

Engaging Students in Literature Circles on Critical Reading and Text Analysis

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Abstract: *To make teaching activities more desirable, different methods and strategies have already been employed constantly. This study utilized the strategy of “literature circles” to improve the text-analysis skills, reading wishes, and interests of potential teachers of Indonesian. “Literature circles” had not been chosen to be utilized as the only real strategy throughout the entire every week class hours; rather, it was used limited to one course hour of each weekly four-hour classes, being complementary to and supportive of other teaching activities. The scholarly study was completed as research. A total of 56 students in two parts of the English department of UMNU Kebumen voluntarily participated in the research. In order to enhance the students’ book reviewing abilities and reading passions, “literature circles” was implemented for a amount of 12 weeks for just one class hour. By the end of the execution of “literature circles” when the students’ reading comprehension post-test and pre-test scores had been compared, a big change was observed. Predicated on the results, it may be figured “literature circles” works well in developing students’ abilities to get the theme, primary idea, and keywords in a text message. Besides, the training students remarked that the implementation of the strategy increased their desire and interest for communication, their self-confidence, cooperative learning, critical thinking, reading without bias objectively, and independent reading skills*

Keywords: *Literature Circle, Reading Skill, Reading Comprehension, Critical Thinking Skill, Effective Reading, Text Analysis,*

INTRODUCTION

The context of Indonesian English language pedagogy, particularly in vocational secondary schools, most of the English teachers adopt reading comprehension or intensive reading programs (Widodo 2015a, t). I have witnessed the truth that intensive reading classes commonly take the form of rigid question-answer exercises. These exercises are a way to ensure that students have understood particular teacher-assigned or textbook-oriented reading texts. In these mundane exercises, the students are asked to respond to questions following texts without any dialogic discussion. In some cases, intensive reading classes adopt multiple-choice format exercises in which college students are asked to answer reading knowledge questions, and a teacher takes on a part in providing ideal answers to the queries (Widodo 2015b). Such an strenuous reading activity does not differentiate whether learners are learning to go through (language ability) or whether they are taking a Reading Comprehension Test (language skills). This conventional reading comprehension activity will not afford students the opportunity to share what they have read and what vocabulary resources they possess learned from reading text messages. In short, test-like comprehensive reading activities do not create a supportive environment where college students engage in interactive reading jobs and collaborative learning community of reading since a sociable practice. For this reason, novels circles or a small peer-led discussion group is suggested in reading in British as a foreign language (EFL) or English as an additional language (EAL) applications. Recent previous studies (y.g., Rowland and Barrs 2013; Shelton-Strong 2012) display that reading circles provide learners with a dialogic space not merely for understanding texts, but also for making sense or meaning of the texts dialogically.

Reading as a Socio-cognitive Procedure and Meaning Making

Reading while a multifaceted procedure has been very much researched from different theoretical perspectives (age.g., knowledge, linguistics, literacy, social mindset) in the region

of second language acquisition. It requires a cognitive or mental process called word decoding. This process can be more challenging when students find out an extra language whose script system differs from that of their indigenous greatly language, such seeing that Thai and British (Country 2009). This word decoding becomes incrementally automated as the students develop their reading ability through practice. The subsequent stages of the reading process embrace spotting how texts (words, phrases, and phrases) are organized and constructed, understanding and interpreting meanings, and utilizing these symbolism communicatively. As college students' reading fluency develops, they concentrate on meaning making, which consists of 3 intertwined carefully components. These consist of text as the manifestation of the article writer, the audience as a meaning maker, and a context while a cultural discourse or practice (see Hedgcock and Ferris 2009). Though learners socially experience the same text message, they cognitively differently procedure the reading. Therefore, Everyday terms teachers need to have to recognize this socio-cognitive complexity. This suggests that reading can be not really the simply capability to decode and understand how language and sentence structure are used in context, but it all is the capability of also producing meaning of just how such vocabulary assets are built pertaining to communicative reasons. Mickan (2013) concludes that reading is a located meaning making activity in which visitors encounter and engage with text messages dialogically.

