

Vocational Students' Cognitive Engagement in CALLA-Based Instruction in Reading Classroom

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Abstract

Learning to read is one of the important factors in teaching English. Therefore, students need instructions and strategies that can help them carry out reading learning activities. It resulted several views regarding reading teaching learning instruction in the context of language learning. This study focused on how the students' cognitive engagement in reading narrative texts with the help of CALLA instructions. The participants of the study were five vocational students at one of vocational school in Karawang. This research was conducted using narrative inquiry design and the data were collected through interviews, observation and documentation. To conduct the analysis, this study employed thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke. This study showed that (1) Students have attention on learning classroom, (2) Using dictionary builds students' resource management learning, (3) Repetition strategy reinforce students' reading comprehension, (4) Students' self-elaboration creates them to connect the reading passage. It indicates that CALLA-based instruction engages students cognitively in reading teaching and learning classroom.

Keywords: students' cognitive engagement; CALLA; narrative text

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INTRODUCTION

Reading is a crucial ability for English language learners, although it frequently gets ignored in the classroom. Thereof, students' inability to comprehend the reading passage, makes it difficult for them to find the answers to questions. Based on that, Students require reading strategies that will improve their reading comprehension. Utilizing efficient reading strategies can reduce the time and effort required to comprehend particular materials, which benefits learners (Asmara, 2017).

The first step in creating helpful reading strategies for readers should be identify the methods that readers have already employed (Ozek & Civelek, 2006). One of the reading strategies that students have subconsciously employed is cognitive reading strategies. It is in line with O'Malley and Chamot in Asmara (2017) that the use of cognitive methods can help readers become proficient readers.

In addition to the necessity of comprehending reading strategies for learners, instructional models are essential for students' reading practice. CALLA is the instruction of learning and teaching reading introduced by Chamot and O'Malley in 1996. In this situation, CALLA (cognitive academic language learning approach) is a method that can be used in general education courses as well as ESL and EFL schools (Xu, 2015). According to Chamot and O'Malley (1996) that the CALLA teaching learning instruction, consists of the following five steps: (1) preparation, (2) presentation, (3) practice, (4), evaluation, and (5) expansion. This instruction was developed to assist students who were studying English as foreign language with the academic challenges they encountered in their classes. The CALLA method is intended to assist EFL students in strengthening their language skills while utilizing effective content-area strategies (Suh, 2012). As a result, CALLA as a model for teaching reading is acceptable since it enables the utilization of students' cognitive reading strategies to produce better outcomes.

Developing a set of methods that EFL students may use in accordance with the specific learning task is the main objective of explicit strategy instruction (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). English instruction in Indonesian schools is typically text-based and one of the subject areas taught in schools is narrative text. Inasmuch as, throughout a typical reading of a narrative text, information is continuously drawn from

memory and integrated with the growing discourse model (Cook & O'Brien, 2014). As a result, the CALLA program can assist reading instruction by adopting methods that are appropriate with the subjects being taught.

In line with that, many previous studies on CALLA-based training and cognitive reading strategies have been carried out as part of this topic research. For instance, Tawarik, et al. (2021) found that CALLA increases the students' reading comprehension and reading awareness. In another study, Marimuthu, et al., (2016) investigated students' reading comprehension performance between using CALLA training and traditional exposure. In addition, Adıgüzel & Gürses (2013) discovered that CALLA has positive responses from students about the impact of reading strategies instruction over their reading ability and strategy use. Another study by Prakoso et al. (2016) examined how CALLA-based instruction affected students' cognitive reading approach and reading comprehension. Albashtawi (2019) found that CALLA improved students' reading achievement.

However, the research on how students engage cognitively with CALLA-based instruction in vocational high school is still poorly explored. To fill the gap, this article finding based on a narrative inquiry research design on students' cognitive engagement with CALLA-based instruction-supported narrative reading text. Based on the research background, the research question in this study is "How are vocational students' cognitive engagement in CALLA-based instruction-supported narrative text?". The study aimed to find out students cognitive engagement in CALLA-based instruction-supported narrative reading text.

