PROBING UNDERSTANDING: EMERGENT SECOND LANGUAGE READERS' VISUAL LITERACY

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SYNOPSIS

Due to the visually saturated world we live in more children are becoming visual learners but the school curriculum is yet to acknowledge this change and a lot of literacy teaching still focuses on the ability to decode and encode printed words. There is a need then to look into the potential of visuals in the teaching of second language literacy and to acknowledge the individual differences and needs of young learners. This study was conducted to better understand emergent second language readers' visual literacy by looking at the meaning-making process that children engage in when transacting with books that consist of textual as well as visual input. Six 7-year old emergent second language readers were selected as the participants of the study and they went through individual sessions with the researcher using four types of picture books – printed picture book, wordless picture book, comic and online picture book. In the individual sessions, the young learners' interpretations of visuals and how they use visuals to interpret the words as well the story in the picture books were documented through observation, interview, video and audio recording. Data from these sources were analyzed using the constant comparative method. They were analyzed for emerging themes which were used to develop categories for tentative hypotheses that became the basis for explaining the data's meaning.

The insights gained from this study have raised some significant issues about young second language learners' visual literacy and second language literacy. Firstly, the data from the study has led to the understanding that the young learners in this study prefer visuals and use visuals in their attempt to comprehend the story in the picture books. Secondly, the data have also shown the importance of context in a child's

learning of the second language. The space that is given for the learners to explore new knowledge using what is known and what is familiar foster a sense of confidence and independence in them. Lastly, similar to other forms of literacy, the learners' visual literacy must be understood in relation to their social and cultural practices. In conclusion, the data from this study have shown that visuals are a powerful source of information in second language reading and evidently in the process of acquiring second language literacy.

MENDALAMI PEMAHAMAN: LITERASI VISUAL PEMBACA BAHASA KEDUA AWALAN

SINOPSIS

Sejajar dengan perkembangan internet dan media massa, dunia sekarang menjadi lebih visual. Kanak-kanak yang berfungsi di dalam dunia ini menjadikan mereka pelajar yang lebih mahir dalam memahami visual berbanding dengan teks. Walau bagaimana pun, kurikulum sekolah masih belum lagi selari dengan perubahan ini dan kebanyakan pengajaran literasi masih lagi tertumpu kepada keupayaan menyahkod dan mengekod teks bercetak. Oleh itu, terdapat satu keperluan untuk melihat kepada keupayaan penggunaan visual dalam pembelajaran literasi bahasa kedua dan melihat perbezaan serta keperluan individu dalam pembelajaran ini.

Kajian ini dijalankan untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang literasi visual pembaca bahasa kedua awalan. Pemahaman ini diperolehi dengan melihat kepada proses kanak-kanak memahami buku-buku yang mengandungi input visual dan teks. Enam orang kanak-kanak berumur 7 tahun yang juga merupakan pembaca awalan bahasa kedua dipilih sebagai peserta kajian. Kanak-kanak ini menjalani sesi individu bersama penyelidik menggunakan empat jenis buku bergambar – buku bergambar bercetak, buku bergambar tanpa perkataan, komik, dan buku bergambar atas talian. Di dalam setiap sesi individu ini, bagaimana peserta kajian mentafsir visual serta menggunakan visual untuk mentafsirkan perkataan serta cerita di dalam buku-buku bergambar yang dinyatakan didokumentasikan melalui pemerhatian, temubual, serta rakaman video dan audio. Data dari sumber-sumber ini dianalisa dengan menggunakan kaedah perbandingan malar. Data dianalisa untuk kemunculan tema-tema di mana tema-

tema ini kemudian digunakan untuk membentuk kategori-kategori. Kategori-kategori ini kemudian digunakan untuk menjana hipotesis tentatif yang menjadi dasar untuk menjelaskan makna data.

Dapatan yang diperolehi daripada kajian ini telah menunjukkan bahawa kanak-kanak di dalam kajian ini lebih gemar menggunakan input visual berbanding teks apabila mereka cuba untuk memahami cerita di dalam buku-buku bergambar yang digunakan. Dapatan daripada kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa konteks adalah satu faktor yang penting di dalam proses pembelajaran literasi bahasa kedua kanak-kanak. Konteks pembelajaran yang memberikan ruang kepada kanak-kanak untuk meneroka pengetahuan baru dengan menggunakan apa yang mereka ketahui dapat menerapkan rasa keyakinan dan kebebasan di dalam kanak-kanak ini. Akhir sekali, data daripada kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa sama seperti pembelajaran literasi yang lain, pembelajaran literasi visual kanak-kanak juga harus difahami bersama dengan konteks sosial dan budaya kanak-kanak ini. Melalui pemahaman-pemahaman ini, dapatlah dirumuskan bahawa kajian ini telah menunjukkan bahawa visual adalah satu sumber maklumat yang signifikan dalam proses memahami teks di dalam bahasa kedua dan seterusnya membantu dalam penguasaan literasi di dalam bahasa kedua.