A literature circle is a reading group consisting of 4 or 5 people in which students who have different academic success amounts and reading abilities voluntarily come together to read literary text messages such as a novel or a tale or expository texts such as essays, articles, or books they like and also to share their reading encounters with one another (Daniels, 2002; Karatay, 2015). The cause why these reading actions are known as novels group activities can be that the purchase of seating is designed either as a total or fifty percent circle which allows all group users to find each other's encounters when they come collectively. If the discussion regarding the text can be transported out just by group people, the order of seating can be a complete after that group (Daniels, 2002). If college students other than the mixed group associates are asked to participate as market in the reading activity, the purchase of seating is arranged while a semi-circle (Karatay, 2015). In literature circles, all known associates in the group read the same text, participate in the discussion about the text, and each has a different reading job for the presentation to be produced at the final end of the debate. Four of these reading tasks are basic (compulsory) and 4 of them are optional

After the students create literature circle reading groups, they choose a book or a text determined either by the teacher or by themselves. Each member says the reserve or the text in order to do the individual reading task he offers been assigned and starts planning to discuss the job with the members of the group. Each college student does this reading activity individually. Indie reading work is certainly performed at school or at home, depending on the volume of the book/text message. After the learners complete their indie reading work and perform their reading jobs, they participate in the discussion about the book and share their experiences with the other students. After the discussion, all students present the work they have prepared which is centered on their reading task. Novels circle reading activities which are done in 1 class hour for about 40-50 minutes are more effective than traditional reading activities used in the acquisition of skills such as text analysis, making a guess, drawing a summary, critical thinking, speaking, writing, enhancing vocabulary, and improving independent reading desire (Briggs, 2010; Daniels & Steineke, 2004; McElvain, 2010; Wilfong, 2009) because these actions present students not only a collaborative learning atmosphere for socializing, but assigning a different reading task to each student helps them improve their individual reading skills and learning

strategies as well. In this respect, compared with the traditional reading education activities, literature circle reading activities provide students with an indirect learning atmosphere for both socializing and cognitively learning reading understanding strategies (Briggs, 2010; Burner, 2007; Williams, 2009). Reading group reading activities are designed to become implemented in four phases

Planning: In this stage the launch of reading duties, creating literature circles, and choosing the book/text respectively are performed. To begin with, the introduction of reading tasks to the training students is implemented. The students are informed individually in what they shall do predicated on the duty while reading the book. Secondly, reading circles are manufactured among students who would like to work together voluntarily. If those who come have different interests together, skills, and academic accomplishment levels, this escalates the quality of the learning atmosphere and in-class conversation. In the 3rd place, the training students must choose among the books/texts offered or among their choosing.

Specific reading: In this stage, time is directed at the learning students to learn the book/text to accomplish their individual reading jobs. In individual reading actions, the learning students must understand this content of the text, take notes, and make a presentation to provide information regarding the reading task. For example, a student who takes over the Illustrator task could be required to pull the chain of events and the individuals in the story.

Conversation: In this stage, the college student who gets control the Questioner job provides his/her friends with a discussion period for 20-30 minutes to talk about their emotions and thoughts about the topic of the book, main idea, other text messages given in the written reserve, the writer's usage of vocabulary, and the writer's design of treating this issue. The pupil also manages the program in ways for all learners to take part in the conversation to a significant extent.

Posting: In this stage, everyone shares their presentations with their close friends about the duties they did. For instance, the Literary luminary/Passage grasp shares the sections likes in the book/text; the vocabulary enricher/word wizard shares the keywords the writer emphasized and the expressed words used with new and various meanings; the Illustrator shares the visuals s/he ready about the heroes and concept map of the occasions with the group users (Daniels, 2002; Karatay, 2015).

The objective of processes of the discussion of the book/text and sharing thoughts about any of it is to raise the students' comprehension skills about the theme, main idea, supporting ideas, plot and subordinate plots, and the writer's design of treating the events and topic. These processes enhance the students' skills of comprehension and evaluation of complex texts they'll encounter throughout their lives and boost their critical and reflective thinking skills (Briggs, 2010; Burner, 2007; Burns, 1998). Furthermore, the processes of planning and specific reading help college students acquire self-control abilities for planning and carrying out independent reading in their reading and learning procedures. In conditions of cognitive competence, these processes will be the levels of the reading comprehension skill that learners need within their academic lives. Literature circles attract students' reading interests a lot more than the original reading of literary functions and summarizing activities and arouse their reading desire for literary works since the learning students in literature circles look for a collaborative and cooperative social learning atmosphere. Furthermore to helping students enhance their capability to understand the deep framework of texts, this environment plays a part in the improvement of college students' ability to discuss a literary text, self-confidence, and self-acceptance which even adults even experience problems in (Allan, Ellis & Pearson, 2005).

