
ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTY IN UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH PROVERBS

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Abstract: Proverb is one of the oldest literary works in the world. Proverb contains messages, values, morals, and advice that can give meaning to life. Many students have difficulty understanding the meaning of a proverb, so the teacher needs to provide appropriate teaching regarding the meaning conveyed in a proverb. This study aims to analyze students' difficulties in understanding the meaning of English proverbs when studying English literature. The method used in this research is qualitative through a descriptive approach. Participants in this study consisted of 35 students who studied English proverbs in English literature class. Data were obtained through documentation, observation, and interviews regarding the difficulty in understanding the meaning of English proverbs. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The results of the study show that students are still confused about explaining the implied meaning of a proverb. This is because knowledge about the pragmatic meaning and sociolinguistic meaning of figurative sentences is still low, so the teacher needs to explain in detail the implied meaning of a proverb. Then, so that students can better get the message conveyed, the teacher asks students to provide examples of these proverbs in everyday life so that the value or advice from a proverb can be used as knowledge in living life.

Keywords: English proverb, difficulty.

INTRODUCTION

When learning new language, the learning will explore various aspects of the language starting from the four basic expertise in speaking, listening, reading, and writing to the cultural elements that affect the emergence of the language. Through language learning someone will be able to continue to try to improve how the language arises into an inseparable part of everyday life. Learning language means that it will also learn the elements of the language (Prayudha & Pradana, 2023). In this study foreign language learning, namely English is the main discussion to be studied more deeply. Furthermore, now English is not just learned for academic purposes, for example at school or in college, but rather its broader use provides a better opportunity to develop the ability to communicate to establish relationships globally. Many things are encountered using

English, for example when we play social media, using a technology, instructions of a product or ad to the bulletin board that sometimes tucked words or sentences using English (Prayudha & Solihah, 2023). This will provide an opportunity for everyone to be accustomed to dealing with English so that its use and use in daily life will have an impact on the daily course of the individual. Furthermore, when someone is faced in a situation where there are English words or sentences it is necessary to be able to understand its meaning so that it will not be wrong in understanding and interpreting the message conveyed. Here, it is necessary to have a good language understanding ability so that individuals can easily carry out the contents of the message conveyed. Having the ability to understand and master foreign languages is very necessary at this time because it will be easier to help carry out daily activities even though English as a foreign language but its existence is often found at any time so students really need to be given understanding and mastery of English in school or outside school. Liando et al (2022) explained that learning English is a necessity considering that international relations have no restrictions. Therefore it is necessary to be able to build good international language competencies among young people. For the academic level students should be encouraged more intensively by providing a good exposure and explanation of English material. Where as it is known that schools are the main educational institutions that provide knowledge after the family. School is a place to produce young people with a variety of expertise, abilities and good competencies in order to produce quality leaders in the future. Here, teachers at school should be able to make students feel like learning English as an international language. There is a need for changes in providing good teaching to be able to encourage students to be actively involved in teaching and learning activities.

One subject that can help students to improve English language skills is English education, besides that there are also subjects in English literature that can provide knowledge and information to students about literary works in English. In this study the researcher focused on learning English literature on English proverbs material. Proverbs is one of the oldest types of literary works in the world. Proverbs is a literary work that has messages, values and advice contained therein, or also Proverbs has the meaning to criticize something. Almost all over the world has its own proverbs, for example in Indonesia there is a proverbs that sound “*air tenang menghanyutkan*”, Or there are also proverbs in English that sound “*better safe than sorry*”. Each of these proverbs has its own meaning and

meaning that can be understood and taken wisdom. In addition, there are also proverbs who have the same meaning both in Indonesian and in English, for example “*buah jatuh tak jauh dari pohonya*” where in English it is called “*the apple doesn't fall far from the tree*”. Both of these proverbs even though they come from two different languages and cultures but have the same meaning where the real meaning is an attitude or character of a child will not be far from the nature or character of his parents. From these two examples of proverbs can teach students about the values and messages conveyed as a form of advice and suggestions for something. Proverb is one of the cultural elements in language games so that when learning new language it will also learn its culture (Suchona & Shorna, 2019). In Connected with English Literature Study Students will learn various types of proverbs in English. By studying this material explains and provides an understanding of the culture delivered in English so that students will learn and compare the meaning contained in the proverbs.

However, in fact in the learning process there are still many students who have difficulty understanding the meaning, meaning and purpose of English proverb which causes students to not be able to maximize understanding of the meaning conveyed, causing students to improve the ability to speak English on the material proverbs. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the difficulties faced by students in understanding the meaning of English proverbs learning.

