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**CYCLIC LEARNING SESSION OF INDONESIAN FOLKTALES UTILIZATION TO
IMPROVE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION**

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Ida Bagus Nyoman Mantra¹⁾ & Dewa Gede Agung Gana Kumara²⁾

^{1,2} FKIP Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar

Email: 1bagusmantra@unmas.ac.id & 2dewagana11@gmail.com

Abstract

Folktales are the most valuable learning resources and embodied linguistic and cultural usefulness. Through the integration of folktales in reading classes enables students develop their readings skill and enrich their linguistic capabilities, in the same their cultural horizons developed accordingly. The present studies aimed at improving English learners' reading comprehension through the integration of Indonesian folktales in reading classes. A classroom action research was conducted in two consecutive cyclic learning consisted of four thematic learning sessions. Data required for this study were collected by administering pre test to figure out the initial reflection of the students' reading comprehension, and a post-test was conducted by the end of each cycle to reveal the improvement of the students' reading comprehension after the implementation of Indonesian folktales. A set of questionnaire was also administered to reveal the changing behavior of the English learners after learning reading comprehension through Indonesian folktales. The result of this study revealed that there were significant improvement on the students' reading comprehension from first learning cycle and second learning cycle. This indicated that the English learners' reading comprehension could be significantly improved through utilizing Indonesian folktales in English classroom.

Key words: Indonesian Folktales, Utilizing, Student, Reading, Comprehension

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Teaching of reading is a language learning activity that every English teacher should intensively carry out in English classroom. Reading is one of the language skills that should be taken into a serious consideration because it can influence the three other skills, such as speaking, listening and writing (Caldwell, 2008). This is due to fact that students may enrich their knowledge just simply by reading available written resources. such as: book, journal and newspaper.

Reading is the process of looking at series of words to getting the information or the meaning of them. Through reading, the students can increase their knowledge, get a lot of information and by reading students can learn about new vocabulary, grammatical or tenses and generic structure of the text that can help them to improve their knowledge and

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improve their four skills because by reading the students can see how to write the word and know how to pronoun the word. Reading is a receptive skill so the reader needs ability to receive the information from the written text (Camille, 2008). In reading process, readers do not merely read the texts, but also most importantly is to understand and comprehend the content of the text.

Reading has many benefits for students because it brings the good effect for students' vocabulary knowledge, spelling and writing. When students are asked to read the new topic, they can find some new vocabulary on the textbooks (Klingner, 2007). On the other hand the more they read, the more they can develop their critical thinking and distribute their idea into the written form. Therefore, reading related to students' writing ability because sometimes students do not have idea to construct sentence to be whole text because

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their reading experience is too low. Thus, if students read many books from any sources, they will be easier to find idea that will be wrote because reading offers a good model of writing (Caldwell, 2008).

In reading activity, we should understand about what we have read; thus, we should comprehend the textbook in order to we can gain knowledge from it. In reading, we should notice especially the messages that exist in the written form, because that is the most important element that the students must recognize. Since, the primary purpose of reading is to know the thoughts expressed in written form (Lems, Miller, & Soro, 2010). Therefore, reading with comprehension is only a way for the students to get at what they want to know from the reading material. It is important because reading comprehension will bring many advantages for the students for enhance their new concept.

Additionally, reading comprehension is not static competency; it varies according to the purposes to reading and the text that is involved (Lems et al., 2010). There are also some benefits which can take from reading text such as reading text can give opportunities to study vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and the way we construct sentences, paragraphs and text. By reading students can comprehend concept and ideas which state in reading text, moreover they will get many information that can enrich their knowledge and also enhance students' mind concept and ideas where the information that they get from the text can construct their mind well (Caldwell, 2008). Reading also helps students to learn others experiences it means reading introduce students new things in their life.

Reading activity involves one or more purposes or tasks, some operations to process the text, and the outcomes of performing the activity, all of which occur within some specific context. Reading is an interaction between the reader and the text. Reader not only read the reading material by

understanding the word but they will try to comprehend the text. The outcomes of reading activity is students can comprehend the reading material by determining whether the main ide of the text, and the messages that not written on the textbook or write in explicitly.

Klinger et al (2007:8) argued that Reading is an active process which consists of recognition and recognition and comprehension skill. Reading comprehension is an activity to grasp idea behind a sentence of a paragraph. It means that it refers to the students' ability to understand and comprehend information which wrote in the textbook. Process of understanding and comprehending the text involve some sub skills that is: understanding word meaning, finding the main idea, summarizing the information which is implied on the text.

