DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE MODEL IN TEACHING READING: WHAT

by Dinovia Fannil Kher

Developing An Effective Model In Teaching Reading: What Would Work Best In A Large English Class?

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Abstract

This article discusses the preliminary process of developing a suitable model for teaching reading in large English classes. The large English classes that are referred in this piece of scientific writing is the English classes at Universitas Negeri Padang which consist up to fifty to sixty students. Not only it is large, but the students in the class also come from various study programs and different cultural background. The diversity of their background of knowledge and culture leads to possible problems regarding their study. The condition requires the lecturer to be able to apply an effective model in the teaching and learning process. The article focuses on the development of a reading model since enriching the students' abilities in reading is one of the objectives of the course. The development process includes the planning of the reading lesson, the learning process, and the evaluation. Various methods of teaching are applied to find the one that works best for the atmosphere of the large classes. However, it was found that none of the common teaching reading strategies used worked well in the large English class at Universitas Negeri Padang.

Keywords: *Teaching, Large English Classes, Reading Class, Strategies, English for General Purposes*

Abstrak

Artikel ini ditulis sebagai hasil penelitian pemula tentang usaha pengembangan model mengajar *reading* di kelas bahasa Inggris berkapasitas besar. Kelas berkapasitas besar yang dimaksud dalam tulisan ilmiah adalah kelas bahasa Inggris mata kuliah umum di Universitas Negeri Padang yang terdiri dari lima puluh hingga enam puluh mahasiswa. Tidak hanya berkapasitas besar, tetapi mahasiswa dikelas ini berasal dari jurusan yang berbeda-beda. Perbedaan ini menyebabkan terjadinya beberapa masalah terkait proses belajar mengahar dikelas. Kondisi semacam ini mengharuskan dosen untuk mampu mengplikasikan model belajar mengajar yang efektif. Fokus dari tulisan ini adalah dasar pengembangan model mengajar *reading* yang mampu membantu mahasiswa mencapai tujuan pembelajaran. Pengembangan yang dimaksud mencakup merencanakan pembelajaran, proses pembelajaran termasuk contoh strategi dan teknik yang mungkin dapat digunakan serta evaluasi. Akan tetapi, ditemukan bahwa hampir tidak ada dari satu strategi mengajar *reading* yang umum digunakan mampu membantu mahasiswa dikelas-kelas berkapasitas besar ini untuk mencapai tujuan pembelajaran yang diharapkan.

Keywords: *mengajar, kelas berkapasitas besar, kelas Reading, strategi, mata kuliah umum*

Introduction

As mentioned in SN Dikti 2016, English is one of the compulsory subjects at Universitas Negeri Padang. This subject is offered in every semester. To ensure that the 8000 students can take this subject, there are 110 classes provided. Each class can cover 50 to 60 students. The students are majoring different field of study.[1]

The subject expected learning outcome is to help the students able to read various articles and journals written in English related to their own major. First, it is due to the fact that these students have passed their six years studying in highschools, that they have covered basic English so that it is possible to move to a new English level and skill. Second, since the students are commonly assigned to read, review and even write many papers, they need to look for information from various source, not only written in their language, but also English. Therfore, they should be equipped with English reading skill. They may have more opportunities to explore and understand their field of study by gathering more information from various English books, articles, and journals.

However, there are some obstacles related to the teaching and learning English at Universitas Negeri Padang that may somehow fail to meet the expected learning outcome. First, the students are varied. The students are majoring different subjects. Some of them are students of the Art Faculty students while some others are science or sports students. It is often difficult to select a material that can trigger the students' need to study. It is often difficult to choose a reading passage that can cover their varied interests. It is obvious, the background knowledge influences their ability to understand a selection. Therefore, the available learning materials, quite often, seem to make the class imbalance because only some students who are both interests and have background knowledge, while some others are not. The second problem is that the numbers of students are quite many. It is perhaps common to have many students in a general course class. Yet, it seems inapplicable for a language class. Students in any language class need more exposures in order to get improved. The lecturers need to pay attention, not only to the ideas that they state, but also the use of the language, the way they apply their language knowledge and expose it to the public, or their peers. The ratio between the students and the teacher should be 1:30. A large class limits a teacher to help students develop their language ability.[2]

There has been many works of literature reviewing obstacles in a large class. Many possible solutions are offered in order to cope with the problems. This article is written as preliminary research done at the English class of UNP. It aims to reveal what happens in English classes equipped with strategies that are probably applicable to conduct a large class.