METHODS

The study employed qualitative research with a narrative inquiry design, which is detailed that narrative inquiry is a methodology investigating understudied phenomena and people's school experiences (Cladinin, 2006). The research site was conducted in one of Karawang's vocational schools. And the participants were first-grade of students in a vocational school. In one class there are twenty students but only five students who involved in this research. The class was a recommendation from the English teacher at the school. To determine the participants, the researchers used a purposive sampling technique which is detailed as a conscious selection of an informant based on the characteristics of the informant (Tongco, 2007).

To examine students' cognitive engagement in CALLA-based instruction-assisted narrative reading text, the study used three instruments. The researchers collected the data from students' interviews, observation, and documentation. In order to obtain the data, the researchers followed the steps listed: first, the researcher made observations; then, the researchers conducted interviews; and finally, the researchers collected documents. The researchers used an observation checklist to observe learners reading learning process in the classroom. The researchers can use observation to help them accurately observe all events and provide information (Mack & Woodsong, 2005).

In students' interviews, the researchers used interview guidelines. It consists of six questions about what are students' cognitive engagement in CALLA-based instruction-assisted narrative reading text. An important method for researchers to verify the impressions gained from observation is to conduct an interview or carefully ask pertinent questions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). All interviews are performed in Indonesian in order to the interviewees can freely express their answers and easily grasp the questions posed. And finally, the interviews transcript was translated into English. Additionally, the researcher used documentation to support the data and serve as an illustration of the research process.

In this study to analyze the data, the researchers used thematic analysis determined by Braun & Clarke (2006). There are six stages in thematic analysis: the researchers familiarizing with the data; generating initial code; searching for themes; reviewing potential themes; defining and naming themes; and finally, writing up the results. After the results have been collected, the researchers will reach a conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the data that have been carried out by researchers are described in the following explanation. There are five stages in CALLA-based instruction such as (1) preparation, (2) presentation, (3)

practice, (4) evaluation and (5) expansion. It contributes in this study for the researchers gained the information. The data results were used to answer the research question “How are vocational students’ cognitive engagement in CALLA-based instruction-supported narrative text?”

1. Students have attention on learning classroom (Presentation stage)

To ascertain that students fully comprehend to the subject, they should have attention during the learning. It assists students how to process information in learning classroom. The transcript of the students’ interview serves as an illustration as follow:

“While the teacher gives the material, I pay attention to the teacher explained in order to comprehend the learned material.” (P1)

“I immersed to the material given by the teacher and try to arrange the questions if there are material I do not understand.” (P2)

“I attempt to concentrate and focus attention to the material given by the teacher.” (P3)

“I pay attention and attempt to concentrate on the subject explained by the teacher.” (P5)

The interview transcript showed that almost participants have attention in the learning process. They claimed that the interactive classroom had thoroughly engaged them. However, there is a participant who expressed have low attention in the learning activity.



Figure 1. Presentation stage

The activities demonstrated that the students were fully immerse in the presentation phase. It is supported by observation data that students pay attentively to the teacher's explanation. It takes a lot of cognitive effort to pay attention to one thing or work for a prolonged period of time (Cicekci & Sadik, 2019). Additionally, it assisted students in formulate the questions and encouraged them to actively participate in the classroom. It can be concluded that students are cognitively engaged during reading learning by paying attention to the teacher as explained the material.

2. Using dictionary builds students’ resource management learning (Practice stage)

In order to effective in English reading learning, it is necessary to be equipped with dictionary. It contributes students to learn text well. The interview transcript reveals the importance of using dictionaries, which the participants illustrated as follows:

“When there is an unknown word, I usually looking for at the dictionary to find out the translation of the unfamiliar word. Inasmuch as, it makes me comprehend the story in the text.” (P2)

“When I do not understand or unfamiliar with words in the passage, I usually look for at the dictionary to discover the meaning of the word.” (P3)

“When there is the unknown word, I used a dictionary till I can apprehend the translation of the word.” (P5)

The interview transcript revealed that using dictionaries as a reference source is necessary to identify unknown words. All participants mentioned that dictionaries make them easier to comprehend the narrative text. It means students used preparation and information collection during learning activities to complete the task with the dictionary (Corno & Mardinach, 1983). Thus, it showed that students engaged cognitively through resource management during the practice stage.



