THE USE OF PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING METHOD IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract

Writing this paper is motivated by the lack of effectiveness process of learning English in the field of Reading Comprehension capabilities. The main objective of this paper is to investigate the use of learning model Problem Based Learning in Reading Comprehension for increasing the ability of students learning English. Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a learning model that is based on the problem where students are asked to find solutions through investigation. Steps in PBL learning model consists of five phases, namely; (1) Phase 1shows the efforts of teachers to orient students on the problem or the material to be studied. (2) Phase 2 teacher organizes the students to learn (3) Phase 3includes the efforts of teachers to guide in finding explanations and troubleshooting of learning materials. (4) Phase 4 in PBL activities that develop and present work, teachers give students the opportunity to others to provide feedback or another answer. (5) Phase 5 shows the efforts of teachers to analyze and evaluate the process of solving problems or learning materials. After that, the teacher can give a reward in the form of awards to students who seem active in learning process.

Key words: Effectiveness, Problem-Based Learning, Reading Comprehension

A. INTRODUCTION

In learning English, there are four skills that should be mastered by students, namely listening, speaking, writing and reading. Reading is one of the most important skills of them. By reading activity, people can get much knowledge and find any information. The knowledge and information can be got from books, newspapers, magazines, and other reading sources.

Basically, reading is getting and constructing the meaning from a printed or written message. The construction of meaning involves the reader to connect information from the written text with background knowledge to come into the understanding and comprehending what the reader read. In addition, reading is also a process of how we get information from what we see like books, texts, newspapers, and others.

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Reading is also very useful in human's life. By doing reading activity, people would know about the world without having to go around the world. They also can improve their knowledge and find any information needed through reading. However, in fact, reading is not as easy as what people think because it is not only reading a sentence and saying it out to others. We need to understand and comprehend about what we are reading in order to catch the content and meaning from our reading source.

As one of the language skills, reading has been taught in all levels of education from elementary school until university level. Therefore, to be able to read well, the students need to be taught by their teacher with the suitable method because the success of students' learning depends on their ability to comprehend and understand about what they read. If their reading skill is poor, they are likely to fail in their study or at least they will have difficulty in making progress. On the other hand, if they have a good ability in reading, they will have a better chance to be successful in their study. So, it can be seen that the reading skill becomes very important in the education field. Hence, students need to be exercised in order to have a good reading skill.

However, reading something in different language is not easy at all. Based on the writer's observation, it is found that the students still have low ability in reading activity. Based on the interview to some students in SMPN 1 Painan, there are some problems faced by them in reading. Those problems come from students and their teachers. There are some problems from the students. First, it is hard for the students to catch the content and the meaning of the reading source as they state that they do not have enough participation in the learning process. The students state that they may not have enough chance to participate actively when the teachers too dominates the activity in the classroom. The lack of participation may give bad result and influence to students' reading comprehension.

Second, it is difficult for the students to understand the text as they just read without have comprehension about what they are reading. They are only reading some sentences and saying them out to the other students. Furthermore, most of students' times just spent for gaining new vocabularies from some difficult words in their reading source. The students more focus to find the meaning of the difficult words on the dictionary for comprehending what they are reading. This kind of learning process may give bad result or negative effects on students' reading skill. The students just focus to look for the difficult words and memorize them. It caused many of them are difficult to get the idea or meaning of the reading sources.

Besides, there are also some problems that come from teachers. First, teachers still more consider for gaining students' vocabularies by asking to the students about the difficult words when they are reading the certain text. The students might feel bored because they are only read the text, look for the difficult words, write them in the notebook, and memorize them. Meanwhile, the students do not understand about what they read and also do not have the concept about the text.

Then, the teacher still used the less effective method which is known as the traditional teacher-centeredmethod in teaching reading. In this method, teachers might too dominates the activity in the classroom because the focus of the learning process in on the teacher-centered. As the consequence, students may not have enough chance to participate actively and the lack of participation may give bad result and influence to students' achievement in learning process. Therefore, it is a must for the teacher to choose the better method in the learning process. The teacher should suit the appropriate method in order to make the learning process run well. By applying the appropriate method to the students, it will increase their understanding about what they are reading. It also can minimize the students' indication that the learning process is not boring at all. So, it is necessary for teachers to use appropriate methodso that the students can have more understanding in reading activity.

