
The Use of Taking Notes on Report Text

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A B S T R A C T

One of the problems suffered by students on English learning was about reading incompetency. It could be troublesome for them to understand what they were reading. Additionally, it became difficult to gain a deeper accepting of the text, something that required assimilating competency, experience, and knowledge. This paper attempt to describe the use of note taking on narrative text. Note Taking could help secondary level students to simplify the process of reading narrative text. Students or learner who had decent skill of reading and theory of note taking would find less difficulties to write down narrative text as teacher's requires. Therefore, teacher should equipped students with proper understanding particularly about taking note. Reading a lot was the best way to achieve this ability.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of language skill which is important for the students. It must be taught to or mastered by the students beside the other skills, like speaking, listening and writing. The fact shows that many references and scientific books are written in English. Reading an English text is an essential part of English language learning in Indonesia. Therefore, for Indonesian students, reading becomes one of the main points to help them understand the message included in a text. Students are also expected to comprehend the content of the text after they have read the text. It means that through reading, students are facilitated to get message or information from the sentences, paragraph, and the whole text which they have read.

Meanwhile, at the level of junior and senior high schools in Indonesia, reading is learnt in order to get meanings from the reading passage with the various types of genres or text types. Junior and senior high schools' students are required to master reading texts with different genres (Depdiknas, 2006). The examples of those genres are *descriptive, narrative, recount* and *procedure*. Therefore, reading becomes a main point skill and needs significant attention.

Unfortunately, in fact, the students face difficulties in comprehending a reading text. Snow (2002:5) claimed that the level of reading skills remains stagnant. Reading scores of high school students, as reported by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), have not improved over the last 30 years. Although mathematics scores have improved, reading scores stubbornly remain flat. In fact, the students reading achievement has recently decreased significantly.

Related to that problem, the students should have a good way to comprehend a reading text. In this case, surely the role of note taking helps the students to comprehend a reading text. If the students can take notes efficiently when they read a reading text, they can read with more understanding. This paper defined what reading and note taking is, described what narrative is,

stated the strong reason why narrative text can be comprehended by using note taking, and also clarified the method and procedure of how to take note and argue for the importance of note taking in comprehending a narrative text.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are four language skills in English. The one which is in focus here is reading. Reading is a process very much determined by what the reader's brain and emotions and beliefs bring to the reading: the knowledge/information (or misinformation, absence of information), strategies for processing text, moods, fears and joys - all of it (Heinemann, 2009). By using this skill, the students can get the information from the text which they read. It is one of the most important activities for the students. Without reading they would not be able to acquire knowledge which is fundamental to their intellectual growth.

Reading skills are the cognitive processes which a reader uses in making sense of a text. For fluent readers, most of the reading skills are employed unconsciously and automatically. When confronted with a challenging text, fluent readers apply these skills consciously and strategically in order to comprehend. Every language requires a different repertoire of reading skills, based on the structure of the language and the literacy habits of the native speakers of that language. ESL and EFL teachers should train students in that skill which will give them the power to comprehend English text.

Reading can be divided into two main sub headings. Those are reading for pleasure and reading for a specific purpose. Reading for pleasure means that the readers choose what they want to read. For example they choose to read a magazine or a book by their favorite author in their free time. This does not however mean that they are not learning from this type of reading. Reading in any form informs them about society and culture and the world in general, whether it is through fiction (creative writing) or nonfiction (fact).

The second sub heading of reading is reading for a specific purpose. It is more goals orientated. In other words, the readers are reading to achieve a specific outcome. For instance is to pass a test or to research for an essay. This type is common for the students. From the moment they attend their first class, they are inundated with reading text. Sometimes the pupils feel they cannot cope with all the information contained in their prescribed readings. Not having the skills to read effectively can determine whether or not they will be successful in completing their studies. It is therefore important to acquire effective readings to achieve success.

There are also some types of reading skill. Some of them are scanning and skimming. Scanning is used to find specific information in a reading. Otherwise, skimming is a technique where you gloss over an article to see whether or not it contains information that is of interest to you. This technique makes it possible for you to quickly evaluate and understand the message of the reading by looking at the main aspects.

Beside of language skill, there is also review on academic skill. The one which is used in this paper is note taking. According to (Sharpe, 2010) taking notes is writing down information while you are listening or reading. Note taking is important because it assists the pupils in concentrating on and understanding the information which they read by helping them to summarize the ideas and arguments in the text. Researchers found that if important information was contained in notes, it had a 34 percent chance of being remembered (Howe, 1970, in Longman and Atkinson, 1999). Information not found in notes had only a five percent chance of

being remembered. Based on that idea, surely note taking plays an important role in helping the students to get the main points provided in the reading text.

According to Trzeciak and Mackay (1994) taking notes requires some activities such as recognize the main ideas; identify what information is relevant to the task; prepare a system of note taking that works for the doer; reduce the information to note and diagram format; put the information in your own words if possible; and finally record the source of the information.

To organize the notes, three strategies can be used (Sharpe, 2010):

a. Anticipate the purpose.

If we can anticipate the purpose of a reading, we will be able to prepare our mind to receive the information.

b. Divide the paper into two-column notes.