[1] "Surat Edaran : Bahan Ajar Mata Kuliah Wajib Umum – Direktorat Jenderal Pembelajaran Dan Kemahasiswaan," accessed September 25, 2019, https://belmawa.ristekdikti.go.id/2016/12/09/surat-edaran-bahan-ajar-mata-kuliah-wajib-umum/.

[2] Virginia Locastro, "Large Classes and Student Learning," *TESOL Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (2001): 493, https://doi.org/10.2307/3588032.

Review Of Related Literature
The Importance of Reading Skills for Higher University Students

It has been obvious that language possessed has a certain connection with the way people think. Reading in English is closely related to thinking in English. [3] Students who can read in English may somehow have a wider perspective on a topic. They do not only interpret the language into their native language which leads them to see, value and judge based on their native perspective, but they also relate with the culture brought by that language.

Reading at the university level helps students to gain higher thinking skills. Through reading, students can relate the new information they get from the reading text with their previous related experience.[4] They are introduced with many different reading strategies. These reading strategies may help them to better understand their reading text. Better readers lead to better students.[5]

English as one compulsory subject at the university is responsible for assisting the students to reach certain reading skill. Some important reading skills are skimming, scanning, and careful reading (Bojovic, 2010).[6] These skills are integrated into the

English subject that the lecturer may free to choose the topic.

It is expected that these reading skills may elevate students' knowledge as well as make the students be effective readers.

The Reading Skills

Various reading skills might be needed by university students. The skills depend on what the reading needs. Increasing reading rate and flexibility ties some reading skills such as skimming, and scanning. Interpreting and Evaluating reading ties making inferences and conclusion.[7]

Skimming is a reading activity where the purpose is to quickly find general information of a reading selection or passages. This skill is needed in certain conditions. They are; pre-reading, reviewing and actual reading. In pre-reading, for instance, by quickly moving the eyes and pay attention the clues given, such as the title, the headings, and subheadings, the students may easily picture out what the text being read is about. It is time-saving, since reading the whole pages is not needed. Then, it is also useful in reviewing. Once the whole picture has been built, it is easier to review the rest of the pages because the student already builds the background knowledge that later is used to understand the upcoming information from the text. Also, skimming is needed in the process of reading itself. Supposed that the student already reads the whole pages, and needs to go back to detailed information. The students can

[3] Ebru Kaya, "The Role of Reading Skills on Reading Comprehension Ability of Turkish EFL Students," *UNIVERSITEPARK Bulten* 4, no. 1–2 (December 30, 2015): 37–51, https://doi.org/10.12973/unibulletin.412.4.

[4] Nava Nourdad, Sanam Masoudi, and Parisa Rahimali, "The Effect of Higher Order Thinking Skill Instruction on EFL Reading Ability," *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature* 7, no. 3 (May 1, 2018): 231, https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.7n.3p.231.

[5] Gavin J Fairbairn, Susan A Fairbairn, and Buckingham · Philadelphia, "READING AT UNIVERSITY A Guide for Students," 2001, www.openup.co.uk.

[6] M Bojovic, "Reading Skills and Reading Comprehension in English for Specific Purposes,"

The International Language Conference on The Importance of Learning Professional Foreign Languages for Communication between Cultures 2010, no. September 2010 (2010): 1–5, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261213403_Reading_Skills_and_Reading_Comprehension_in_English_for_Specific_Purposes.

[7] Kathleen T. McWhorter, *Efficient and Flexible Reading* (Pearson/Longman, 2010).

quickly pay attention to the part that needed to be more understood.

Moreover, there is a scanning skill that is also important for students to be mastered. Sometimes, there is only few information that a student needs from a selection. By having this skill, the student can easily jump to the information that is wanted. This skill gives an opportunity to 'read' more than one book within a short time. Thus, more information is easily gathered.

Then, making inferences and conclusion are other skills that are useful for the students. Though they are somewhat similar, they are slightly different. When making inferences, the students take and use clues that they find to state what has happened. But when it comes to conclusion, the students are about to take some follow ups based on the inferences that they already make. One simple example is, when a group of students has planned to go on a camping trip, but then they see that the sky is dark, the wind blows hard, they infer that it is about to rain, thus, the conclusion they have to make is that they have to cancel the plan due to the weather condition. This similar ability then is applied when the students are reading a reading article. By being able to make inferences and conclusion of what they read, they are training themselves to be critical thinkers.