METHOD

The Current Study uses a qualitative method to get information about the difficulties faced by students when studying English Proverbs. Qualitative research is one type of research that can review data in the form of opinions, perspectives or opinions about the object being studied (Cresswell, 2013). Where in this study students' opinions in the form of difficulties faced in proverb learning become the main data in the study. In addition, according to Prayudha (2023) In qualitative research the implementation procedure in the form of a picture or real condition during the study can be used as research data, where all existing activities are displayed decide to inform the reader about the real situation. Furthermore, to make it easier to understand the data obtained by researchers using a descriptive approach in presenting data. Descriptive approach is one way to describe the findings in the form of deep, clear, and real situation found in the field. Sugiyono (2014) Explain that the

descriptive approach is a way of conveying findings by explaining clearly and without engineering. Thus, this research analyzes student opinions on the difficulties encountered when studying English Proverbs.

Furthermore, this research was conducted for one month when students study material about proverb in English literary choice subjects. Participants in this study consisted of 35 students who studied English. Then, the data is obtained through learning observation, activity documentation and observations of several students related to the difficulties faced while learning English Proverbs. Observation activities carried out when learning English Proverb are related to the situation, conditions, students' understanding of understanding the material, and the learning atmosphere. Interviews were conducted semi-structured related to the understanding of English Proverbs material. Then, the analysis data through the stages at proposed by Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2013), they are; data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Learning English Literature at school is one of the chosen subjects taken by students at SMAN 02 Bengkulu City. This course studies various literary works in English. One of the material learned by students is about English Proverbs. Proverbs is one of the oldest literary works that contain values, advice and meaningful messages so that they can be used as criticism of something. Language explains how values and norms apply to an area (Moran, 2001). In proverb learning students will learn from figurative words, sentence structure to the implicit meaning in the sentence. Research was conducted for one month by observing and interviewing students when studying the material proverbs. From the observations it was found that this material was one of the fun materials to be studied. Students tend to be enthusiastic about listening or learning about proverbs in English. Where students' curiosity is so great when given a proverb in English. There is an agenda to spread understanding related to procedures, habits of learning foreign languages and cultures so it is necessary to filter material that is appropriate for learning material (Tajeddin, & Teimournezhad, 2015). Proverbs learning makes students so eager to be seen from the learning process given by students always ask questions and think so hard and critically to find answers to what is meant by a proverb. In addition, students are also able to be actively involved in implementing learning this can be seen from when the teacher tells students to read and

answer the proverb students are enthusiastic about giving their opinion to the meaning contained. In addition, when giving the meaning contained in the Proverb the teacher asks students to link into the example of daily life so that the meaning conveyed can be linked to real life.

However, the learning that went very enthusiastically turned out to only make students feel curious about the intention of the proverbs, while the understanding of students in understanding the meaning of Proverbs is very lacking. There are still many students who guess or guess the meaning of a proverbs incorrectly. Then, students are also still a lot of confusion in getting the intrinsic meaning of a proverb so it is necessary for teachers to help students get the actual meaning. This event certainly will not have a good impact on students' understanding of English Proverbs because students will have difficulty if they meet with new proverbs and there are no teachers who explain the meaning. Things like this need to be anticipated by the teacher by emphasizing meaningful learning about Proverbs. The teacher can explain the elements, structure and pattern of figurative sentences so that students are able to understand the true meaning in interpreting a proverb so that students not only guess the meaning but are able to get the true meaning of the proverb. The teacher is also very necessary to give a clear picture of the meaning of the proverb and ask students to associate this meaning by giving concrete examples in everyday life so that students will continue to remember and understand when the proverb can be used in everyday life. The teacher must be able to provide a clear explanation so that students do not have different interpretations (Prayudha, 2023). It is very necessary for English teachers to be able to design a comfortable and pleasant learning atmosphere when giving material proverb because when studying this material not only gives a statement about proverb but must also be able to interpret the message or advice in the proverb so that it can be understood and used in the situation or the right moment for students.

There are several difficulties faced by students when understanding the meaning of proverb directly, including; Lack of understanding of the meaning of figurative or pragmatic meaning and the meaning of sociolinguistic that makes it difficult for students to understand the meaning of the use of the word proverb, whereas when learning language in a proverb there will certainly be a word game that gives beauty in delivering a message. Furthermore, the lack of understanding vocabulary also makes it difficult for students to get the meaning of a proverbs, even though they understand in translating words for word

but will have difficulty understanding the words connected into a sentence, therefore the teacher's role in giving instructions and clear explanations makes it a point important in learning. The task of the teacher is clearly explained about what is meant by a proverb and then asks students to link to concrete examples in everyday life.