Reading is activity of understanding the meaning of the text. Thus, reading is not only read the reading text but readers also need to comprehend what the text talking about. Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that reading is very important because by reading the readers will gain various knowledge and a lot of information (Pang, Muaka, & Bernhardt 2003). Reading is important thing in education; it also provides a good model for English writing and develops positive value for students. Many people said that reading is the heart of education. It means that reading can develop the students' knowledge and shape their good attitude. Reading is not only important for education especially in language learning but also for daily life such as for entertainment and emotional development.

Similarly, Klinger et al (2007:8) state that reading comprehension is a complex process which involves the interaction between readers and what they bring into the text. Such as like what strategy that they use and their experience in reading. On the other hand, in reading comprehension, readers will try how to understand what the author mean and comprehend the meaning of text that is

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hidden behind the textbook. Sometimes, this activity is too difficult for students. Thus, monitoring of the teacher is needed when teaching reading, especially reading comprehension. Therefore to ensure students have degree of ability, assessment should also be conducted regularly (Widiastuti, 2016). Teachers are also urged to conducted assessment daily in the form of formative assessment to continually enrich their ability (Widiastuti, 2017).

All of the students can read but only a few of students can comprehend or can understand what they have read especially English text. It because many factors such as the students consider that English is a subject that very difficult, bored and scares because meaning and letters are different. The other factor is the teacher always uses the same method to teach (Mantra, 2017), which makes the students get bored in learning.

For students from elementary to university level, reading is something that has to be done. They have to read their compulsory books or other materials related to their lesson. It is certainly not easy to present the English reading for Indonesian students whose language system is different. Reading is a complex process which involves not only the read the text but also their experience to comprehend it. Because of its complexity, many teachers of English at junior and senior high school find difficulties in all teaching reading and prefer teaching structure to reading.

The learning objective of reading based on the curriculum, the students are expected to gain the information from the texts or they can comprehend the text well. However, in the field there are also difficulties that found on the students, that is commonly encountered a lot of difficulties in finding out the main idea, specific information, textual reference, and word meaning of the text. In addition, the students also got difficulties in answering the comprehension text about the content of the text. In this case, involvement of teacher and

the technique that used are very important. Technique that the teacher applied in reading class should help their students to comprehend the reading material that given by them.

Many technique of teaching English has developed, especially to improving reading comprehension. Actually, those techniques of teaching influence the students' success to get the goal of learning (Maba, & Mantra, 2018). So, the teacher of English should select the suitable method or technique to teach. There are many approaches or techniques have been applied in the English curriculum. In general, the techniques in reading comprehension found at Senior High School is discussion technique, but in implementing that technique teacher still found the difficulties when doing the teaching learning process.

One of the richest learning activities that can use to develop students' comprehension is folktales. It is not only highly dense with linguistics features but also cultural characteristics (Mantra, 2017). Students also find that folktales are interesting to read because it creates a sense of reading for enjoyment and they find folktales are the source of cultural awareness (Mantra, & Maba, 2018). Folklore plays a significant role in teaching. It contains the traditional belief and the story of the community that is passed down from one generation to the other through word of mouth. The essence of folklore may cover folktales, myths, legends, beliefs, practices, superstition, etc. This characteristics of folktale highlights that folktale has a wide span of content and linguistic resources. Folklore is commonly built in accordance with the culture of the community.

There are various Indonesian folklores as part of children literature that are developed based on the geographical ethnic groups in Indonesia. Most of the folktales have moral values which encourage students to read because they want to know and learn the values and culture of the past which can be used as a guidance in present life time. Understanding these phenomenon, it is



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considered to be important to reveal how the students' English reading comprehension can be improve though the utilization of Indonesian folktales.

METHODS

The subject of the study was an EFL class consisted of 23 students which consist of 9 female and 14 male. They were chosen as the subject of the study because after interview was conducted with the teacher in which the result showed the students still had difficulty in reading comprehension. Therefore, immediate and appropriate teaching learning process needs to be carrying out to solve the problem. This study was classroom action research (CAR) consisted of cyclical processes in which in every cycle there were four interconnected activities such as: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

The purpose of the research is to determine the methodology and design of the research. By this design, the researcher is able to do the research step by step. The research design is the conceptual structure within the conducted research. The teaching and learning process were divided into two cycles. Each cycle consisted of two learning sessions which includes four interconnected activities. The four interconnected activities are planning, action, observation, and reflection. The results of the reflection and observation from the first cycle were used to revise the planning for the second cycle.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All of the data needed for this study were collected in the classroom by conducting pre test, post test and questionnaire to the students as the subject of this study. The pre-test was administered to the subject to obtain their pre-existing ability in reading comprehension. The result of pre-test was used as the consideration of giving treatment that consisted of two cycles. Post-test was administered once in each cycle in order to measure the subjects' progress in reading

comprehension through folktales based learning. As a result, there were two sets of raw scores obtained for the present study, those were pre-test scores and post-test scores.