Reading skills are also used to improve students' comprehension of a topic. Some popular activities related to this is finding the topic, main ideas, and major-minor supporting details. These activities help the students to separate the most important information to the least important information. A topic covers general idea, what the text is about, while the main ideas

talk specifically about a thought within a paragraph. Students may not accept what is read without questioning the text, therefore, paying attention to its major and minor information may help the students to clarify what is actually being talked and described within the sentences, Again, the students are trained to be critical thinkers.

Moreover, identifying the author's purpose and bias are other worth reading skills. Students may locate a writer' position on a topic by evaluating what is being mentioned in the passage, whether the writer supports or against certain issues and the reasons why they do that. Besides, the students may need to know whether the author is being biased or not. Sometimes, there is a tendency that the writer addresses a certain viewpoint without trying to address the opposite ideas or thoughts. This skill trains the students to be able to think objectively and critically.

The skills mentioned previously have one similarity, they lead the students to be able to think critically. It is an ability which is considered urgent currently due to the massification of information and the tendency for many people to accept news without having any second thoughts, whether or not they happen to be true.

Possible Reading Activities

Students need various interesting, yet intriguing reading activities that can trigger the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Many students believe that reading is not as important as speaking, that reading is boring that reading gives no advantages, that reading is time-consuming. Thus, the first job of the lecturer is to make sure that the students feel positive about what they are about to study. The students

need to realize, that reading is not only a bridge to any information but also food for the brain, which means, they are not mentally alive unless they read.

On the previous section, it has been explained some reading skills which are important for students. Yet, those reading skills will not be applicable if there are no activities following. Students need different activities for different topics or texts so that the class will not be monotonous. Followings are some possible reading activities are mentioned to clarify what may seem engaging for the process in the classroom.

First, a reading strategy called context clues is helpful to make the students save their time when they are reading some statements written in English. It has been habitual for the students to depend so much on the use of a dictionary in the class. Students then are taught to guess the meaning from the clues given. They are taught that if they find an unfamiliar word within a text, they just need to make guesses about what the word is probably about by looking at the rest of the sentence. Here, it can be the synonym or antonym. The students then will be trained to be efficient readers. For example:

This thirsty man **yearned** *for a drink of water.*[8]

The students need to find out the meaning of the bold word but they are not allowed to look at any kinds of a dictionary. Therefore, they can look at the clues provided, here, they need to see the rest of the sentence. They may understand the meaning of thirsty and water, by using these two familiar words that they know, they can

figure out that the bold word can be looked for, wanted, or needed. Another example:

Dad said nothing but nodded **affirmatively.**[9]

Again, the students are asked to figure out the meaning of the bald word— affirmatively. Supposed that the students know the meaning of said, nothing, and nodded. To guess the meaning of affirmatively, the students have to look at the context and imagine a real situation where the statement is possibly stated. When a person said nothing, but nodded his head, what it may mean. Nodding is the clue. It is the clue that indicates agreement. A person does not need to say anything. Yet, by adding his head, he already says that he agrees about the topic being discussed or questions being asked. Therefore, they can conclude that the word affirmatively means something which is related to an agreement.

Then, there is skimming and scanning. The students are usually taught under a single topic. Commonly the students are assigned to do both within the same time. Lecturers may bring a piece of newspaper or magazine, articles or any expository texts to the classroom and teach the students how to do skimming and scanning. This activitiy should be done under lecturers' supervision, in order to make sure that no one is being dishonest, such as, instead of reading the clues provided like reading the title of the text, reading the topic sentence, reading the first sentence and the last sentence of every paragraph and reading the concluding paragraph, as how skimming and scanning should be done, they skip the activities and jump into reading the whole passage. Thus, the lecturer may simply instruct the students to read the title, the first sentence of each paragraph, the topic sentence or the main

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[8] *Reading Comprehension Skills and Strategies. Level 8* (Saddleback Pub, 2002).

[9] *Reading Comprehension Skills and Strategies. Level 8.*

idea, and the concluding paragraph within the same set time. After that, they may propose their ideas related to what the text is probably about. The lecturers may probably provide pre-reading questions to build the students' schemata and give comprehension questions to clarify whether or not what they have thought about a text, by looking at the clues, are the same when they have read the whole paragraphs. To test their scanning ability, the lecturers may directly ask the students a few questions related to the text and see whether the students can locate the answer within the set time. It can be done by scanning some reference materials, scanning news listing or information provided in a table.

