

## USING *SILENT SENTENCES* IN TEACHING READING A NARRATIVE TEXT

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### Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas tentang salah satu aktifitas yang dapat digunakan dalam pengajaran membaca teks narrative yaitu *Silent Sentences*. Guru dapat menerapkan strategi ini kepada siswa untuk meningkatkan kemampuan mereka dalam membaca dan menganalisa ide-ide dalam teks narrative. Maksud dari kegiatan *Silent Sentences* ini adalah siswa bekerjasama dalam kelompok untuk menyusun kalimat-kalimat yang diberikan menjadi sebuah paragraf yang benar. Dalam kegiatan ini, masing-masing siswa diberikan satu buah amplop yang berisi beberapa kalimat, kemudian siswa diminta untuk menyusunnya menjadi sebuah paragraf yang benar dengan cara saling menukarkan kartu dalam kelompok. Siswa tidak dibenarkan untuk berkomunikasi secara lisan antara satu dengan yang lainnya. Kegiatan berakhir ketika para siswa mampu menyusun semua kalimat menjadi sebuah paragraf yang benar.

Key word: Activity, *Silent Sentences*, Narrative text, Reading

### A. Introduction

Many efforts have been done by government in order to improve Indonesian human resource. Government realizes that in global era, people from different countries, cultures, and languages will interact each other by using the international language to communicate. Since English is one of the International communication languages, the government has decided to put English as essential subject that has to be taught from elementary school to the university. It is expected that people, especially students, can use English as media of communication to prepare them in facing the global era.

Nowadays, in order to implement *Undang-Undang No. 20 tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional and Peraturan Pemerintah No. 19 tahun 2005 tentang Standar Nasional Pendidikan*, Indonesian government has arranged a new curriculum called *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*

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(KTSP) or School Based Curriculum. Basically, it is a curriculum in which every school, from elementary to senior high school, is expected to develop the curriculum independently based on *Standar Kompetensi Lulusan (SKL)*, *Standar Isi (SI)*, and *Panduan Umum* which have been arranged by *Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan (BSNP)*. Moreover, the curriculum development is also generated by considering the local specification, local needs and students' ability where the school is located. However, this curriculum is basically a follow up of previous curriculum, *Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi (KBK)* or Curriculum 2004.

According to *Standar Kompetensi Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Curriculum 2004* and School Based Curriculum (KTSP), the goal of English teaching learning process is to make the students able to use English both oral and written form. Students are expected to have a good listening and speaking ability as well as reading and writing ability. Students will learn how to use their English in any circumstances, such as in daily activity, business, tourism, and education. It will help them when they move from classroom situation to the real world situation. Experience will also play an important role in this process. In addition, the teacher him/herself is also expected to be creative in generating teaching technique, media and material. He/she should make the teaching and learning process become an interesting activity in the classroom. The technique can be generated by adopting, adapting or if it is possible, it can be developed by the teacher him/herself. For the media and material, teacher can take them from any source, such as newspaper, magazine, internet or created by him/herself.

Moreover, *Standar Kompetensi Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Curriculum 2004* and School Based Curriculum (KTSP) explain that the teaching and learning process for English subject is done by using genres. There are twelve genres or types of text that should be taught by teacher to students; narrative, recount/spoof, report, procedure, news item, description, anecdote, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, discussion, explanation and review. Each text has its own social function, generic structure and language features, and the four language skills are integrated during learning those texts. One of the texts is narrative. It is considered as a kind of text that entertains, teaches history, and comes to make sense of the phenomena in this world. The material of narrative text is usually taken from the type of story such as fairy tales, folk stories, fable, and so on. Senior High School students are familiar with this type of text because their kindergarten and elementary school have told them many times about stories related to legend, fairy tale, folktale, or fable.

