Using Authentic Materials in Reading Comprehension of Students' Low and High Proficiency Levels

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Abstract*: Using Authentic Materials in Reading Comprehension of Students' Low and High Proficiency Levels. The purposes of this study are to find out whether there is significant difference of students' reading comprehension between high and low proficiency level students who were taught through authentic material, to find out the aspects of reading skills that mostly influenced by the students in reading comprehension through authentic material and to see students' perceptions of teaching and learning through authentic material. This study used one group pretest and posttest design. Based on the result of T-test Sig. (2-tailed) showed that there is significant difference between high and low proficiency level students. Finding inference was the aspect of reading that mostly influenced reading comprehension in high proficiency level students while finding supporting details was the aspect that mostly influenced in low proficiency level students. Moreover, the high proficiency level and low proficiency level students have a positive perception in teaching and learning through authentic material.*

Abstrak: Using Authentic Materials in Reading Comprehension of Students' Low and High Proficiency Levels. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan perbedaan yang signifikan dari pemahaman membaca antara siswa dengan tingkat kemampuan membaca tinggi dan siswa dengan tingkat kemampuan membaca rendah yang diajarkan menggunakan materi autentik, untuk menemukan aspek kemampuan membaca apa yang paling berpengaruh oleh siswa dalam pemahaman membaca menggunakan materi autentik dan untuk melihat persepsi siswa dalam belajar dan mengajar menggunakan autentik material. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain one group pretest and posttest. Berdasarkan hasil analisa T-test Sig. (2-tailed) menunjukan bahwa adanya perbedaan yang signifikan antara siswa dengan kemampuan tinggi dan rendah. Menemukan Kesimpulan merupakan aspek membaca yang paling berpengaruh pada siswa berkemampuan tinggi. Sedangkan, menemukan detail pendukung merupakan aspek membaca yang paling berpengaruh pada siswa berkemampuan rendah. Selanjutnya, siswa berkemampuan membaca tinggi dan rendah mempunyai persepsi positif dalam belajar mengajar menggukan materi autentik.

Kata Kunci: Authentic Material, High and Low proficiency, Reading Comprehension,

INTRODUCTION

Reading is the activity or the process of constructing meaning from written text. While reading, the reader makes their own interpretation between the symbol of the language and the meaning of the symbol. (Berardo, 2006:61) defines reading is considered to be an interactive process (a conversation between writer/reader, even though the writer is not present). Students have to be mastered Reading skill. It because the success of students learning depends on the greater part their ability to read. Reading comprehension is measured by five aspect of reading, such main idea, supporting details, vocabulary, finding reference and making inference (Davenport, 2007:61). Comprehension is also measured based on the readers' schemata or proficiency level in reading. (Sutarsyah, 2013:19) defines schemata is an abstract structure or concepts stored in memory based on the people experience and knowledge. it implies that a person who has more background knowledge is able to comprehend better than those who have less background knowledge.

The researcher found that the reason what make students difficult in comprehending the text. First, students argue that reading an English text is very difficult activity. The students have lack of linguistic competence, such as vocabulary and structure. Second, learners have no motivation and interest in learning a new language. Third, the teacher always teaches the students by using textbook. Teaching English by using textbook is not teaching them the culture of the target language. The content of the textbook is written by the publisher in home. Because of this reason, teachers need to use a kind of material which can renew their efforts to have the students attain the highest achievements and bring positive effect to the learners.

As the teacher, we have a responsibility to prepare the students as much as possible to be able to comprehend reading text. To begin it we can know analyzing the students' abilities in reading or we call it as students ''language proficiency level''. (Tadros, 2014:2) explains reading proficiency requires three sets of interrelated skill that develop over time: language and communication, mechanics of reading and content of knowledge. Language proficiency means the ability to master a target language and it deals with all of language components and skills. Language proficiency level will determine students output. In fact, every student has different proficiency level. Students with high proficiency level of language is easier to acquire a new language than the student in low proficiency level. In preparing the material and before starting the lesson, the teacher have to know first about the proficiency of students. It is important for the teacher in order to achieve the goal of the teaching and learning.