To vary the activities, the lecturer may also start the class by bringing or showing one example of an advertisement, where most of the information is written in phrases. The lecturer may ask about any information in the advertisement. The students try to find the answer by ignoring other information stated since it is not related to the questions being asked. This activity can be a very good example for the students to make them see and realize that they should read by having purposes in their mind. When they are asked to find information in a short time, when they are asked to find details, they know exactly what strategies to be applied.

Furthermore, there is a reading skill known as making inferences and drawing a conclusion. When making inferences and conclusion, the lecturers do not directly distribute a passage to the students to read, yet, the class may some how to start by discussing series of pictures, paying attention to the clues that the pictures reveal, and state or clarify what they can infer. The students are responsible to have reasons for every inference that they make.

The lecturers will not only teach the students how university students are supposed to think but also to convince their peers why the inferences that they make are true. Another option is that the lecturers can provide examples of quotations taken from random figures or famous person, then ask the students to infer the statement. Again, the students should have reasons behind. After a series of practices, the students are given a reading selection and asked to do what they have done during the pre-reading section. They are to find the inferences and to state the reasons. For example:

As he walks toward the building, Tony is irritated with himself. In one arm are three books. His other hand jingles the change in his pocket. "If I had not been so forgetful, I could have used this money for something instead of having to pay a fine."10

Above is an example of a paragraph that can be used to teach students how to make inferences and drawing a conclusion. The lecturers can ask the students where is tony going and what is fine for?. To answer these two questions, the students need to take inference from the sentences. It is said that he walks toward the building, and in one arm there are three books, thus, Tony is walking to reach a building by holding three books. The question now is, what building is it, since he is bringing three books, it is easy to indicate that the building must be a library. Thus, Tony is going to a library. Then, the text is closed by a statement given by Tony "If I had not been so forgetful, I could have used this money for omething instead of having to pay a fine." Since the students already get the first answer, library is the place where Tony is heading to, then, from the statement it is obvious that Tony feels so upset I could have used this money,

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[10] *Reading Comprehension Skills and Strategies. Level 8.*

because he has to use the money for something else, something that he does not like, and it is because he has been careless If I had not been so forgetful, shortly, it can be inferred that Tony may somehow have lost or misplaced books that he borrowed from the library. Thus, Tony has to use to money for paying a fine for the books that he can not find and return.

Another example:

Jerome spoke softly to Petey, but it was of no use. He squawked all the way to the vet. Jerome carried Petey's cage inside, and Petey screamed every word he knew at the dogs and cats in the waiting room. The vet put on gloves and checked Petey all over. He then pronounced him fit as a fiddle and said, "See ya next year, Pete."11

Above is another example of text that can be used to teach inferences. The questions that can be what was the type of the pet that pet may have, and why the vet used gloves when handling petey?. In order to answer these two questions, the students need to understand the text and try to see the unstated information in the text. It has never been said what was the pet, but it can be inferred by looking at the word squawked and how this pet is afraid of cats and dogs, and this put is put in the cage. By understanding these information, the students can know that the pet must be a type of bird. Then, to answer the second question, the students can make inferences by looking at the word vet and the vet checked Petey all over. The students have to know what a vet does, and what he wears when a vet working. A vet is a doctor for pets. When he is working, he has to use gloves so that he is covered and protected.

Thus, the bird must be injured that it makes the vet wear his gloves.

Moreover, the lecturers provide some other reading activities to help students comprehend a reading text easily, such as finding the main ideas or topic sentence or discussing major and minor supporting details of a paragraph. The lecturers may play a trick to the students by inserting some unrelated sentences used as major supporting details within some selected paragraph. The students are guided to pay attention to every first sentence of the paragraph so that they can conclude the idea of the whole text. Then, the students are asked again to look at the supporting details and locate statements which are wrongly placed, or the statements that do not support the topic sentence or the idea being discussed. For example:

The word Pompeii brings to mind a picture of a city buried in volcanic ash and the inhabitants caught frozen in time. But, when Mount Vesuvius erupted in A.D. 79, engulfing the city of Pompeii, most of the people escaped. It must have been a very frightening experience. Though they did not have much time, many were able to carry off their most valuable, moveable possessions to safety. Later, when the eruption was over, some people tunneled back into buildings to remove even more. The excavation of Pompeii is of immense importance, not for the objects of value left behind, but for the incredible information, it provides about how the people of that time lived.12

The students can be given some time to read the whole paragraph, and then to pay attention to the first sentence of the paragraph. The students are asked to decide whether the first sentence is also the topic

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11 *Reading Comprehension Skills and Strategies. Level 8.*

12 *Reading Comprehension Skills and Strategies. Level 8.*

sentence. Then, the students again are asked to write down or highlight the supporting details of the paragraph. Once they have finished doing this, they are asked to look at each supporting detail and check whether each sentence supports the topic sentence.