Figure 2. Practice stage

Figure 2 illustrates that students used dictionaries as equipment in reading learning. While completing reading activities in the practice stage, pupils desired to manage resources from their dictionaries. It implies that through managing the resources they used a mental effort by utilizing dictionary.

3. Repetition strategy reinforce students' reading comprehension

Repetition helped students to comprehend the reading passage. It can be used by students to master partially or a whole the content of the text. Rereading a sentence and re-read the entire text to improve the errors is part of this process. It is illustrated by participants as follow:

“To comprehend the contents of the text, I rereading the text in order that I can comprehend the entire story better because of sometimes there are unfamiliar words, thus I reread the parts of I do not understand.” (P1)


“To grasp the narrative text, I usually rereading the narrative text till I comprehend the content or significance of the text.” (P2)



Figure 3. Practice stage

Name : _____
Class : _____

Little Red Riding Hood



Once upon a time there was sweet little girl. Everyone called her Little Red Riding Hood, because she always wore a red riding hood. It had been given to her by her grandmother, who loved the little girl very much.

One day Little Red Riding Hood's mother said, "Here, child, take this basket to your grandmother. It's got bread, butter, cake and berries in it. She's feeling sick and I hope this will make her feel better. Don't talk to strangers. (don't leave the path and walk straight to your grandma's house)." (The wolf was listening.)

Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother lived half an hour away in the woods outside the village. So Little Red Riding Hood set off. The girl had just entered the woods, when a wolf came out of the trees. She wasn't scared because she didn't know wolves are dangerous.

"Good day, Little Red Riding Hood," the wolf greeted her. "Good day, Mr Wolf," the girl replied. "Where are you going?" he asked. "I'm going to visit my grandmother, because she isn't feeling very well," Little Red Riding Hood replied. "What do you have in that basket?" asked the wolf. "I have some bread, butter, cake and berries to take to grandma", she replied. "Excellent! And where does your grandmother live?" asked the wolf and Little Red Riding Hood explained exactly where her grandma lived.

They walked together for a while. Then the wolf spoke again. "What lovely flowers there are here! Why don't you pick some for your grandma?" The girl looked around and saw all those beautiful flowers. She thought that her grandmother would be delighted to have some fresh flowers and, despite her mother's advice, she left the path.

While Little Red Riding Hood went deeper into the woods to pick flowers, the wolf went straight to her grandmother's house. He knocked on the door and heard a voice inside "Who is it?" "It's me, Little Red Riding Hood. I've brought you bread, butter, cake and berries", the wolf said, disguising his voice. "How lovely! Give the door a big push and come in. I don't have the strength to come and open it."

The wolf entered the house, went to the old woman's bed and ate her whole. Then he put her clothes on and slipped into the bed. When Little Red Riding Hood arrived at her grandmother's house, she noticed that the door was open. The girl went in and went to the bedroom. Usually she felt very happy at her grandma's but that day something felt different. "Good morning!" she said, but no one replied.

Her grandmother looked strange. "Oh, Grandma, what big ears you have!" exclaimed Red Riding Hood. "All the better to hear you with!" the wolf replied in a fake voice. "Oh, Grandma, what big eyes you have!" she continued. "All the better to see you with!" the wolf said. "Oh, Grandma, what big hands you have!" "All the better to grab you with!", the wolf said.

"Oh, Grandma, what a big mouth you have!" exclaimed Red Riding Hood. "All the better to eat you with!" The wolf roared, jumped off the bed and ate the poor girl whole.