Objective of the Study

In each stage of the teaching process, text analysis and summarizing techniques are taught to improve the students' knowledge skills. Since the techniques taught at academic institutions to enhance the learners' reading comprehension skills are implemented on short texts, the college students are not equipped with necessary abilities and also are not really experienced enough to understand and analyze extended and compound text messages. As most of the students have difficulty in focusing on long texts, even though they are prospective teachers, their interests and desires for reading are not at the reasonable level (Demir Atalay, 2009; Batur, Gülveren & Bek, 2010). Furthermore, it cannot become true that those who acquired the habit of reading at an early age have got an interest in reading and that those who have an curiosity do not have adequate experience and skills to cope with traditional novels classes and to comprehend and analyze a literary text. Prospective educators, actually in their final calendar year of study, still cannot acquire sufficient experience and skills to comprehend the main theme and idea in long and structure texts (Karatay, 2007). In this study, the effect of reading sectors on the students' ability to analyze text messages, their reading desires, and interests in reading was studied. Though literature circles have been well understood in the EFL context, the implementation of this instructional method in the EFL framework remains under-explored.

To conduct this research, this article report's findings drawing on an ethnographic classroom research project about the adoption of reading circles in English department of UMNU Kebumen voluntarily student participated in the research. Therefore, this research aimed to answer the following questions.

1. Are literature circles effective on improving the students' ability to analyze texts reading?
2. Are literature circles effective on increasing the students' critical in reading?

RESEARCH SITE AND DESIGN

The study was designed as experimental research. The study was planned in three stages: In the first stage, Reading Comprehension Test was used to determine the students' text evaluation skills of locating the theme, primary idea, and keywords (Karatay, 2013, p. 246). In the next stage, for 12 weeks, 1 hour of each 4 hour traditional reading a class was reserved pertaining to literature circles reading actions. In the 3rd stage, Reading Comprehension Test was used at the end of the again term to gauge the improvement in the students' text analysis skills. Also, to obtain comprehensive data about the students' book reading encounters and their views about the standard of implementation, the students' sights were obtained. To that end, the training students were asked two open-ended questions that have been, "What did you prefer and didn't like about literature circle reading activities?" and "What recommendations is it possible to make to enhance the implementation of literature circles?" As response to these open-ended questions, the learning students mentioned their views in written form. Thus, by using both qualitative and quantitative research strategies together, methodological triangulation was done to look for the after-effect of literature circle reading actions on the students' text message analysis abilities, their desire to have independent reading, and their interests in reading.

The study group of the research consisted of a total of 56 students of English department of UMNU Kebumen. The participants in the sample were selected using homogenous sampling. Etikan, Musa, Elkassim (2016, p. 3) define homogenous sampling as a form of sampling that "focuses on candidates who share similar traits or specific characteristics. For example, participants in Homogenous Sampling would be similar with regards to ages, cultures, jobs or life experiences. The idea is to focus on this specific similarity and how it relates to the topic

being researched.” In the sampling process, all students who were taking the training course were included in the sample.

Instructional Procedures

Reading circles reading actions were planned to improve the learning atmosphere in the reading education classes and to motivate collaboration among the learning students and support their acquisition of text analysis strategies. In the first week of the 14-week Reading Education program, Reading Comprehension Test was administered to determine the learners' initial amounts of reading knowledge. Additionally, in the initial week, by carrying out brainstorming, the writers and text messages the students liked were determined. A list of 20 books which the learning college students wanted to go through was ready. In the second week, a briefing about literature sectors and reading duties was particular to the learning learners, and a test implementation in short reading texts with reading groups of 3 or 4 people had been produced. During this practice program, the learning college students were given assistance on indie reading, having conversations, reading jobs, and the demonstrations they would prepare. Hence, they were given a safe and sheltered introduction to reading text messages confidently longer. After the second week, every week the learning students selected a reserve they desired from the designated reading list, place up their own reading voluntarily organizations, and decided on the project of the reading duties among themselves. During the staying 12 weeks of the reading training course, the combined groupings chosen a book they needed every week, executed unbiased reading in house, discussed the written book in the class, and shared their presentations about it with others. In the final examination given at the final end of the term, Reading Comprehension Test was administered once to determine to what level the college students had progressed again. In addition, the learners' sights approximately the execution of the research were taken, using two open-ended queries about books groups reading activities Before the learning students set out upon carrying out reading circle-oriented actions, they were scaffolded to perform such tasks in the first four course intervals. General, the learning students involved in the pursuing educational activities. First of all, the trained teachers and the college students negotiated how to type groups. The learning learners had been provided two choices of whether they chose their own group members (student chosen) or of whether the instructor picked group members (teacher-chosen). In this scholarly study, the learning learners opted their very own group users. Despite this, the educated teacher urged the students to include group people with blended language capability to ensure that great skills college students could support their low effectiveness peers. This is normally the primary of collaborative function. In what comes after, once the learning learners created organizations, they were assigned different roles. In this literature circle oriented reading guidance, there were two main roles each group had to play: host and visitor. Host groupings presented the selected text to guest group members. The guest group associates posed queries regarding content