Another possible activity to help thstudents find topic sentence and supporting details are by providing some separate sentences and ask the students to indicate whether the sentence should be a topic sentence or supporting details. Such as:

_____1. A pelican, for example, has a built-in scoop for fishing.
_____2. A leopard's spots enable it to hide in wait, unnoticed, by its prey.
_____3. Many animals have special features that help them get food.[13]

The exercise above is a simple way to teach students how to distinguish a topic sentence and supporting details. The students are asked to put a T if they think the sentence is a topic sentence, and to put an S if they think it is a supporting detail. If it is a topic sentence, then it can be elaborated, yet, if it is a supporting detail, it is an elaboration of an idea.

Moreover, to improve the students' critical thinking, the lecturers can choose a higher level of English selections. The possible activities are like, first, distinguishing between facts and opinions. In recent years, this ability is necessary since there are thousands of unfiltered information out there. The information may come from many unknown sources that the students should be selective in choosing what might be true, what can be used as a source of information. Therefore, they need to know which ones are facts, and which ones are statements given by a person. The lecturers give examples of how something

can be said as a fact and how it differs from an opinion. Later, by considering the characteristics of facts and opinions, the students try to differentiate facts from an opinion on their own.

Besides, the students can be asked to look at the tone used by the author in the text. The tone describes feelings.[14] Students can identify how a writer feels about a certain topic by analyzing the tone used. The tone used can be simply interpreted from the choice of words that the writer uses within his or her sentences. Students can conclude whether the text is perhaps disapproval, admiration or gratitude.

Then, the students are asked to find out the author's purpose. The lecturers ask the students to first identify the audience that the authors intend to read his or her writing. After that, they may move to see the writing more by concerns about bias.

There are plenty of reading activities that lecturers may provide to engage the students during class discussion. When it comes to reading, it is not only reading what is stated, it is also to read what is unstated. As higher university students, it is necessary that these skills are not only to be understood but also to be performed. At Universitas Negeri Padang, where English is taught as a compulsory subject, the students are expected not only to read and understand English text brought or assigned by the lecturer in the classroom, but they are also expected to be able to apply what they get in their English class to what they study in their department or their own major.

Teaching Large Classes

The quality of the learning environment is closely related to the size of

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[13] *Reading Comprehension Skills and Strategies. Level 8.*

[14] McWhorter, *Efficient and Flexible Reading.*

the class.[15] Large classes are a massification of education since the numbers of students enrolling at universities are raising.[16] Having many students in a class requires many different and engaging activities.

There are problems that every teacher may face dealing with excess numbers of students in a class. Pedagogical issues such as problems in carrying out the tasks; speaking, writing, and reading, evaluating individual work, setting communicative condition even problems in remembering each student's name.[17] Large classes need active learning activities. These activities bridge the difference in students' interest.[18] Some activities that lecturers or teachers may have in large classes are; first, it is important to ensure that students have space. Although there are many students in the class, yet they have to feel comfortable. The comfortable class helps students to concentrate more during the lesson. Second, it is important to make sure that the students socialize each other. This makes them feel secure in the class knowing they have peers to communicate. Then, it may be beneficial to keep a profile book for the class because sometimes it is hard to know every person.

Also, it is urgent to prepare different activities for different topics. The teacher does not only know what to teach but also, how to teach it.[19]

Methodology

This study is preliminary research. The design is descriptive research. It aims to describe and explore the real condition in English classes at UNP which are grouped as large classes. The information obtained from the research, later, will be used to develop a model of teaching reading that may suit the condition of the students at English classes of Universitas Negeri Padang. The data were collected through pre-test, post-test, questionnaires, and interviews. The first instrument used was a questionaires. The questionaires are distributed to the students to find out their expectation toward English subject. In general, the questions addressed are their motivation to study English, how do they feel about English, how do they see English as a subject, what do they want from the subject, and how do they want their lecturer to guide them during the class. The second instrument is the reading test. Since the students are first semester students, the level of the questions are based on the grade XIII English curriculum. Before the test was administered to the students, the test was validated by trying it out to other students. Then, the questions were reviewed. Some questions were changed. Then, interviews are done to the lecturers, mostly asking about the expected learning outcome of the subjects and their general perception about their first-year students.

