycles, it was known that the percentage of students who got score of 74 or higher improved from 77% in Cycle 1 and 89% in Cycle 2. It means that there was an improvement as much as 12% of the students who got score of 74 or higher from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. The results of the students` scores in active participation and reading comprehension achievement by using authentic reading materials both in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 gave the consistent results. The findings supported the idea suggested by Grellet (1996:7) and Klickaya (2004) stating that authentic materials can be motivating and interesting, or they have a positive effect on students` interest.

Furthermore, the results of this research supported the previous research findings conducted by Niapasa (2010) conducted a classroom action research to the eighth grade students at SMPN Hadi Wijaya Genteng. She reported that the use of

authentic reading materials from internet could help the students` to improve their reading comprehension achievement and their active participation.

In addition, Jannah (2014) who conducted a classroom action research to class 8-F at SMPN 1 Jember. She reported that the use of authentic reading materials from the internet could give motivation the students in answering the teacher`s questions and could help the students to improve their reading comprehension achievement in finding the meanings of the text. Both of research results proved that the use of authentic reading materials had benefit not only to improve the students` active participation but also to improve their reading comprehension achievement.

Based on the discussion above, it was proven that the use of authentic reading materials from internet could improve VIII-C students` active participation in the reading teaching learning process and their reading comprehension achievement at SMPN 9 Jember. Therefore, the English teacher is suggested to use authentic reading materials from internet as the appropriate material to teach reading materials because authentic reading materials can be used to improve the students` active participation and their reading comprehension achievement.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the above data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that using authentic reading materials from internet could improve VIII-C students' active participation and reading comprehension achievement in the teaching learning process of reading comprehension at SMPN 9 Jember. The result of the students' active participation in the teaching learning process improved in each cycle.

Therefore, the English teachers at the school should use authentic reading materials from internet in teaching reading comprehension because they might improve the students' reading comprehension achievement as well as their active participation. Meanwhile, the future researchers are suggested to use the research result as a reference and a source of information in conducting the future research.

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