We have to put the main ideas in the left column and details and examples in the right column.

c. Separate the major and minor points

Taking notes plays in the storage and retrieval of information is probably dependent on the characteristics of the instructional setting and individual difference characteristics (Weener, 1974). It means the form and quantity production of students' note taking are different one to another. While listening or reading, the student transforms the presented messages in ways which can be described as associational, conceptual, and inferential transformations (Di Vesta, 1971, in Weener, 1974)

2. METHOD

There are five methods which can be used by a note taker to take note (services, 2010). Those are *cornell*, *outlining*, *mapping*, *charting*, and *sentence method*. The first method of note taking is the *cornell* method. This method provides a systematic format for condensing and organizing notes without laborious recopying. After writing the notes in the main space, the note taker can use the left-hand space to label each idea and detail with a key word.

The second method of note taking is the *outlining* method. This method deals with listening and then writes some important points which are heard in an organized pattern based on space indentation. Place major points farthest to the left. Indent each more specific point to the right. Levels of importance will be indicated by distance away from the major point. Indentation can be as simple as or as complex as labeling the indentations with Roman numerals or decimals. Markings are not necessary as space relationships will indicate the major/minor points

Besides, *mapping* method is also one of way which can be used to take note. *Mapping* is a method which uses comprehension/concentration skills and evolves in a note taking form which relates each fact or idea to every other fact or idea. It is a graphic representation of the content of a lecture. This is a method which maximizes active participation, affords immediate knowledge as to its understanding, and emphasizes critical thinking.

Another method of note taking is *charting* method. It deals with setting up a paper by drawing columns and labeling appropriate headings in a table. Then, the note taker determines the categories to be covered in the lecture. After that, the note taker set up a paper in advance by columns headed by these categories. The last thing which should be done by note taker is just listen to the lecture or read a book, record information (words, phrases, main ideas, etc.) into the appropriate category.

The last method of note taking is sentence method. This is the simplest way in taking note. The note taker just writes every new thought, fact or topic on a separate line. The note taker can use this method when the lecture is organized, but heavy with content which comes fast. The note takers can hear the different points, but they don't know how they fit together. The instructor tends to present in point fashion, but not in grouping such as "three related points."

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Narrative Text

There are some genres or text types which can be learnt by the students in the school. One of them is narrative text. Hedge (1988) in (Paltridge, 1996) presents that there are some text type categories such as static descriptions, process descriptions, narratives, cause and effect, discussions, compare and contrast, classifications, definitions, and reviews. In this paper, I choose narrative text as one of text types which can be understood by using note taking.

Porter Abbott (2002) in (Nair, 1721) defines narrative as "the representation of an event or a series of events". Something has to happen; description and counting are not narrative. Nor is the real story which happens over a length of time, and has an order of events. The main purpose of narrative is to amuse, entertain and engage the reader in an imaginative experience. Some narratives also have other purpose. For instance they may seek to explain a phenomenon (myths and legend) or to teach a lesson (fables). A narrative story deals with complications or problematic events which lead to a crisis and in turn finds a resolution.

Besides, (Kane, 2000) on page 363-364 explained that a narrative is a meaningful sequence of events told in words. It is sequential in that the events are ordered, not merely random. Sequence always involves an arrangement in time (and usually other arrangements as well). A straightforward movement from the first event to the last constitutes the simplest chronology. However, chronology is sometimes complicated by presenting the events in another order: for example, a story may open with the final episode and then flash back to all that preceded it.

The Importance of Note Taking in Comprehending a Narrative Text

Narrative text is one of texts which can be comprehended by using note taking. Given the role of note taking in self-regulatory learning processes, the study has design implications for intelligent tutoring systems in general and narrative centered learning environments in particular (Scott W. McQuiggan, 2008). The research done by Scott W. McQuiggan et al improved that the use of note taking gave a significant effect to the students who learned in narrative centered learning environment. The result of their research indicated that students were taking hypothesis notes regarding likely solutions to a narrative-centered science problem showed better performance on post-test measures. Furthermore, the ability to induce models that accurately predict the content of student notes provided a view into student self-regulatory processes, which could be used by tutoring systems to monitor some forms of student strategy used.

Comprehending narrative text was not easy for the English as foreign language learners. They should understand the point included in each generic structure like in the orientation, complication, resolution, and reorientation. To make them easier in comprehending that such text, they could use note taking as the way to help them to get the main point in the narrative text. The use of note taking in comprehending narrative text was important because it assisted the pupils in concentrating on and understanding the information they were reading by helping

them to summarize the ideas and arguments in the text. Besides, it allowed them to focus on the points relevant to their purpose.

4. CONCLUSION

Many people have problem with reading. It is hard for some people and it can take time. If the reader develop good reading skills, it will be very helpful to their future. One of way which can be used to get the ideas in the reading text easily is by using note taking. The role of note taking is important in helping the reader to comprehend the text. One of the texts which can be comprehended by using note taking is narrative text. By using note taking, the readers are easier to get the point of the narrative text in each generic structure of that text. The other benefits are the reader can concentrate better, make an easy way to remember important things, and become a clear way to revision.

In conclusion, by examining those situations, it has been seen that note taking is helpful as one of way which can be used by the readers to comprehend the content of narrative text easily.

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