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[15] David J Hornsby, "Teaching Large Classes in Higher Education : Challenges and Opportunities in a Developing Context," *Conference: Canadian International Education ConferenceAt: Hart House, University of Toronto, Canada*, no. June (2013), http://www.researchgate.net/publication/257387156_Teaching_Large_Classes_in_Higher_Education_Challenges_and_Opportunities_in_a_Developing_Context.

[16] David J Hornsby, Ruksana Osman, and Jacqueline De Matos-Ala, "Teaching Large Classes," in *Large-Class Pedagogy Interdisciplinary Perspectives for Quality Higher Education* (SUN PRESS, 2013), 7–17, https://doi.org/10.18820/9780992180690/01.

[17] Locastro, "Large Classes and Student Learning."

[18] Fred Wiegant, Karin Scager, and Johannes Boonstra, "An Undergraduate Course to Bridge the Gap between Textbooks and Scientific Research," *CBE Life Sciences Education* 10, no. 1 (March 2011): 83–94, https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.10-08-0100.

[19] Carolin Kreber, "Teaching Excellence, Teaching Expertise, and the Scholarship of Teaching," *Innovative Higher Education* 27, no. 1 (2002): 5–23, https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1020464222360.

Evaluating teaching and learning reading in large english classes

The questionnaires.

Among the many questions addressed to the students, some answers are considered significant to be discussed. Surprisingly, most students answer the reason why they take English as one of the subjects is merely because the subject is compulsory, which means, they simply have no other options. The answer may sowehow reflect that the students find English less interesting or they do not think that they need English even as a consideration for their future career. Some other interesting answers are a statement that saying English is very difficult and they have failed for years to understand it that they prefer to give up in the first place. This answer may reflect that most students do not yet obtain the Basic English skills which had been taught during highschools which the lecturers use as the foundation to continue the lesson to a higher level. Then, many students argue that the most important skill that they need to have is speaking. They say, through speaking they can reflect their ability and it is a skill that people can quickly detect, therefore, it is good to be used as a way to make an impressive first impression. For them, communicating in English- spoken English, outlaws reading. This argument indicates that the students do not understand the importance of reading and how reading may help them to reach their dream as well as to add their vocabulary so that speaking in English will be easier for them.

Furthermore, many students argue that the important thing of studying a foreign language is to master its structure. The structure is the main key in understanding any foreign languages. They claim that the English structure has always been confusing that they prefer to be taught the easiest way

to remember or to use various English tenses. These students prefer to learn English structure separately, rather than integrated within one authentic text.

The Pre-test and Post-Test result.

The reading test was administered to 100 students. Two classes were chosen randomly. The students were studying different majors. Although the test aimed to find out their reading skill as university students, the questions and passages were arranged by referring to their high school curriculum, because most of them were freshmen. It was also done to ensure that these students have studied and the same skills. Interestingly, it was found that all students obtained a low score. Converted to UNP range of score, it could be pictured that more than 50% students obtained E, 30% of them obtained D, 15% obtained C- and only 5% of the students obtained B-. Only this 5% of the students passed the test.
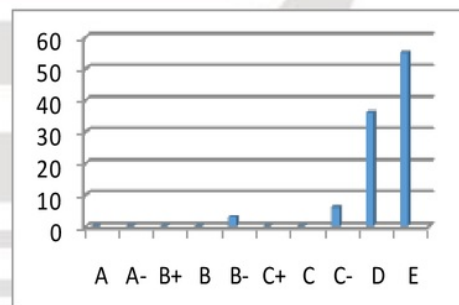

Figure1. Students' Pre-test Score

The test was then administered to the same 100 students. It was given at the end of the semester. However, the post-test result also showed that most of the students obtained a low score. None of them were able to reach A, A-, or B+.
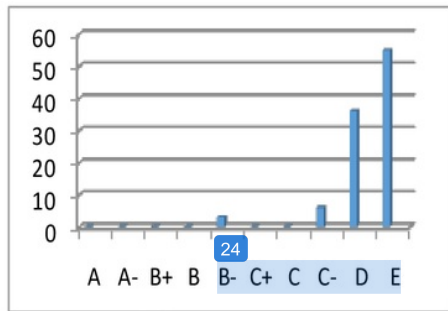
Figure 2. Students' Post-test score