Prepare a good material also need to be noticed since the successful of students' learning depend on the material. Authentic material is chosen to solve the students' reading problems. (Wallace, 1992:145) defines that Authentic texts have been defined as real-life texts, not written for pedagogic purposes, it is written by native speaker and contain "real" language. Authentic material refers to the use in teaching of texts, photograph, video selection, newspaper, magazine, short stories, novel and other teaching resources that were not specifically prepared for pedagogical purposes, (Sukirlan, 2012:6). Authentic material gives positive effects on learners motivation (Sukirlan, 2016:6). The

teacher can use authentic material to increase the students' linguistic competence especially in vocabulary and structure and make the students more challenging in reading. The language which is used in the authentic material comes from real life. When teaching students by using authentic material, the teacher also teaches them about the culture of the target language itself unconsiously. Authentic material can make the teacher more creative in preparing the materials which can attract the students attention, So, the students are not bored while learning process.

Some studies on the implementation of authentic material in learning foreign language have been conducted by some researchers. For example, (Guo, 2012) has done the research about Using Authentic Materials for Extensive Reading to Promote English Proficiency. As another example, (Khalili and Mahsefat, 2012) has investigated quantitative research entitled the Impact of Authentic Listening Materials on Elementary EFL Learners' Listening Skills. (Rahim, 2014) has conducted a qualitative research entitle Investigating EFL College Teachers' and Learners' Attitudes toward Using Authentic Reading Materials in Misan of the academic year 2012–2013.

As in the previous studies discussed above, however, they have not discussed yet the effect of using authentic material in reading comprehending in students' different proficiency level. Therefore, this study attempted to find the differences of students achievement between students in low proficiency and students in high proficiency in reading using authentic material. Authentic materials is used to know what aspect of reading which will be increased by students in high and low proficiency level. The writer also would like to know the difference perceptions about authentics materials between low proficiency students' and high proficiency students'.

METHODS

Quantitative research with one group pretest and posttest design was carried out in this research. The population came from all students of eighth grade at SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung. In taking the sample, the researcher used purposive sampling technique. The sample was divided into two groups (high and low proficiency levels). To determine students' proficiency level, the researcher used English proficiency test by using final examination test. Then, the researcher scored it and encoded the students based on their proficiency level. The sample consists of 12 high proficiency level students and 12 low proficiency level students. They were taught in the same class in sixty minutes in each treatment.

The data sources were taken from a set of reading comprehension test and questionnaire. Reading comprehension test was used to know students' reading achievement. There are 50 items in form multiple choices with five options (A, B, C, D, and E). Second instrument is questionnaire. In order to know the students' perception, a set of questionnaire which is adapted by Richard (2001:244) was taken for instrument. The questionnaire consists of 25 questions with five likert scales 5 (*Strongly Agree),* 4 *(Agree),* 3 *(Neutral),* 2 *(disagree) and* 1 *(Strongly Disagree).* All the collected data were then statistically analyzed by using SPSS (T-Test).

RESULTS

After determining the sample, the writer conducted pretest, treatments, and posttest of reading. Pretest and posttest are used in order to see how far the students'

reading skills before and after giving treatment. The treatment was conducted in three times where in each meeting was sixty minutes. The researcher taught both of high and low proficiency level students by using authentic material.

After treatment, questionnaire was distributed in order to see the students' perception toward authentic material.
In order to answer the first research question is there any significant difference of students reading achievement who are taught by using authentic material between students in low proficiency level and students in high proficiency level. the research computed the result of pretest and posttest and analyzed it by using independent t-test formula as this below:

Table 1. The Analysis of Hypothesis Test of Posttest Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Score of posttest	Equal variances assumed	.396	.536	9.130	22	.000	17.83333	1.95337	13.78229	21.88438
	Equal variances not assumed			9.130	20.672	.000	17.83333	1.95337	13.76715	21.89952

The result shows that Sig.(2-tailed) of post-test in both high and low proficiency students are 0.000. It means that p < 0.05, p

= 0.000, 0.000 < 0.05. It means that there is significant difference between the students' high proficiency level and students' low proficiency level that were taught through authentic material on the students' reading comprehension.