However, there are still some problems that emerge during teaching and learning reading skill for narrative text. Even though narrative text is well-known by senior high school students since they have ever heard narrative text in the form of fairy tales, folk stories, fable, folktale or legend, they still have some difficulties in understanding ideas. Furthermore, conventional technique in teaching reading also makes students bored and unenthusiastic. They find reading as a monotonous activity in the classroom

where they just sit behind their desks while concentrating in translating the text and figuring out what the text is about. In order to overcome these problems, teachers should provide their students an opportunity to develop their reading skill, and creatively generate techniques to make English teaching and learning process become an interesting activity in the classroom. There are many ways or techniques that can be used by the teachers in teaching reading, such as by using visual aids, newspaper, magazine, cards, internet, role play, problem based learning, group discussion, and so on.

In this article, the writer chooses a technique which can help students in developing and increasing their ability in reading. The technique is by using “silent sentence” activity. By using this technique, the students are asked to make 5-6 major groups in a classroom, where they will arrange words to make good sentence after the materials of teaching distributed.

The term “Silent Sentences” is firstly used in Paul Ginnis’s book, “Raise Classroom Achievement with Strategies for Every Learner”. According to Paul Ginnis (2008) “Silent Sentences” activity is a constructing activity with implemented incentive for a individual and group work. It means that this activity can be applied with some groups of students. The groups are expected to have a solid team-work and able to compete with other groups.

Paul Ginnis (2008) also stated that the procedure can be modified depend on the teacher and the class situation. He offers some other variation that will make this activity to be more interesting. The variations are:

- a) Create variations in the number of "words" per person. For groups with students who are older and more capable will take a lot of sentences for each group to ensure sufficient complexity.
- b) At the simplest level, color card can be used. For example, all verbs in a red card, all nouns in blue card, etc. Then do questions and answers about the patterns with the students: "What do we notice about the colors in each sentence? Why are they like this? What will happen to the sentence if we...? "
- c) Can be played in groups with various amounts.
- d) Each player can have different specifications which must be met. For example, circuit boards - each player must make a certain circuit to perform a particular job. In this case, a variety of specifications need to be known by all players.

Paul Ginnis (2008) said that there are several advantages of applying this activity in teaching. The advantages are:

- a) By limited speaking, observations and mental process increased.
- b) Those who have interpersonal intelligence and those with spatial and Concrete Sequential Mind Styles or visual learning styles exist in elements.
- c) Understanding of students is tested. By going around the room, the teacher easy to see where the confusion and uncertainty appears. This activity offers informal formative assessment.

- d) This activity provides a powerful lesson in the group, the truth, cooperation, and above all, self-discipline.

From the explanation above, Silent Sentence activity is a reading activity where students sit and work together in a group, passing their unusable words in a piece of paper after arrange their own words in to one sentence without using any verbal or sign language. Students' self comprehension are tested because even though they work together in a group, they work individually in arrange their sentence.

In this article, the procedure of Silent Sentences is adapted from Paul Ginnis's Silent Sentences. Generally, students still follow steps explained before. However, the writer tries to adapt the Paul Ginnis's silent Sentences by adding and omitting some steps. For example, the writer omits the steps that the teacher give some clues about the sentences is given by using correlated picture, and adds a step that the teacher asks student to write down their sentences in white board after the time limit.

## **B.Discussion**

To get the better result of teaching reading through Silent Sentences activity, the teacher needs to set the classroom procedure. The classroom procedures should include three activities of presentation of material in reading. The activities are Pre activities, Whilst activities, and Post activities. There are some stages that are used in applying Silent Sentences as mentioned on the following sub topic.

### **1. Lesson Preparation**

Before coming to the class and begin the lesson, the teacher has to make some preparations. One factor to determine the success of teaching and learning process is the lesson preparations. The teachers should have well-organized preparations in order to get the teaching and learning process successfully. There are some steps that the teacher should consider in preparing teaching and learning process. The steps are described as follow:

### **2. Procedure of Teaching Reading Narrative by Using Silent Sentences**

There are three steps in teaching reading through Silent Sentences technique. They are Pre activity, Whilst activity and Post activity.

#### **a. Pre Activity**

There are several activities in pre activity:

1. In pre-teaching activity, there are some activities done by teacher and students. First, the teacher begins the class by greeting the students.