Data Collection Tools

Reading Comprehension Test was developed by Karatay (2007) and reliability and validity studies of the test were conducted and later on published by Karatay (2013). The type of the text in the test is certainly expository. The quantity of the terms in the text is certainly 1974. There are 25 multiple choice items about the text message in the knowledge test. Items 1-23 are about the keywords included in the text. Item 24 is definitely about the topic studied and item 25 can be about the main idea. In the 1st implementation of the Reading Comprehension Test, Cronbach alpha (reliability coefficient) was calculated as 0,82. In the second execution, the reliability

coefficient was calculated while 0,84. These data showed that reading comprehension check version 1.1 was reliable for collecting data in the study. The data collected through the Reading Comprehension Test formed the quantitative part of the data collection process. In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative data were also collected in this research. The latter type of data were acquired through the written answers learners offered to respond to the two open-ended questions that were aimed to the students at the end of the 12-week implementation process.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data obtained through the Reading Comprehension Test, mean, regular change, repetitive measurements, and t-test were used. The replies the learning learners provided to solution the open-ended questions had been examined through content analysis technique which can be used in qualitative research studies commonly. Each student’s answers to the open-ended questions on the subject of the implementation were examined, and the similar, very similar, and different opinions were coded below sub-themes and main-themes. This code method is normally described as an innovative and systematic technique in which some phrases in a text are summarized under smaller articles categories (Büyüköztürk et al., 2011). Hence, the students’ sights about the execution were private into primary themes and sub-themes, and each student’s response was coded seeing that Participant1 (henceforth, G1), P2, G3. In this procedure, when it all was not crystal clear to apparently determine under which theme or sub-theme the college students’ views would end up being categorized, the opinions of an professional in the field were sought. The data attained from the individuals about the implementation through content material evaluation were transformed into tables then, using their frequencies and percentages to express the learners’ views in numerical type.

FINDINGS

In this section, the change in the students’ text analysis skills at the end of the 12-week literature circles reading activities and the articles analysis of the learners’ opinions on materials groups are presented. The First problem: In the analysis of this problem, the arithmetic averages of the pre-test and post-test scores of the answers the students provided to the questions about the topic, main idea, and keywords in Reading Comprehension Test which were implemented just before and after materials circles reading actions were used. The data about these are given in Table 1. Text analysis

Table 1. The students’ results of the pre-test and post-test scores in text analysis

Text analysis	Implementation	N	S	Sd	t	p	
Theme	Pre-test	56	57,09	4,18	183	5,952	,000
	Post-test	56	87,90	2,35			
.Main idea	Pre-test	56	67,54	3,51	183	1,973	,050
	Post-test	56	87,09	3,36			
Keywords	Pre-test	56	78,76	3,64	183	4,928	,000
	Post-test	56	98,65	3,25			
Reading comprehension	Pre-test	56	67,89	3,40	183	5,055	,000
	Post-test	56	88,45	2,8			

*p<,05 significant difference.