To answer the second research question what aspects of reading skills mostly influenced by the implementation of authentic material in both students high and low proficiency level, then the researcher analyzed the gain of each aspect and identified how the gain of the aspects as follows:

Table 2. Increases of high proficiency level students from pretest to posttest for each aspect of reading

No.	Aspect of Reading Comprehension	Total Answer		Increase	Percentage (%)		Increase
		Pre	Post		Pre	Post	
1	Identifying Main Idea	77	89	12	64.1	74.1	10%
2	Finding Supporting Details	76	93	17	63.3	77.5	14.1%
3	Understanding Vocabulary	75	95	20	62.5	79.1	16.6%
4	Finding Reference	80	99	19	66.6	82.5	15.8%
5	Finding Inference	75	97	22	62.5	80.8	18.3%

From table above, it can be stated that authentic material increase the students reading comprehension in high proficiency students in all elements of reading comprehension, such as the main idea (10% increased), the supporting details (14.1 increased), Vocabulary (16.6% increased), Reference (15.8% increased) and finding inference (18.3% increased).

Table 3. Increases of low proficiency level students from pretest to posttest for each aspect of reading

No.	Aspect of Reading Comprehension	Total Answer		Incre ase	Percent age (%)		Incre ase
		Pre	Post		Pre	Post	
1	Identifying Main Idea	52	70	18	43.3	58.3	15%
2	Finding Supporting Details	54	79	25	45	65.8	20.8%
3	Understanding Vocabulary	53	73	20	44.1	60.8	16.6%
4	Finding Reference	56	75	19	46.6	62.5	15.8%
5	Finding Inference	58	70	12	48.3	58.3	10%

Based on table above, it can be stated that authentic material increase the students reading comprehension in low proficiency students in all elements of reading comprehension, such as the main idea (15% increased), the supporting details (20.8% increased), Vocabulary (16.6% increased), Reference (15.8% increased) and finding inference (10% increased).

In order to answer the research question, the researcher distributed questionnaire which consists of 25 statement by using five likert scales. Then, the researcher computed the result of questionaire as follows:

Table 4. The Percentage of the aspect of the Students' Perceptions in evaluating learning teaching by using authentic material in high proficiency level

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teacher	725	80.56%
Material	691.7	86.4%
Learning	591.8	73.9%

From the table above, the percentage of students' high proficiency level perception in evaluating learning teaching by using authentic material. based on the result of questionnaire, the percentages of three aspects where teacher aspect was 80.56%, material aspect 86.4% and learning aspect was 73.9%.

Table 5. The Percentage of the aspect of the Students' Perceptions in evaluating learning teaching by using authentic material in Low proficiency level

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teacher	641.6	71.28%
Material	650	81.25%
Learning	591.6	73.95%

Based on the table, it shows about the percentage of students' low proficiency level perception in evaluating learning teaching by using authentic material. The result of questionnaire can be seen from the percentages of three aspects where teacher aspect was 71.28%, material aspect 81.25% and learning aspect was 73.95%.

DISCUSSION

Based on the result of the research, it can be seen that there is a significant difference of students' achievement between high and low proficiency level students. The difference can be seen by the result of t-test formula Sig.(2-tailed) of pre-test in both high and low proficiency students are 0.000. It means that $p < 0.05$, $p = 0.000$.

High proficiency students are more confident in elaborating idea. It might be because high proficiency students have better knowledge in catching the meaning of the text and they also have more background of the knowledge than the low proficiency level, so it makes high proficiency students easy to share their ideas. Background of knowledge from high and low proficiency students is different. High proficiency level students have better background knowledge than low proficiency students. It is in line

with (Sutarsyah, 2013:20) a person who has more background knowledge is able to comprehend better than those who have less background knowledge. In addition (Mardianti et al, 2014:2), schema refers to the knowledge already stored in someone's memory (plural: schemata). They also points out that schema activation strategy is a way of reading where the readers are expected to use a strategy to activate his/her own prior knowledge when they read an English text or passage.

Meanwhile Low proficiency level students also have their improvement in reading through authentic material. It can be seen from the gain score in low proficiency students also increase. It might be from the beginning of learning where low proficiency students have very lack of knowledge than high proficiency level students. They only know few vocabularies and their knowledge of grammar is still lack. But, when the research gave them an authentic text, they learned more from it. Some of low proficiency students stated that after they were introduced authentic material, their vocabulary is increased, they began to understand the meaning of word that they did not know before. So, at the end they can fully understand the text above.