Teacher: *Good morning students!*

Students: *Good morning sir!*

Teacher: *How are you today?*

Students: *Fine. Thank you. And you?*

Teacher: *I am fine too. Thank you.*



2. Then, the teacher checks students' attendance. After that, the teacher looks at the seat. If they are not well organized, the teacher asks the students to arrange their seat. So that, the teacher and students finds the classroom more interesting and comfortable.
3. The teacher stimulates students' background knowledge by asking some questions:
  - a. Do you like reading a story such as fairy tales or legends?
  - b. What is your favorite story?
  - c. Do you know what picture is this?



- d. What do you know about Malin Kundang?
  - e. Why he cursed to be a stone?
4. The teacher shows the legend of Malin Kundang's text in front of the student by using printable media or projector.

### MALIN KUNDANG

A long time ago, in a small village near the beach in West Sumatra, a woman and her son lived. They were Malin Kundang and her mother. Her mother was a single parent because Malin Kundang's father had passed away when he was a baby. Malin Kundang had to live hard with his mother.

Malin Kundang was a healthy, dilligent, and strong boy. He usually went to sea to catch fish. After getting fish he would bring it to his mother, or sold the caught fish in the town.

One day, when Malin Kundang was sailing, he saw a merchant's ship which was being raided by a small band of pirates. He helped the merchant. With his brave and power, Malin Kundang defeated the pirates. The merchant was so happy and thanked to him. In return the merchant asked Malin Kundang to sail with him. To get a better life, Malin Kundang agreed. He left his mother alone.

Many years later, Malin Kundang became wealthy. He had a huge ship and was helped by many ship crews loading trading goods. Perfectly he had a beautiful wife too. When he was sailing his trading journey, his ship landed on a beach near a small village. The villagers recognized him. The news ran fast in the town said that Malin Kundang back to the town.

An old woman ran to the beach to meet the new rich merchant. She was Malin Kundang's mother. She wanted to hug him, released her sadness of being

lonely after so long time. Unfortunately, when the mother came, Malin Kundang who was in front of his well dressed wife and his ship crews denied meeting that old lonely woman. For three times her mother begged Malin Kundang and for three times he yelled at her. At last Malin Kundang said to her "Enough, old woman! I have never had a mother like you, a dirty and ugly woman!" After that he ordered his crews to set sail. He would leave the old mother again but in that time she was full of both sadness and angriness.

Finally, enraged, she cursed Malin Kundang that he would turn into a stone if he didn't apologize. Malin Kundang just laughed and really set sail.

In the quiet sea, suddenly a thunderstorm came. His huge ship was wrecked and it was too late for Malin Kundang to apologize. He was thrown by the wave out of his ship. He fell on a small island. It was really too late for him to avoid his curse. Suddenly, he turned into a stone.

5. Then, the teacher asks the students some questions and let them find the answers in their group discussion, for example:
  - a. Have you ever read or about the story?
  - b. Who are involved in the story?
  - c. Where did it take place?
  - d. What happened to the character(s)? What happened next?
  - e. What happened to the character(s) in the end of the story?

These questions are given in order to make the students analyze the story they have been told before carefully. Thus, the teacher can find out whether the students understand the story.

6. After that, the teacher teaches the students about narrative text. Teacher explains the social functional, generic structure and language features of narrative text.
7. The teacher divides the students into several groups, this step is intended to form several group of students for discussion session and silent sentences activity. Each group consists of four to six students. The teacher gathers them around their own desk or pulls desks into a circle.

#### **b. Whilst Activity**

Whilst-teaching activities are the activities conducted during teaching process. In this phase, the teacher leads the students to the main activity in the teaching learning process. The teacher guides the students by giving some words about the pictures. It is help to stimulate students' understanding.

