
Big Book: An Attractive Way to Comprehend Reading Text for Young Learners

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Abstract

Introducing reading text from young learners should be supported by appropriate facilities and resources adequate infrastructure. Learning Reading should be managed in such a way as to create meaningful and enjoyable learning activities. The use of big book as a medium of learning is one of the efforts to understand the reading text for young learners. This research aims at knowing the application of Big Book in teaching student's reading comprehension of the second grade students of elementary school. The research design in this study is qualitative approach. The data are collected by using observation, interview, and documentation. Meanwhile, techniques of analyzing data are data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion. The subject of the research is the second grade students, which consists of 13 female and 7 male. The researcher is successful to use big book to teach reading comprehension. The students feel happy and interested when using big book. The researcher asks the students to read aloud the reading text individually and in a group, and then gives questions about the content of the text. Students are able to understand the reading text using big book. Based on the findings of research, the researcher also recommends conducting further research on using of Big Book.

Keywords: *big book; comprehend; media; reading*

1. INTRODUCTION

Even though English has not become a Second Language for Indonesian people, the existence of English as a Foreign Language has been introduced at the elementary education level or even at the university level early age. There are two main factors that support young learners to learn English language. First, they have sharp hearing and good memories at age. This is the peak of their skills before they are 12 years old.

They are able to learn to listen the sound quickly and precisely and can master new learning easily. Second, children have significant obstacles less, respond happily, enthusiastically, and spontaneously.

Reading is one of the English skills that should be taught to young learners. It is a process of transferring information from the authors to the readers in the form of text. Reading is main skill in language learning and considered as the

difficult skill for a foreign language learner. According to Harmer (2000: 9), reading could be defined as a physical activity and mental activity. This activity is useful to understand the meaning of the text because there is a process of understanding letters. Reading is called a physical activity due to the fact that the eyes do the reading action. And it belongs to mental activity because point of view and memory as parts of thinking are involved in it. He then sums up that the main purpose of reading is a process of comprehending written texts. Dealing of it, Cline et.al (2006: 2) states that reading is process of decoding and understanding texts. Decoding need to interpret the symbols words into the written words.

Reading is very important especially for young learners in catching the main idea of the text. Moreover, the students get information and knowledge from the reading material, for example new vocabulary, words class, and the style of the authors in expressing ideas.

Teaching English for young learners is not same as teaching advanced learners. The second grade students of elementary school are still young learners. Their cognitive and social emotion conditions are different with the advanced learners. Brewster et al. (2008: 2) stated that language learning process is influenced by both students' characteristics and learning environment which give impacts on the quality of the learning outcomes. The characteristics of young learners according to Suyanto (2008) are they are egocentric, they have short attention

span, they cannot differentiate between abstract thing and concrete things.

Thus, it is clear that the teacher should understand the characteristics of young learners in order to choose the media and the method which are appropriate with the students' need.

English learning can be circumvented in various ways - methods and techniques as well as learning media - which will make children not feel learning but playing, so that children feel engrossed in learning English (Dahl et al., 2001)

English language is very important because it makes people easy to get new information and knowledge. A lot of young learners mainly in non speaking English Countries , has begun to study English. It has made English teachers try hard to teach them to make them understand and master English skills, namely, speaking, writing, reading, and listening. This is because teaching English to children (young learners) is difficult. The teacher should select and use interesting, attractive, efficient, effective, and appropriate media to teach English in the class. EYL learning will be more effective if teachers use media to support teaching and learning activities because children like visual things. The use of teaching aids or media in the form of real objects, pictures, puppets, and miniatures can make the presentation of the material more interesting and fun.

The use of interesting, effective, and suitable media is to catch the children's attention in learning English. Suyanto (2008: 22) states that young learners like

to learn the materials that are visualized. It is more interesting and joyful.

Big Books are children's books in bigger size than the normal book size of the common book (Alpusari et al., 2021). It usually consists of narratives text and are categorized into the most interesting ways of getting young learners involved with printed media (Grabe, 2019; Nurzayyana et al., 2021). Moreover McNamara (2019) says that Big Books as learning media has been used by the teacher to teach reading for young learners since many years

In carrying out reading activities, young learners should understand the purpose of the reading, whether they read to understand the main idea of the reading or they read to get information. Students do not have to understand the meaning of word for word, the important thing is that they can understand the context of a reading. It is important for a teacher to provide signs so that students have strategies in reading a discourse.