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CONTENTS

Page

Acknowledgements

Synopsis i

List of Contents v

List of Tables ix

List of Figures x

List of Appendix xi

Chapter 1 Introduction 1

Background of the Study 6

Picture books and Visual literacy 8

Statement of the Problem 12

Significance of the Study 16

Objectives of the Study 18

Research Questions 18

Theoretical Framework 19

Limitations of the Study 28

Definition of Terms 29

Chapter 2 Literature Review 32

Introduction 32

Children's Cognitive Development 32

Literacy and Construction of Inner Control 35

Literacy and Socio-cultural Contexts 36

Multiliteracies and Second Language Contexts 41

Reading and Interaction 42

Reading and Writing 43

Reading and Drawing 46

Reading and Picture Books 48

Reading and Visual Literacy 51

Word and Image Interactions 53

Imagery and Verbal Processes 55

Conclusions 60

Chapter 3 Methodology 61

Introduction 61

Research Design 61

Rationale for Using the Qualitative Approach 62

Case Study 65

Research Procedures 68

Researcher's Role 70

Selection of Site and Participants 71

Data Collection 72

Data Analysis 87

Validity and Reliability 88

Ethical Issues 90

Initial Encounter with the Context 91

Conclusions 94

Chapter 4 Findings 95

Introduction 96

Organization of the Findings 98

Part 1 100

Summary of the Findings for Part 1 135

Part 2 136

Profile of Learners 136

LEARNER 1 137

Family Background 137

School Background 140

Reading Background 142

Criteria for Selection 143

Sessions with Haikal 144

Haikal's Evolvement as a Reader 171

Haikal as a Teacher 173

LEARNER 2 176

Family Background 176

School Background 176

Reading Background 177

Criteria for Selection 178

Sessions with Shirena 178

Shirena's Evolvement as a Reader 209

Shirena as a Teacher 210

Conclusions 211

Chapter 5 Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations 216

Summary of Research Findings 216

Implications and Recommendations 229

Limitations 237

Conclusions 239

References 241

Appendices

LIST OF FIGURES

		Page
Figure 1.1	Theoretical Framework of the Study	20
Figure 3.1	Overview of Research Design of the Study	67
Figure 3.2	Work Process of the Fieldwork	69
Figure 3.3	Literacy Development Cycle (Unsworth, 2000)	74
Figure 3.4	List of Picture Books	75
Figure 3.5	A Brief Description of the Three Sessions Conducted for Each Type of Picture Book	77
Figure 4.1	Overview of Chapter 4	95
Figure 4.2	Plan for Study on the Participants' Visual Literacy Development	96
Figure 4.3	Process of Generating Data	99
Figure 4.4	Emergent Second Language Visual Literacy Practices	213

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table 4.1	Family Background and School Background of Participants	101
Table 4.2	Reading Background and Criteria for Selection as Participants	103
Table 4.3.1	Sessions Using Printed Picture Book (`Gorilla' by Anthony Browne)	106
Table 4.3.2	Sessions Using Wordless Picture Book ('Flotsam' by David Weisner)	110
Table 4.3.3	Sessions Using Comic (`Fee, Fi, Fo, Fudd' by Bill Matheny)	115
Table 4.3.4	Sessions Using Online Picture Book (`The little red hen' by Michael Ramirez [Starfall.com])	120
Table 4.4	Summary of Strengths as Visual Readers	125
Table 4.5	Participants' Evolvement as Readers	130
Table 4.6	What is Understood of the Emergent Second Language Readers	132

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	Excerpts of transcriptions and fieldnotes on participants' family background and school background.
Appendix B	Excerpts of transcriptions and fieldnotes on participants' reading background and criteria for selection as participants
Appendix C	Excerpts of transcriptions of sessions using picture book
Appendix D	Excerpts of transcriptions, observation tables, and drawing produced by participants in sessions using wordless picture book
Appendix E	Excerpts of transcriptions, observation tables, and drawing produced by participants in sessions using comic
Appendix F	Excerpts of transcriptions, observation tables, fieldnotes and drawing produced by participants in sessions using online picture book
Appendix G	Excerpts of fieldnotes on the participants' evolvement as emergent second language readers
Appendix H	Excerpts of observation tables and fieldnotes on what is understood of the emergent second language readers
Appendix I	Visual literacy tests
Appendix J	Education, Planning, Research and Development Unit (EPRD) and State Education Department Approval Letters
Appendix K	Consent letter