There are several activities or steps of whilst-teaching activities. They are as following:

##### *1. Exploration*

In this activity, a teacher:

- a. Teacher asks several question about arrange sentences in to a good paragraph and gives some example.
- b. Teacher explains the concept of Silent Sentences activity where they will add other students' sentences by passing their card to the student next to them. Moreover, the teacher also explains that they will read a narrative text, using the text organization (orientation, complication and resolution), and language features. If necessary, they can use the notes they have as the guidance or help them to generate language features.
- c. Teacher explains the main rule before the activity started.
  - No one allowed to speak or use sign language.
  - Students may only give cards, and may not take or give signs to the others to ask for the card.
  - If a card has to offer, it cannot be denied.
  - Remain in the chair.

## 2. *Elaboration*

In this activity, a teacher:

- a. Teacher gives each student three envelopes. Each envelope contains one set of sentences of different bits of paper or card. Set is made in such a way that no one can make the sentence correct and reasonable, and their own words. The envelopes contain the Narrative text organizations, such as orientation, complication and resolution.
- b. Inside of each envelope there are some pictures related to the sentences they will arrange.
- c. Teacher tells the story of Cinderella for two times to help students in arranging their sentences.
- d. Teacher asks the students to arrange the sentences to be good paragraph by trading their card with other student until they get complete paragraph.
- e. In activity, students look to see who might need a card
- f. When students have a set paragraph, does not mean he has finished. He's probably got the wrong solution - he may still hold the card which still needed by another player and therefore he must remains actively participate.
- g. Activities completed only when everyone has a set of paragraph that are reasonable and accurate.
- h. Teacher ask student to construct their paragraph in to a good paragraph of narrative text.
- i. Teacher shows the correct arrangement by showing a full text of Cinderella.
- j. Teacher asks the student several question about the text they have

- What is the suitable title for the story?
  - Who are involved in the story?
  - Where did it take place?
  - What happened to the character(s)? What happened next?
  - What happened to the character(s) in the end of the story?
- k. After that, the teacher asks the students about generic structure and language features of the text.

### 3. *Confirmation*

In this activity, a teacher:

- a. Teacher gives another narrative text which is related to the topic
- b. Teacher asks the student to answer some questions related to the text given and discuss whether it is right or wrong.

### c. **Post Activity**

As the closing phase, teacher should make this phase as memorable as possible in order to make students remember the day's lesson and wait for the next lesson. In this phase, teacher leads the students to summarize the material that has been taught by asking some questions to recall the students' memory. Then, the teacher asks students to clean up the classroom together. Finally, the teacher makes a conclusion about the lesson and then the teacher ends the class.

## 4. **The Advantages of Using Silent Sentences Activity in Teaching Reading**

There are several advantages of applying this activity in teaching. The advantages are:

- a) The students vocabulary are increased because they should find the meaning individually.
- b) This activity can improve students understanding in analyze a words, sentences, and paragraph.
- c) The teacher easy to see where the confusion and uncertainty appears by going around the room.
- d) This activity provides a powerful lesson in the group, the truth, and cooperation.
- e) It makes the students interested to the lesson because this is an interesting activity.

### C. **Conclusion and Suggestion**

The procedures in teaching talking cards to improve students reading ability at Senior High School are divided into three phase. First, pre-teaching activities. In this phase, the teacher greets, check the attendance and the readiness before begins teaching the material. Second, whilst-teaching activities. In this phase, the activities divides into three stages; elaboration, exploration and confirmation. Third, post-teaching activities. The activities in this phase include the comprehension of the students about the material they learned during learning process by giving exercises and homework to the students. Moreover, Talking



Cards gives many advantages for both the teacher and the students especially. This activity can make the class become lively and fun and of course it will make the students enjoy to learn and do not easily get bored. They will be easy to remember what they have learned too. In addition, using Silent Sentence to improve Senior High School students in reading narrative text also can help them to improve their vocabulary beside they also be able to analyze the text. So, Silent Sentences activity Cards is the appropriate activity for Senior High School to improve their reading ability in learning English.

From the conclusion above, it is suggested to English teacher to apply this technique in teaching reading. It is expected that this technique can help the students to solve problem in reading, provides them with another experience of reading, and guide them to be a good reader. Furthermore, it helps students to understanding ideas in a text.

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