The Interviews

The interviews were done to some English lecturers who teach large English classes. Some significant findings were considered as important to be noted. First, these lecturers did expect that the students had mastered basic English skills, that they did not need to review the old lessons, that they could easily move the new ones so that they could meet what was stated in the expected learning outcome—to make the students able to read various English reading text. However, most of them said that it was useless to keep moving forward while the students had no idea how to keep moving on. Thus, these lecturers had to review the basic skills that the students were supposed to master. Not only it was time-consuming, yet, it is way harder to be done due to the size of the class, which was large. Since most of them failed to master what they should have mastered, ensuring almost 60 students to understand and follow the instruction in a suddenly basic English class is difficult. Basic English class should always be intensive, therefore, it should not be large.

Furthermore, due to the size of the class, the lecturers admitted that it was hard to equip the students with the appropriate English reading assignment. There were almost 60 students to take care of. All lecturers handled more than two large English classes. It was difficult to find assignments which were not time-consuming, but possible to be reviewed and to be talked about as a feedback with the students. Thus, assignments given were limited to some scopes.

Besides, many lecturers admit that they had to unfocus themselves to the well-arranged subject expected learning outcome and created a new one. They expected that their students understand basic English tenses since most of them failed to apply these and it became impossible for them to teach the intended reading skills.

Due to the problems, the lecturers stated that having one English subject within the years of studying at the university for the students is not enough. These students had to be sent to a basic English class before being sent to the large English class.

The Reading Activities Provided

There were many types of in-class exercises given to the students. Before they were brought to the reading part, they were introduced to some preliminary reading activities, such as word-power, snapshot, matching the pictures, and brainstorming. These activities meant to help students to recall their already existed vocabulary and to bridge them to find new words. What mostly happened in the class was not quite expected. It was admitted that the students possessed very limited numbers of vocabulary that they could not contribute words during the brainstorming. Most of them directly relied on their dictionary and the situation became one-way communication.

During the reading activity, the students kept consulting to their dictionary since guessing became very difficult. Translating word by word became the only option. During this activity, context clues are quite impossible because the words that the

students knew were less than the words that they knew.

When it came to reading exercises, students were able to answer the literal question but incapable to answer implicit questions. They both could not write and mention the intended answer. The students looked unmotivated and uninterested in studying more.

Mostly the time spent was not used to apply the reading activities which had been explained before such as finding the main idea or skimming and scanning. The students seemed to know too little about the text that further discussion was almost impossible to be done. Often, the lecturers had to go back to the discussion about how sentences are constructed and how English parts of speech function and work. Shortly, reading activities were undone.

The Grammar-Based Reading Activity

Various English tenses were introduced to the class. It was quite hard to get a reading text that only uses one single type of tense. When the grammar lesson was taught based on a reading passage, only a few examples could be taken. Some sentences were left out because the students had not yet mastered the Basic English tenses. This activity seemed to fail to help students to both understand the text and understand its tenses. The text was not learned as a whole, because only a few parts were taken, while the examples of the tense were limited.

Many lecturers decided to return to high school English lesson and made sure that the students understood verbs, nouns, adjectives and how they differ and function within a sentence, and how they use them to construct an acceptable English sentence. Usually, the explanation about these parts of speech took several meetings. However, it

was admitted that many of large English class lecturers used this as a major option since it might somehow engage the students and make them feel secure because they could study all from the very beginning.

Why do the previous reading activities fail to help the students to meet the expected learning outcome of the subject?

It has been obvious that the students' inputs were low. Reflected from the pre-test score, the students' ability in English was not good. The results indicated that they did not yet master what they were supposed to master. Basic English tenses should have been considered done since they were taught in their high school curriculum.

It has been nature for every lecture to know at once whether or not their students understand the topic being discussed or engaged to the discussion. Based on some interviews with the lecturers, they admitted that teaching English structure from the very beginning, such as introducing the nouns, adjectives, and verbs and then continue to teaching the English tenses is way more effective. The students were highly motivated since they were helped to understand the basic concept of English syntax. They were taught in a better way how to construct a simple sentence, how to elaborate them, how to write them and how to say them. They showed interest since they finally understood why certain parts of speech should be put in a particular sentence, for example, my friends and my mother give me a surprise birthday. This type of sentence was really popular among students since they did not know when they had to use –be and verbs. They always have a tendency not to differentiate the class of words. They put noun as a verb-replacement I school at Universitas Negeri Padang and some other equal mistakes. Therefore, many

English lecturers at MKU prefer to teach the students from the beginning since they feel it is way more useful and helpful for the students. It is better than forcing the students to read and have one-way communication during the class.

