

Implementing Microlearning Strategy in Teaching Reading Comprehension Skill

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Abstract

The concept of microlearning strategy is considered helpful to accommodate the modern phenomenon where students have difficulty to stay focus on a thing for a long time. Teaching reading comprehension has become an endless topic to be integrated with various strategies to support students in understanding texts. This study aims to present how microlearning strategy is implemented in teaching reading comprehension skill and describing the students' perceptions on the learning process. The findings present that microlearning strategy was implemented by introducing parts of a paragraph, identifying topic sentence and supporting sentences, identifying main idea of a paragraph, paraphrasing topic sentence, identifying topic of a text, identifying answers based on the questions. Students revealed that microlearning helped them answer questions faster, described main ideas. Microlearning was also mentioned to be useful since it allowed students to study a concept in small parts with flexible time. They also mentioned that it was possible to use microlearning in learning other English skill. These showed that microlearning is recommended for the lecturers and teachers in teaching and learning activities both in the classroom and at home.

Keywords: english teaching, microlearning, reading comprehension, teaching strategy, language teaching

INTRODUCTION

Microlearning strategy has now become a popular option related to students' span of attention decrease. As stated by [1] long period of online learning system affects students' span of attention related to shorter ability to stay focus on learning activities. As proposed by [2], microlearning presents learning materials in short portions which can be done by students in short time to prevent them from long exposure on a certain topic. This leads to the implementation of this strategy on the process of teaching and learning English skill. Reading skill as one of the skills requiring students' focus and comprehension is considered worth to be supported with this strategy. As what presented by [3], teaching reading comprehension needs proper strategy to support the process and to make sure students have the ability to comprehend any information presented in the text.

Numerous researches have been conducted in microlearning to show the influences of the strategy on students' academic achievement. As conducted by [4], this strategy helps students to improve their language acquisition and retention on studying. This is supported by [5] who also show how it helps students in applying knowledge they get from learning. However, those previous studies did not mention how actually microlearning was conducted in the classroom to finally increase the students' academic progress while it is prominent to make sure that the activities were presented in small portions and topics as the characteristic of microlearning itself.

In terms of teaching reading, the skill still becomes one of lecturers and researchers focus through the integration of various strategies. A study conducted by [6] focuses on how digital text, as a part of

technological development, is implemented in the classroom while still focusing on how to help students improve their comprehension. While [7] used differentiated-instructions approach in the classroom to accommodate students' diversity. Those previous studies implemented strategies that focus on students' cognitive achievement instead of focus on the process of building the achievement. Microlearning strategy is proposed by this study in teaching reading comprehension since it emphasizes the process of building comprehension on students which is useful for their further development.

This study aims to describe how microlearning is implemented in learning activities of reading comprehension by the lecturer and to observe students' perceptions on using this strategy. The novelty presents by this research lays on the description of the strategy related to the possible learning activities. This study is expected to give insights on the educators on how microlearning is supposed to be presented to the students in the classroom and to lead them to the ability of building deep comprehension on a topic.

METHOD

This research implementing case study design to focus on deeper observation and understanding on a phenomenon. This is in line with what presented by [8] that case study aims to gather rich explanation and description by employing various methods of data collection. The instruments employed in this study were observation sheet used for gaining data on what activities conducted by the lecturer based on microlearning strategy and a set of interview questions to gather students' perceptions on their experiences using this strategy. The instruments were both validated through triangulation process. The data collected from observation sheet were validated through triangulation process and the responses from students' interview were analyzed using thematic analysis and then were validated with triangulation as well.

Observation sheet was mentioned to be effective on a case study design since it allows researcher to take not as many as data during the direct observation [9]. Thematic analysis was considered helpful to finally present the narrative data such as interview responses since it includes the process of categorizing data [10]. The respondents were 45 students of 1st semester consisting of 33 female students and 12 male students. The respondents were selected with purposive sampling technique which selected all students joining Reading Comprehension course as the respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The first finding presented was about the learning activities conducted by the lecturer in the classroom by using the microlearning strategy principles.

Table 1. Learning activities based on microlearning strategy

Activities	Time
Introducing parts of paragraph	Meeting 1
Identifying topic sentence and supporting sentences	Meeting 1
Identifying main idea of a paragraph	Meeting 2
Paraphrasing topic sentence	Meeting 3
Identifying answers for questions	Meeting 4-8

The findings above show that instead of asking students to practice their reading comprehension skill by involving them in the activities of continuously reading and answering questions, microlearning involves them in the activities of building the concept of reading comprehension itself by introducing the students to small unit of a text starting from parts of a text to parts of a paragraph. By having deep understanding on the concept, it will be easier for students to apply it to any types of text for any kinds of information, both explicit and implicit.

The second finding was related to the students' perceptions on their experiences on using microlearning.

Table 2. Students' perceptions on microlearning strategy

Themes	Frequency
Help them answer questions faster	30 responses
Help them understand the text better	28 responses
Study the concepts in flexible time	29 responses
Interested in using microlearning on other skills-learning	32 responses

From the responses, it can be viewed that students perceived microlearning as a strategy that helped them to answer the questions faster since they understand better about the materials and had already had insights on how to actually gather information from the text presented. The responses also present that students felt they could understand any texts better since they already had strong foundation on the text itself. They had longer time to connect what they read to their previous knowledge. Since microlearning presents the materials in short topic, they felt that they had flexible time to complete the assignment. They did not have to work on an assignment in a long period of learning or complete the assignment all at once. After using microlearning, most of them agreed that it was possible to use microlearning when they learn other language skill.

The findings attempt to fill the research gap presented by previous studies. The first finding is expected to answer the concepts of conducting microlearning in the class-room, or in this case, Reading Comprehension course. The second one is expected to ensure that microlearning is helpful for students with various benefits.

The description on how microlearning was employed in the classroom answers the needs of microlearning in the classroom as presented by [1] about the strategy to accommodate students' lack of attention. The small topic in each meeting that presented to students helped them build deep understanding affecting their further development of a concept. This is also in line with the characteristics of microlearning which presented by [2] that microlearning is supposed to be presented in small materials to prevent students from boredom while learning. The implementation of this strategy in teaching reading was also meant to support the needs of teaching reading strategies [3].

The concept of teaching reading is more than just building cognitive achievement but also building the enjoyment of reading itself. The students' responses in interview related to their experiences in using microlearning showing the enjoyment in reading as in line with what stated by [4]. This implementation

shows that it is possible and doable to implement microlearning on university students though most of them are high-experience students in learning English. However, employing microlearning on university level is still considered useful and helpful as what proposed by [5].

Teaching reading with microlearning helps students deal with the anxiety that usually comes while reading since they are required to read not for enjoyment but for comprehension. The flexibility of time offered by microlearning brings enjoyment to students so they think they have more time to read the text more than twice or three times. They can re-read the text as many time as they can to help them understand the text.

CONCLUSION

Microlearning strategy is worth to be implemented in the classroom by involving students in the activities of learning small concepts to bigger ones in reading comprehension skill teaching. It helps building enjoyment and confidence in students since they feel they understand text better. However, this study has limitation in terms of the duration of the observation and the small numbers of respondents. For further re-searches, it is suggested for the researchers to focus on how the strategy is implement-ed in other teaching and learning process and how the strategy can actually help students not only in academic improvement but also soft-skill one.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There is no any competing interests on the author.

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