The students can understand and comprehend the reading materials optimally if the method for teaching them can maintain the student's interest. The students will be interested when they can do more activities. So, it is important for the teacher to make a situation where the students feel enjoy in learning process so that they will be motivated to read the text and the learning process can become more conducive. There were some studies which had been conducted related to the teaching reading. One of them was the study conducted by Hamidi and Adnan (2013) that focused on the use of Directed Inquiry Activity in teaching reading Narrative.

Based on the statement above, the writer wants to offer 'Problem-Based Learning' for teaching reading comprehension. Problem-Based Learning itself is a student-centered pedagogy in which students learn about a subject through the experience of solving an open-ended problem. So, we can say that the Problem-Based Learning is completely different from the traditional lecture tutorial approach as there is a shift of power from the teacher to the student. In the traditional teacher-centered approach, the teacher is knowledgeable in the subject matter and the focus of teaching is on the transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the student. In contrast, the Problem Based Learning is a student-centered approach in which the focus is on students' learning.

Generally, in PBL classrooms, the teacher acts as a coach or facilitator of activities that students carry out themselves. The teacher provides students with appropriate problem for work on, assist them in identifying and accessing the materials and equipment necessary to solve the problems, gives necessary feedback and support during the problem solving process, and evaluates student's participation and products. The purpose of these activities is for helping them develop their problem solving as well as their language and literacy skills.

Based on the explanation above, using Problem-Based Learning in teaching reading comprehension is one of a good way to improve student's learning experience. By applying this method, it is hoped that it can help the student at using the power of authentic problem solving to engage students

and enhance their learning and motivation in reading comprehension. In addition, it is also very important as a teacher to be aware in making a good strategy in the learning process because the application of the appropriate strategy will be affected to the student's achievement in the result of learning process.

B. DISCUSSION

1. Teaching Procedure

PBL is an instructional learner-centered approach that empowers learners to conduct research, integrate theory and practice, and apply knowledge and skills to develop a solution to a defined problem. Several authors have described the characteristics and features required for a successful PBL approach to instruction.

Duch, Groh, and Allen (2001:11) described the methods used in PBL and the specific skills developed, including the ability to think critically, analyzeand solve complex, real-world problems, to find, evaluate, and use appropriate learning resources; to work cooperatively, to demonstrate effective communication skills, and to use content knowledge and intellectual skills to become continual learners. Meanwhile, Torp and Sage (2002:14) described PBL as focused, experiential learning organized around the investigation and resolution of messy, real-world problems. They describe students as engaged problem solvers, seeking to identify the root problem and the conditions needed for a good solution and in the process becoming self-directed learners. Hmelo-Silver (2004 : 235) described PBL as an instructional method in which students learn through facilitated problem solving that centerson a complex problem that does not have a single correct answer. She noted that students work in collaborative groups to identify what they need to learn in order to solve a problem, engage in self-directed learning, apply their new knowledge to the problem, and reflect on what they learned and the effectiveness of the strategies employed.

Problem-based learning (PBL) is perhaps the most innovative instructional method conceived in the history of education. PBL was originally designed to respond to the criticism that traditional teaching and learning methods fail to prepare students for solving problems in the learning process. Instead of requiring that students study content knowledge and then practice context-free problems, PBL embeds students' learning processes in real-life problems.

According to Arends (2008:57) there are five major phase that can typically be found in PBL. In teaching reading by using Problem Based Learning strategy, the five major phases are:

a. Orientation of learners to the problem

Before teaching activity, teachers can prepare the lesson by providing the basic concepts, instructions, references, or links and skill that is required in learning process. It is intended to make the students more quickly to get a 'map' about the direction and purpose of learning. The concept which

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is given does not need in detail form, preferably in outline form only, so that learners can develop it independently in depth.

In this occasion, the writer wants to apply the PBL teaching procedure by using one of the texts used in curriculum 2013 (see appendix). The teacher can reveal some problems that in a piece of discussion text there are so many complex things students need to know, for example:

➢ How to determine the negative effect of the internet.
➢ How to take advantages from the internet.
➢ How to comprehend the using of the internet appropriately.