Figure 1. Proverb learning through the use of Kahoot.

The picture above illustrates proverb learning using the Kahoot application where students feel very enthusiastic about carrying out and following learning in a fun way. Proverbs learning makes students feel curious about the meaning and meaning of a proverb so that students' attention when the teacher explains the purpose of a proverb becomes greatly increased, especially when the teacher asks students to link with daily examples to make students feel very active in conveying their opinions. However, as it has been mentioned that students have a very low understanding if asked to provide opinions related to the meaning of proverbs without help and explanation from the teacher. When students have limitations in understanding something maka the teacher needs to guide and make a clear explanation (Zubaidi et al., 2021). This has a very bad impact for students' knowledge in understanding proverbs so that teachers must find the right ways or methods so that students have good competence in understanding the true meaning of proverbs. The teacher has a great responsibility to form interesting and fun teaching so that students can wisely in understanding the meaning of a proverb.

Furthermore, to get student opinions related to the difficulties faced when understanding the meaning of English proverb, interviews have been held with several students. Interviews are carried out semi -structured and as for the results of the following interviews:

How do you feel when learning English proverbs?

"When I studied English Proverbs, I felt very curious about the meaning and meaning contained in the proverb. In addition, I feel curious whether there is a proverb that is the same between Indonesia and in English. When learning takes place, I feel very happy, it turns out that understanding proverb from abroad can also add to my insight about understanding moral messages, advice and values contained in the proverb so that I become more understanding and have broader knowledge knowledge ".

Do you find difficulties in understanding English Proverbs?

"Yes, when I understand an English proverb sometimes I am confused to interpret the truth/intrinsic meaning. I am used to understanding word for word so that the meaning I understand is only the meaning of semantics. In addition, the use of figurative words also makes it difficult for me to get the true meaning and I need to ask questions and wait for an explanation from the teacher in order to understand the meaning of proverbs clearer ".

How do you understand the intrinsic meaning of a proverb?

"Usually when the teacher tells to understand the meaning of a proverb I translate word for word and associate it into a complex sentence and draw conclusions in its meaning. I am accustomed to understanding the meaning of an English proverb through the meaning of words and that is true, but if the proverb uses figurative words it takes my time to digest its intrinsic meaning and sometimes waiting for an explanation from the teacher to be more clearly understanding the meaning ".

In your opinion, how should you learn English Proverbs to make it easier to understand it?

"Actually learning English taught in class is very fun. The teacher uses a fun way and is able to make me feel more motivated to participate in learning in the classroom. In addition, some learning activities are also very fun starting from guessing meaning, guessing gestures and so on. However, my

understanding of the meaning of pragmatic and sociolinguistic meaning is still very lacking so that it has not been able to maximally get the true meaning of the proverb. "

From the results of the interview it can be concluded that there are still many students who tend to find it difficult to understand the meaning of English proverb based on the actual meaning, because almost most English proverbs using figurative words that really need to have a deeper understanding to get the actual meaning. In addition, the language of a proverbs is also sometimes influenced by the situation, time and environment of the conversation so that students sometimes have not yet maximally understand the meaning of pragmatic and sociolinguistic. Here, teachers need to encourage students to get used to listening and understanding English proverbs to get used to and can use it in the right situation in everyday life.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

English Proverbs is one of the studies learned in English literature subjects. Understanding the meaning of English proverb requires hard effort because sometimes using figurative words that cannot be interpreted only with words and therefore it is necessary for teachers to provide a good and clear explanation related to the meaning and message conveyed from a proverb. In addition, English proverb learning also not only understands the meaning but students must be able to link the meaning of the proverbs with the experience or examples of daily life so that students are able to get a concrete example of the use of the proverb. However, in fact there are still many students who find it difficult to get an understanding of the meaning clearly from an English proverb. The difficulties that students face include the lack of understanding of pragmatic meanings and the meaning of sociolinguistics of figurative sentences so that it is difficult for students to understand the meaning, values and advice of a proverb. However, to overcome this problem the teacher has a great role in explaining the intent and message conveyed by giving examples or parables so that students do not misinterpret in understanding the meaning of a proverb. Furthermore, researchers who are interested in the topic of this research can try to find the right method in providing teaching about proverb so that students can easily understand the meaning of proverb with fun and interesting learning.

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