When table 1 was analyzed, this was seen that the students' post-test results (89,67) in acquiring "the theme in the text" were larger than their pre-test scores (59,89). It was noticed that there was a significant difference in favour of the post-test between the scores of the pre-test and post-test [$t(183) = 5,952, p <,000$] in the college students' ability to discover "the theme in the text message". It can be said that literature sectors are effective in improving the learners' ability to find "the theme in the text". Likewise, the students' post-test scores (72,50) in finding "the main idea in the text" had been higher than their pre-test scores (62,50). It was seen that there was a significant difference in favour of the post-test between the ratings of pre-test and post-test [$t(183) = 1,973, p <,050$] in the college students' ability to find "the primary idea in the text message". Hence, it can be concluded that reading groups are effective in enhancing the learners' capability to discover "the main idea in the textual content". Very similar findings may be stated also on the subject of the students' ability to find "the keywords in the text". The college students' post-test scores (78,26) in getting "the keywords in the text message" were higher than their pre-test ratings (53,15). It was noticed that there was a significant difference in favour of the post-test between the results of pre-test and post-test [$t(183) = 4,928, p <,000$] about learners' ability to come across "the keywords in the text". As a result, it can end up being mentioned that books groups are effective in improving the students' ability to look for "the primary idea in the text message". The pre-test scores (58,51) of the reading comprehension skills of the students were also lower than their post-test scores (80,14). It was driven that there was a significant difference in favour of the post-test between the ratings of pre-test and post-test [$t(183) = 5,055, p <,000$] in the college students' "reading knowledge" capability. Using this selecting, it may be concluded that literature circles are effective in enhancing the learners' "reading comprehension" ability.

The Second problem: The analysis of this problem was conducted in critical reading, using content analysis of the answers the students gave to the open-ended queries about the execution of literature sectors reading activities. After books groups reading actions that held up an-hour-a-week for 12 weeks, the students' sights about their execution were determined under positive (4), bad (1) and recommendation (1) designs. The data about this are provided in table 2

Table 2. Improving critical reading

No	Views Participants N	Participants	N	%
1	Literature circles provided us with an opportunity to read and assess many books from different perspectives	P1-P2-P4-P8-P9-P10-P11-P13-P14-P15-P16-P19-P20-P21-P22-P23-P24-P25-P26-P27-P31-P32-P33-P34-P35-P38-P39-P41-P48-P51-P53-P57-P59-P60-P61-P62-P63-P65-P66-P68-P71-P72-P73-P75-P76-P77-P79-P81-P83-P84-P88-P90.	52	57
2	In literature circles, we read and reviewed the books of authors who had different world views than us.	P2-P3-P4-P55-P57-P60-P62-P63-P65-P66-P70-P72	12	13
3	What was told in the books we read in literature circles helped us overcome our prejudices against some historical figures.	P1-P5-P2-P27-P31-P32-P66-P70-P72-P83	10	11

Regarding to 52 students (57%), reading groups “supplied them with an chance to examine and assess many books from different perspectives”; 12 learners (13%) stated that “in literature groups, they browse and examined the written books of authors who also had different globe views than themselves”, and 10 students (11%) mentioned that “what was told in the books they read in literature circles helped them overcome their prejudices against some historical figures.” These data present that the students’ critical reading skills about understanding, event, circumstance, and individuals in the written books improved. The reality that the learners examined the books all but do different duties and from different jointly perspectives and held discussions afterwards improved their ability to evaluate what was told in the written books without having prejudices and having different stage of sights

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Three important instructional implications can be drawn from the findings of the study. First, those are the contribution of literature circles to the college students’ text analysis skills. It was determined that literature circles were effective in improving the students’ text analysis skills such as finding the theme, main idea, and keywords in a text. The data show that reading strategies which were taught through traditional reading education could be realized in a more entertaining and attractive social learning atmosphere through literature circles. Second, Critical reading sectors can be integrated into strenuous reading programs that focus on both knowledge building and language awareness. The results suggest that the use of this instructional method engages students in reading while meaning making and dialogic activity that helps college students develop their reading ability and language repertoire. To optimize this meaning-making task, reading instructors can assign and rotate assignments that learners can play. Third, contribution of literature circles to college students is their effect on improving the college students’ ability to read texts critically. The views of the students such as “*literature circles provided us with an opportunity to read and assess many books from different perspectives*”; “*in literature circles, we read and reviewed the books of authors who had different world views than us*”; and “*what was told in the books read in literature circles helped us overcome our prejudices against some historical numbers*” support this. The fact that the students go through and analyzed the books performing different tasks and then talked about them altogether in literature circles demonstrates they improved their capability to assess the content material of a reserve without prejudice and by using different perspectives. The present study has showed how literature circles worked in critical reading programs and improve in student’s text analysis skill.

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