Some students also said that they could not manage reading activities because too many words were unfamiliar and the activities limited them to explore themselves. Referring to some examples of reading activities explained in the previous section, it could be seen that techniques require the students to have understood about basic English and possessed sufficient vocabulary as to how university students are supposed to have. For example, on the statement the thirsty man yearned for a drink of water, the bald word, is the word that they have guess, it has also been explained that to guess the meaning of the bald word, they can use the word thirsty as a clue. Unfortunately, some students did not know that word as well. Therfore, it became more difficult for them to finish the exercise because numbers of vocabulary that they do not know are more than what is expected. Another example given previously was the strategy to make inferences and conclusion. There was a short paragraph given. Many students failed to answer the questions because, again, numbers of vocabulary they possessed. They could not use the clues provided. Vocabulary that they know is less than vocabulary that they do know. Shortly, it was almost impossible to apply this reading strategy to these students. "Reading comprehension was a complex activity which sometimes might be very difficult since the requirements needed were quite many. This fact led the students to met failure in their reading".20

The students have to have background knowledge about the text, the students need to have sufficient vocabulary, and they need to understand how sentences in English are constructed and how each tense functions and means in every sentence. Therefore, they can get the whole picture of the reading.

Moreover, the students sometimes said that they might know the answer in their language, but they found it difficult to spawn their ideas into English words. They admitted that their expectation in English class was to help them to understand tenses.

Besides, referencing to the reading skills mentioned previously, it is obvious that the aim of readings is beyond having an ability to understand English tenses. It is the skill to understand to comprehend and to evaluate what is provided. It is a bridge to make them able to apply what the students study in their reading class to what they learn in their department. There is almost no, or perhaps only a small portion of grammar lesson integrated. Yet, the real condition is the class is that the students are lack of English vocabulary, tenses which are needed if a person wants to understand an English text. Thus, the expected reading activities were not yet applicable to such condition.

What would work best in a large english class?

Based on what has been explained previously, it is possible to say that none of the reading activities explained will work best in a large English class with this typical situation and condition. First, the students' input which is already low requires them to have an intensive basic English lesson where they can learn the basic concept of English as a language. Second, these low English level students are too many to be seated within one class that it is almost impossible

[3] Dinovia Fannil Kher and Yati Aisya Rani, "The Quality of Students' Paraphrases of an Expository Text: A Study of 15 English Department Students of

[3] ate University of Padang" (Atlantis Press, 2019), https://doi.org/10.2991/icoelt-18.2019.1.

to discuss texts being brought to the class. Third, the students' major are too varied to be grouped in the same class, that some students may interest with the topic, while some others are not. This, influences the learning process in the classroom. Usually, students who are already interested in the topic on the first place dominate the class leaving the less interested students unmotivated to continue being in that class. A communication gap is created. Shortly, due to the three conditions that the university faces, some adjustments are needed to be considered.

Conclusion And Suggestion

Though there are many theories about teaching reading strategies for university students, none of the theories suits the condition of UNP students. They have low English input, they are from the different major of study and 50 of them are seated in the same class.

Therefore, there are some possible considerations to be taken in to account. First, it is important that the lecturers throw some focus group discussions in order to formulate new expected learning outcomes that fit the condition of the students at Universitas Negeri Padang. Second, it is necessary for the university to reconsider numbers of students that it is going to be put in a class. Then, it may be helpful if the students are given the Basic English class before they are asked to take the English class. It may be acceptable to say that, instead of forcing the trends of the curriculum for higher education, it may be more appropriate to make some changes to the current curriculum which fit the current condition of the human resources-the students. Third, it is necessary for the university to group the students based on their major. One class should consist of

students majoring the same subjects. It eases the lecturer to decide what texts or passages should be learned by the students.

However, this unique condition provides an opportunity for the lecturers to conduct a research in order to design a particular teaching and learning reading strategy, which are different from other common reading strategies, since most of them have been proven failed, which is applicable for any large English classes where the students' English ability is considered low.

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