General knowledge and vocabulary that has been owned and the use of pictures are expected to help children understand the content of a reading. This initial knowledge is the basis which is then added with learning experiences; eventually they get new knowledge

There are three previous research used in this research. the first previous research conducted by Yola and Syafei (2017) entitled Big book as A media to teach Reading Comprehension to Elementary School Students, it can be seen that the procedures of using big book has two steps, namely first reading

(show the cover, read the title, ask the students to make connection to the text, read the story, discuss the story) and rereading (read the story again and the students follow what being said).

The second previous reseach is conducted by Mahayanti and Asrina (2017) entitled The Implementation of Big Book as Media to Teach Reading Comprehension for the Sixth Grade Students of Elementary School. The reserach tells the procedures of big book to teach reading as follows introducing the part of big book such as the cover, pages, upper part and bottom part of the book, telling the title of the story, reading the complete story, rereading the story, discussing the content of the story and giving the interesting games related to the story.

The third previous research which entitled the use of big book learning Media to improve students' Beginning reading skill in Primary School by Nurani and Haris (2019) can be seen from the result that big book can improve students' beginning reading ability. There were 80% of the students who are able to read syllables consisting three letters fluently.

Based on the three previous reseach, there are some similiarities and the diffirences of this research. The similiriaties are the subject used is the elementary students, the type of the research is qualitative. The differences is that this research is not only use big book as media but also combined with audio. So that the students can listen the

vocabulary related to the story via the audio spoken by native speaker.

2. METHOD

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research. The researcher presents the data in the form of words so this research is categorized into descriptive qualitative design as the research approach. Hardani et al., (2020) says that descriptive study simply describes about phenomenon. It means this study is purposed to observe the phenomenon or even activities in the form of words not oral words. The subjects of the researchers are the students from second grade of elementary school. The class consists of 20 students, 7 male students and 13 female students. The researcher's role is as an active teacher. The researcher collects data by using field notes, observation checklist, and interview. The researcher observes the process of all the activities in the classroom when applying Big Book by using field notes and checklist and then interviews the teacher and the students about the use of big book in teaching reading, the strengths and the weaknesses of the implementation of big book in teaching reading.

The data are analyzed by reducing the irrelevant data and including or reflecting the needed data or the fact or information taken from the field notes, observation sheets and result of interview After that, displaying data in the form of brief discussion and drawing

the conclusion from the result of the research.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The researcher facilitates the young learners to comprehend reading text using Big Book as a media. The findings of this research are taken from interview, observation sheets and field note.

The purpose of this research is to know the application of Big Book in teaching student's reading comprehension of the second grade elementary school. The researcher prepares the lesson plan, the media Big Book, the observation sheet, field notes and the interview sheet.

In pre activity, the researcher greets the students and checks students' attendance. The teacher gives brainstorming by asking students about daily activities such as "*What do you do in the morning? what do you eat for breakfast?*" These questions lead the students know about the material given. Then the students mention about their daily activities using Indonesia language (*mandi, sarapan pagi, berangkat sekolah, belajar, pulang sekolah, makan siang dan tidur*). It makes the students focus their attention on the lesson

In main activity, the researcher shows Big Book to the students by saying "*Students look at this. Do you know what is it?*". The students answer "*Book*". The researcher explains "*Yes. It is big book. there are lots of pictures inside. I will tell you a story about daily activities. Are you ready students?*" Big Book which has

picture series with texts under the picture is about daily activities. After explaining the media, the researcher reads aloud first, and then asks the students to read the text in their group. After that, they read the text one by one.

Furthermore, the researcher shows the title on the cover of big book and the students are asked to guess it (Figure 1). The researcher briefly explains the topic is about daily activity. Then, asking students to make a group. After that, the researcher asks students to listen to audio about the vocabulary related to the story by saying: "*Students please listen to the vocabularies and repeat after me*" (Figure 2). Next, the students make a list of vocabularies from the audio they heard. The researcher pronounces the words together with students and finds out their meanings. After that, the researcher gives some exercises to measure how far they understand of the materials using Big Book during the learning process.

In the post activity, the researcher and the students review the materials and the difficulties during the learning process using Big Book, and also asks whether they are interested and happy using media big book.

Based on the results of observation and interview, the researcher found some problems of comprehending reading text about daily activities using big book. The problem is students' poor pronunciation of reading the texts. It is supported by student AR's opinion. He says: "*susah ngucapin kata-kata dibuku*"

(it is difficult to pronounce the words in the book) Then the students are difficulties to identify meaning of the vocabulary. These problems make the students become poor reader. Some students cannot pronounce the word *breakfast, skunk, take a bath and beautiful.*