Then, students will be divided into several groups and each group has to choose one of the problems provided. For example;

Teacher : Well everybody, please sit in your group now!
Students : Yes, sir!
Teacher : Okay, now i will provide some problems of a text in piece of paper. For the leader of each group, please pick one of this paper!
Students : (The leader takes a piece of paper in front of the class. For example, the problem selected was the third. It is How to comprehend the using of the internet appropriately.)

b. Organizing learners

Working in groups, students are guided how to find answers to the problems which have been determined to finish. Students discuss implementation strategies about:

➢ Who did what, for example, two people are looking to use the internet or books, and two others seeking information from the main source such as an internet user nearby their home.
➢ Towards completion dates, the overall task should be finished within a particular time. For example, the task had to be finished in a week (7 days). During that time, students should be already completed investigation of the problems to obtain solutions.
➢ The solution of the problem can be delivered to the teachers in softcopy or written form depends on teachers' purpose.

c. Guiding the investigation of individuals and groups

With the guidance of teachers, students conduct an investigation to seek information through the internet, reading books and other printed materials, ask the experts, or find out the answer in the library.

d. Develop and present work

After the students collect the results of an investigation about the various alternative solutions and how to recognize the language features of descriptive text, the students discuss the most appropriate solution according to them including the arguments that could be built for convincing. At the last, the solution is poured in the form of written text or softcopy that can be presented in front of the class.

e. Analyze and evaluate the problem solving process

With the guidance of teachers, students reflect on the process of investigations to obtain the most appropriate solution as an answer to the problem that has been determined. These reflections can be written in the form of study journal.

At the end, the teacher gives feedback to the students toward the process and learning achievement. It can be like giving reward to every group that has presented their work. The reward can be a dictionary or other things that can motivated them in the next learning process. Finally, the teacher concludes or summarizes the lesson together with the students. The teacher also reviews the activities that have been done consistently.

2. Advantages of using Problem-Based Learning Method

➢ PBL promotes self-motivation and facilitates more enjoyable and effective learning. Researchers have found that students generally favor problem based learning classes, and therefore demonstrate increased attendance and attitudes than traditional classes (Vernon & Blake, 1993). Students think problem based learning is a more interesting, stimulating, and enjoyable learning method. It also offers a more flexible and nurturing way to learn. Students in these classes are often less threatened by their environment and more able to pursue learning independent. These attitudes help students increasingly become more self-motivated (Vernon, 1995) and independent learners which help students continue their learning practices once they leave school

➢ PBL is able to increase student's self direction. As students pursue solutions to their classroom problem, they tend to assume increased responsibility for their learning. These students use self-selected resources, such as journals, on-line searches, and other library resources more often than traditional students (Vernon & Blake, 1993). They also alter their view of instructors from a sourse of test answers to a possible resourse to solving relevant problems (Aspy, Aspy, & Quimby, 1993). These processes and learning skills help students become more competent in information-seeking skills than traditional students.

➢ PBL encourages learning from experience, allowing students to use and organize what has been learnt to understand problems.

➢ PBL develops teamwork and communication skills. Problem based learning incorporates collaborative teams in the solving of relevant problems. This methodology promotes student interaction and teamwork by enhancing students' interpersonal skills such as working with group dynamic, peer evaluation, and how to present and defend their plans. (Delafuente, Munyer, Angaran, & Doering, 1994).

➢ Most students retain and use little of what they memorize in classroom situations. Unfortunately, memorization is a common occurance in traditional programs (Vernon & Blake, 1993). Problem based learning attempts to break this focus by engaging students in structuring solutions to real life, relevant, contextualized problems. By replacing lectures with discussion forums, faculty mentoring, and collaborative research, students become actively engaged in meaningful learning.

C. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the previous discussion, it can be concluded that teacher should choose the appropriate method in the learning process. Teachers are models for students and are expected to be good teacher in facilitating during the learning process. Therefore, teachers should be more creative, interesting, and can create the comfort situation in the class.

Problem-based learning (PBL) is an exciting alternative to traditional classroom learning. With PBL, the teacher presents students with a problem, not lectures or assignments or exercises. PBL involves learning through tackling problems. Although the problems, or tasks, may not always have a 'solution', PBL nevertheless provides a rich learning environment in which students identify what needs to be studied and learnt from examining the problems confronted.

In this type of instruction, the teacher provides students with appropriate problem to work on, assist them in identifying and accessing the materials and equipment necessary to solve the problems, gives necessary feedback and support during the problem solving process, and evaluates student's participation and products. The purpose of these activities is for helping students to develop their problem solving as well as their language and literacy skills. It also teaches students valuable lessons in cooperation and communication that they can carry with them into the workforce.

In this chance, the writer suggests the teacher should be able to choose appropriate method for teaching and learning process. The appropriate method can help teacher to attract students' interest in order to make students have full attention to the lesson.Then, the teacher should give motivation to make students become more active and also to build students' achievement. At the end of class, teacher should give feedback to the students. It can be like giving a reward. It is aimed to make the students get more confidences in the next learning process.

Note: This article was written based on Yongki Perwonegoro's paper that is supervised by Dr. Jufri, M. Pd.

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