With his stomach full, the wolf got back into grandma's bed and fell asleep, snoring loudly. A huntsman, who was passing by the house, heard him and thought it was very strange for the old woman to snore so loudly. He looked inside and saw that it was the wolf who was snoring. The huntsman had been looking for the wolf for a long time. At long last he had found him!

The huntsman lifted his gun and was just about to shoot, when he had a thought. Maybe the old woman was still alive inside his belly! So the man took a pair of scissors and cut open his belly. He saw a red hood popping out and then Little Red Riding Hood jumped out. The huntsman cut a bit more and the grandmother came out, too.

Little Red Riding Hood gathered some stones and they filled the wolf's belly with them. When he woke up, he was scared and tried to run away but the stones were so heavy that he fell down dead.

The three ate some cake, happy in the knowledge that the wolf was not going to be a danger anymore. Little Red Riding Hood decided never to leave the path again and to listen more carefully to what her mother told her.

Answer the following questions based on the text:

- Who are the characters of the story?
Little red riding hood, little red riding hood's mother, little red riding hood's grandmother, wolf, the huntsman
- Where did the Little Red Riding Hood go to visit?
The grandmother's house
- What is the complication of the story?
When the little red riding hood arrived at her grandmother's house and she meet the wolf.
- What is the moral lessons of the story?
Don't talk to strangers

Figure 4. narrative text material

Based on the interview transcription, participants mentioned that the repetition strategy assists them to comprehend the text well. It is clearly responded by the participants that they reread the text to improve their reading comprehension. The observation data revealed that students cognitively engage during the practice phase. It is indicated by students have to answer several questions from the text. Because of cognitive strategies are techniques employed by students to complete assignments or meet learning goals that are connected to cognitive actions and processes (Eker, 2012). It showed that students used their cognitive ability by using repetition strategy to help them during reading learning.

4. Students' self-elaboration creates them to connect the reading passage

Students' prior knowledge is essential to assist them to comprehend the material. It can be accomplished by relating the previous knowledge to existing the material. It illustrated by participants from the interview transcript as follow:



Figure 5. Expansion stage

“Yes, I relate to the previous information, because of previously I have known the stories in the text from the teacher and I have been told but not all of the texts I know.” (P1)

“Yes, I connect to the prior knowledge because of previously I read the story in a fairy tale book, even though I only well-known with the certain stories.” (P4)

The interview transcription showed that students connect their previous information to the material during expansion phase. Students claimed that previous experience help them to comprehend the text. It is also supported by participants 3 and 5. However, there is a participant who did not relate her previous information as she reading process.

Based on observation data, students engage cognitively to complete their tasks. In the expansion stage, the presented material was a familiar fairy tale for the participants. It allows students used their cognitive ability by relating their previous information to the text. It indicates that students used an elaboration technique that involved connecting previously learned content to recently learned material or connecting recent learned material to prior personal experiences (Tunga, 2021). It can be concluded that students' self-elaboration creates them connect their prior information to the reading passage. The results obtained from this study also support the results of research conducted by Tawarik, et al. (2021), Marimuthu, et al., (2016), Adıgüzel & Gürses (2013), and Prakoso et al. (2016) which states that the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) has an effect on the ability to read comprehension.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding, it can be inferred that students engaged cognitively in CALLA-based instruction-supported narrative reading text. The researchers found that students have attention to their reading learning activity during the presentation phase. Students were fully immersed in a learning activity through focus and concentration on the material and interactive classroom. Another finding during the practice stage that dictionary builds students' resource management learning. Students engaged cognitively through managing resources from the dictionary to help them comprehend the unfamiliar words. Moreover, the repetition strategy reinforces students' reading comprehension during the practice phase. It indicates students used strategy to finish the task through related cognitive process and actions. In addition, students' self-elaboration creates them to connect the reading passage. Students involve mental effort to connect their previous information to recent material.

Based on the conclusion, there are some recommendations, it is recommended for English teachers to apply CALLA-based instruction as a reading teaching and learning model. It was very beneficial for learners to help them easily comprehend the reading passage. For future research, the findings of this study can be used as an additional reference with different materials and design.

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