Based on the preliminary observation which was done by interviewing the English teacher, it showed that the subjects of the study had low ability in reading comprehension. Therefore, to solve the problems, the present study applied a cyclical process of classroom action research. After carrying out the cyclical process into practice, the findings of the present classroom action research can be elaborated as follows.

The present study was intended to improve students' reading comprehension through Indonesian folktales. Based on the result of the post-test in the second cycle, it can be confidently proclaimed that Experiential Learning can significantly improve students' reading comprehension.

In pre-cycle, the pre-test was administered in a strict testing situation. The mean score obtained by the subjects under study in reading comprehension pointed out the mean score of 55.00 in which it was considered as very low achievement of the students. This low score obtained on pre-test was also based on the problem showed through the observation which showed that the students found difficulty in reading comprehension. In the first cycle, the folktales based learning was implemented in reading comprehension classes. In session 1, some subjects were still unfamiliar with the stages of learning. In session 2, the subjects were more active than the previous session. At the end of cycle, after treating the subjects by using folktales based learning, the post-test was conducted. The result of the post-test showed the increasing figure of 72.00. The mean figure of the post-test scores obtained by the subjects under study was higher than the one of the pre-test. In the first post-test, higher mean score was achieved because the students had already had less anxiety in reading comprehension. Some of the students were



able to find specific and general information, but most of them still low in finding textual meaning and textual references. The students' scores however were much higher compared with the one of the pre-test. This mean figure convincingly revealed the obvious improvement of the subjects' ability in reading comprehension. In order to attain higher score reflecting higher ability of the subjects, second learning cycle was carried to continually improve the students' reading comprehension.

In the second cycle, the subjects were treated by using the revised learning plan using the same technique with some modification in learning stages to maximize the students' involvement in reading comprehension classes. In the second cycle, the subjects were more active and they enjoyed the teaching learning process. In this cycle the students were reinforced in reading comprehension by giving them more exercises. In second cycle, it turned out to show the progressing mean score of 85.50. The comparison between the mean score of first and second cycle showed the increased progress significantly. This significant improvement of the mean score suggested that the teaching of reading comprehension in second cycle through folktales could be remarked more effective than first cycle, in the teaching scenarios in second cycle were accordingly revised by taking into account the weaknesses found out in first cycle.

In this cycle, most of the students were able to find specific and general information, textual meaning and textual references. It could be concluded that folktales can be utilized to improve the student's ability in reading comprehension. This research could be ended because the success indicator had been decided. Furthermore, this research was regarded as successful based on criterion of which 80% of total subjects can achieve the minimum passing grade.

The proportional percentage figures of total response of the questionnaire for item A, B, C, and D were 42.60%, 40.64%, 15.75%

and 2%. The comparative percentage of questionnaire obtained for the present classroom action study revealed that the subjects under study gave positive response, in which their attitude and motivation were changing after having been taught reading comprehension through folktales. This figure showed that 42.60% of the subjects strongly agreed with the application of Experiential Learning Method, 40.64% of the subjects agreed, 15.75% of the subjects quite agreed, and 2% of the subjects disagreed. The positive response was based on the percentage means that more than half portion of the subjects under study found that the learning process was beneficial and interesting for them.

CONCLUSION

The English translated texts of Indonesian folktales are one of the most effective learning activities that can vividly improve students' learning achievement. Therefore the present study was conducted in a series of cyclic learning cycles. The main data for the present classroom action study were collected through administering pre-test and post-test the subjects under study and at the end of second cycle was administered questionnaire for knowing the students' changing learning behavior after being taught reading comprehension through folktales. The purpose of administering questionnaire at the end of the second cycle was to establish the students' interest, motivation and attitude in learning through folktales. The result of questionnaire was the students were interested in learning through folktales. It could be concluded that folktales could be utilized to improve the students' reading comprehension. Therefore, this finding suggests that the use of folktales in learning English should be intensively maximized and teachers should always consider the usability of folktales and they are really rich in linguistic and cultural resources.



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