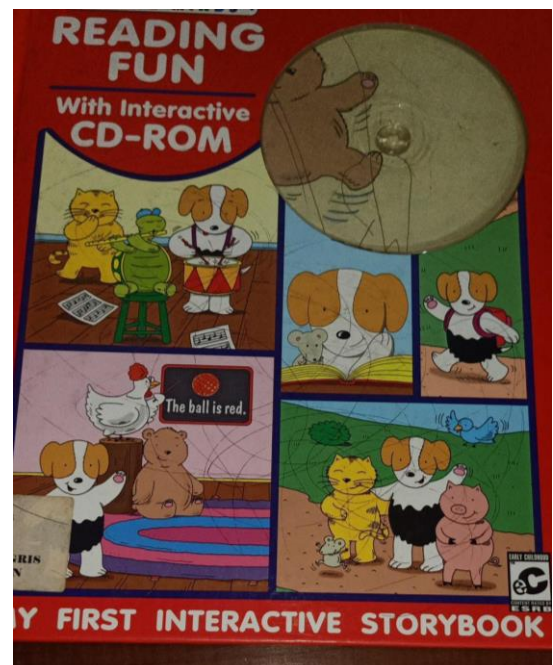


Figure 1. Cover of Big Book

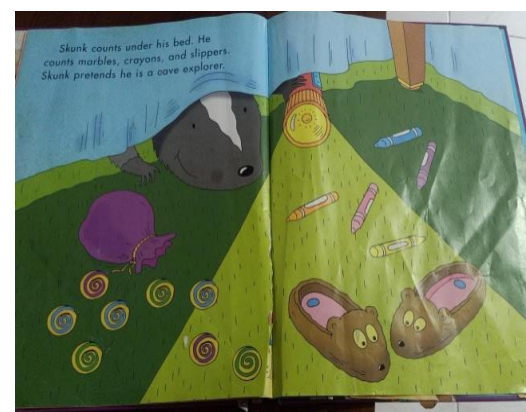


Figure 2. Content of Big Book

Besides, there are some advantages of using big book. Most students are enthusiastic and enjoy the reading class using Big Book, they can understand the content of the text and they can add the new vocabularies.

Referring the result above, there are some points found in relation with the use of Big Book for young learners. First, the use of reading media Big Book are successful and effective for teaching English young learners in second grade. Grabe (2019) states that using big books enables early language learners to learn to read first by "reciting and memorizing, recognizing sight words, and decoding the text and to begin matching oral language with the written word" (p. 91). In teaching reading to elementary school students, teachers should understand the characteristics of young learners which are different from advanced learners'.

Another characteristic of young learners is they have short attention span or concentration span. Attention span is the amount of time in seconds or minutes the child remains on task without distraction (Mustafa, 2010). In learning, attention or concentration span can be seen when children pay attention or concentrate or focus on the materials. Musthafa (2010) argues that young learners only have short concentration span. It is less than 15 minutes. Using Big Book make the students feel interested and enjoy learning process because the media is big and colorful. It makes students keep focus on learning although they have short attention span.

At the last point, based on the interview result the students enjoy the learning process. According to Lynch (2008: 35) Big Book creates secure and relaxed atmosphere in the classroom and attracts students' attention in teaching and learning process.

The topic chosen is also interesting. It is about daily activity. It is better for reading activities to choose a topic related to the child's interests, something that has to do with the environment, something beautiful and interesting and related to the topic that will be discussed at that time. The level of difficulty and length of reading should be adjusted to the ability of students (Halimatussa, 2016)

4. CONCLUSION

In reading activities, the right pictures and keywords help students a lot in understanding English discourse. Teaching English to children with fun is difficult and easy. Therefore, it takes a reference that can be used as a guide to create a learning process that brings a sense of fun. English teaching materials in elementary schools must be fun and enjoyable interactive. Therefore, the media, materials and methods provided must be in accordance with the student development.

The Big Book is an appropriate media for young learners (Saefuddin, 2019). Using Big Book in the classroom has two functions. First, it is as a teaching tool. Big book can help students to understand the content of the text because big book has picture and the sentences are not

too long and to add the vocabularies so that when students continue their education to a higher level, they will have no problems.

Second, it is a strategy to make the class more interesting and unforgettable for students. The Big Book provides some reading methods such as reading aloud, silent reading, and also give many reading activity such as give questions, shows the title and asks students to guess it.

Big Book creates happiness and relaxed atmosphere in the classroom and attracts students' attention, curiosity, and enthusiasm in teaching and learning process (Rebecca, 2019). Big Boo is useful to help the students learn and make the students easy to understand content of text in reading activity. The students' are easy to understand about texts, meaning and describe thing or information in passage.

Young learners are very easy to comprehend the reading text through appropriate media. However, not all media for young students are suitable for them. Therefore, the teacher should select media that are suitable for them based on their characteristics. Students find it easier to memorize vocabulary and comprehend the reading text when they see something interesting like big book.

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