Based on the analysis of second research question the researcher found that the aspects of reading skills mostly influenced by the implementation of authentic material in both high and low proficiency level students. The first aspect is identifying main idea. There was a different gain between high proficiency level students and low proficiency students who are taught by using authentic material. The gain of main idea in high proficiency level was 10% and the gain of main idea in low proficiency level was 15%. Therefore, low proficiency students are higher than high proficiency students. At the first time, the students in low proficiency level felt confused to determine the topic toward the text. They have to read more than once before they could determine the topic of the text. At the same time, high proficiency level students are easier to determine the main idea because they could understand the text well. it can be said that authentic material can increase the students' knowledge especially in identifying main idea.

The second aspect is Finding supporting detail. Finding supporting detail is used to identify all information details in the text. The gain of identifying detail was 14.1% in High proficiency level students. In contrast to low proficiency level students, the gain of identifying detail was 20.8%. Finding supporting detail is mostly influenced in low proficiency level. It might be because the answer of the question already taken in the text. The students can use scanning technique in getting information of the text. According to (Richardson, et al, 2009:279) Scanning is rapid reading for some specific purpose— for instance, to find out where, when, or how something happened. So, low proficiency level students can easily to answer the question about the information in the text by focusing on the question with the relevant paragraph in the text. Since high proficiency students have better background of knowledge than low proficiency students and the gain of finding supporting details is not higher as low proficiency level students, it can be said that authentic material prepares some benefit for the students, especially in finding supporting details.

The third aspect is understanding vocabulary. From the finding above the aspect reading of using context for vocabulary was increased in both of high and low proficiency level students. Although the vocabulary students increased there was same gain between high and low proficiency level students. It can be seen from the gain of understanding vocabulary was 16.6% in

High and low proficiency level. Since authentic material contains difficult words, it makes the students more motivate in comprehending the text. In high proficiency level, the students are easier to understand the vocabulary and it makes them to comprehend the text well. Meanwhile in low proficiency students, vocabulary with its synonym or antonym helped the students to get more vocabulary. So, it can be conclude that authentic material is suitable to use in order to increase students' understanding vocabulary.

The fourth aspect is finding reference. Finding reference is the ability in choosing the things pointed by certain pronouns. To be able to complete this task, the students should be careful in analyzing the information related to text given. In the process of learning, it has been introduced by the teacher. Hence, they were familiar with this task. Furthermore, the result of post test showed that the total number of the correct answer was increased. This fact indicates that the ability of students in determining reference is improved positively. In this case, there was a same gain between high proficiency level students and low proficiency level students. It can be seen from the gain of understanding vocabulary was 15.8% in High and low proficiency level. it can be concluded that authentic material can increase the students' knowledge in finding inference in both of high and low proficiency level students.

The last aspect is finding inference. Finding inference is the ability to conclude the text logically. From the finding above the aspect reading of finding inference was increased in both of high and low proficiency level students. It can be seen from the gain of finding inference in high proficiency level students was 18.3% and 10% in low proficiency level students. Finding inference is the most influenced aspect in high proficiency students. It is

caused reading is an activity that involves students' schemata. Schema is a factor that influences students in comprehending text. (Sutarsyah, 2013:19) states that schema is an abstract structure or concepts stored in memory based on the people experience and knowledge. He also adds this implies that a person who has more background knowledge is able to comprehend better than those have less background knowledge. That's why the high proficiency students can make the logical conclusion of the text since they have better schemata. While low proficiency level, they get more difficulty in comprehend the text so they less in making the conclusion in logically.

The third research question deals with the students' perception toward the effect of implementation authentic material between high proficiency level students and low proficiency students. A questionnaire was given to support the findings and to see the students' perception in low and high proficiency level students. The result shows that, all students in high and low proficiency level have positive perceptions about authentic material.

The first aspect of evaluating teaching and learning process is teacher's quality. Teacher is a center for the students in transferring knowledge as long as the successful learning is in the teacher attention. Many things can be done to create a context for good teaching, but it is teachers themselves who ultimately determine the success of a program (Richards, 2001:209).

High and low proficiency level students have positive perceptions in evaluating the teacher. They agreed that the teacher prepares the material well. Most of students stated that before starting the class, the teacher already prepared it well at home. So, in the class the teacher already knew what she wanted to be explained to the students. Teacher also used strategy which is effective and suitable. In this case, the

teacher used cooperative strategy such as discussion. Discussion is chosen because authentic material contains difficult language. By discussion, the students can share their ideas and help each others to solve the problems in reading authentic material. Teacher can control and organize the situation in the class during learning process. She makes conducive situation that makes the students focus in doing their task. Students like the teacher in giving their chances to ask a question or giving opinion. In this case, the students can be more understand the task and material that given if they did not understand. If the students can ask the answer clearly, the teacher always appreciates them. The students also agreed that the teacher helps the students when the students get difficulty in understanding the material. Teacher will repeat the explanation and she used simple language in explaining the material. Teacher is very enthusiasm and interesting in giving the material, she did not make the students became stress in doing the task therefore the students felt comfort during the learning process.

The second aspect of evaluating teaching and learning process is the material. According to Richards (2001:251) instructional materials generally serve as the basis for much of the language input learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the classroom. In this case the researcher used authentic material in order to increase the students' reading comprehension. Students in both high proficiency level and low proficiency level have positive perception in authentic material. Authentic material is a higher aspect that mostly liking by the student in comprehending the text. Students agreed that authentic material is suitable with the topic discussion and it is organized well. Whereas in authentic material contains difficult words and it takes much times to

the students in low proficiency level in comprehending the text, but at the end, they can understand the text well. Difficult words in authentic material also provide new vocabulary for the students, so the students agreed if authentic material can increase the students' vocabulary. Students also like authentic material because authentic material can bring new atmosphere for the students. It makes the students more active in thinking when they read authentic text. Students like authentic material because by reading authentic material, they can imagine in reading the text so, it can increase their creativity. Because authentic bring some benefit for the students, all of students agreed that authentic material can increase their students interest in reading and authentic material can be implemented in SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung. It can be seen in questionnaire number 16 where the percentage both low and high proficiency level was 100%.

The third aspect of evaluating teaching and learning process is the learning quality. The extent to which teaching achieves its goals will also dependent on how successfully learners have been considered in the planning and delivery process, (Richards, 2001:223). So, learning quality comes from the students' feel after teaching and learning finish. Whether they get progress or not after they learn.

Students agreed that the learning and teaching process finished on time. They also like the facilities in the class support their learning and teaching process. When they do the task through authentic material in teaching learning process, the students feel challenging in solving the problems. As (Richards, 2001:253) states authentic material often contains difficult language. It makes the students were curious in knowing the meaning of the language itself. They feel different achievement when they learn through text book and through authentic

material. 100% of students in low proficiency level students and 75% students' in high proficiency students agreed that after learning by using authentic material their knowledge are increased. They get something new after learning. Especially, their vocabularies are increased after learning with authentic material. At the end of learning, students' motivation are increased, It is in line with (Sukirlan, 2012:6) states that authentic material has positive effects on learner motivation. (Richards, 2001:252) adds that authentic material has a positive effect on learner motivation because they are intrinsically more interesting and motivating than created materials. Students also like the conducive situation in the class because they can focus in learning. Overall the most of students agreed that the quality of learning in the class is good. It can be seen from their result of questionnaire number 25 where high proficiency level was 83.4% and low proficiency level was 83.3%.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion and the results of the data analysis in this research, the researcher draws conclusions as follows below:
1. There is a significant difference of students' high proficiency level and low proficiency level in reading comprehension achievement through authentic material.
2. Authentic material influenced the aspect of reading in high and low proficiency students. In high proficiency level, authentic material increase students' knowledge in finding inference. In low proficiency level students, authentic material also increase students knowledge in finding supporting details.
3. The students' perceptions by the implementing authentic material are positives.

Based on the result of the research and the conclusion stated previously, the researcher would like to propose some suggestions as follows:
1. Select the authentic material which is suitable with the students' level thinking since authentic material comes from real language in the second language which consists of many difficult words.
2. Make an interesting material with authentic material. It is caused that authentic material is not for pedagogic purpose, the teacher should make their own material by using authentic material.
3. The further study may apply more participants. The different context and setting may be worth investigation since it may discover new findings and values of authentic material.
4. Employ qualitative design to know what problems that mostly found in both high and low proficiency level students which can make the achievement different.

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