

CHAPTER II

READING COMPREHENSION BY USING A SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

METHOD

A. Reading

Reading is one of four basic skills in English. Finochiaro and Bonomo (in Tarigan, 1975:8), stated that “Reading is bringing meaning to and getting meaning from printed or written material”. Another expert, Nunan (2003:68) defined reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from the text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. So, based on explanation, reading can be defined as a process transferring idea by using the knowledge of the reader to know meaning from words and sentences in printed or written material. By reading, students can comprehend about information in the text. Reading also getting a message from the text, it means the reader can understand the purpose of a message. However, reading is actually a complex process as described by Ruddel & Unrau (in Schoebanch, Greenleaf, Cziko, and Hurwitz: 1999:44):

As experienced readers read, they begin to generate a mental representation, or gist, of the text, which serves as an evolving framework for understanding subsequent parts of the text. As they read further, they test this evolving meaning and monitor their understanding, paying attention to inconsistencies that arise as they interact with the text. If they notice they are losing the meaning as they read, they draw on a variety of strategies to read just their understandings....

In addition to Ruddel and Unrau, Goodman (in Lin, 2004:22) states that “Reading is not the process of passive decoding and reading literally any

more”. Rather it is the process of active ‘guessing – confirming’ and interaction between the readers and the reading contents. Furthermore, the reading process means an active cognitive system operating on printed material in order to comprehend the text.

As the definition of reading has progressed from a perception of an accumulation of isolated skills to a whole process of interrelated skills and strategies, readers are assumed to become more active during reading. In school, compared to other skills, reading may be considered as the most frequently used skill among English Foreign Language students. In language learning setting, reading is the most important source of language learning (Alderson, 1984). To communicate efficiently, learners need the four English skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, from all of these four skills, reading is regarded as the most vital and necessary for students in both a classroom context and an extracurricular environment.

B. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. According to Panel (2010:05), “Reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language”. Comprehension is what most people think what reading is. This is because comprehension is the main reason why we read. It is the aspect of reading that all of the others serve to create. Reading comprehension is understanding what a text is all about. It is more

than just understanding words in isolation. It is putting them together and using prior knowledge to develop meaning.

Beside that, King and Stanley in Darlis (2004:8) stated reading has five components contained in reading texts, which are appropriate with the junior high school curriculum. They are:

1. Finding factual information

Factual information require readers to scan specific details. The factual information questions are generally prepared for students and those which appear with WH question word. There are many types of questions; reason, purpose, result, time, comparison, etc in which of the answer can be found in the text.

2. Finding main ideas

Recognition of the main idea of a paragraph is very important because it helps readers not only understand the paragraph on the first reading, but also helps readers to remember the content later. The main idea of a paragraph is what the paragraph develops. An efficient reader understands not only the ideas but also the relative significance as expressed by the researcher. An efficient reader understand not only the ideas but also their relative significance, as expressed by the author, in other words, some of the ideas as super ordinate while other subordinate.

3. Finding the meaning of vocabulary in context

It means that the reader could develop his or her guessing ability to the word which is not familiar with him or her, by relating the close meaning

of unfamiliar words to the text and the topic of the text that is read. The words have nearly equivalent meaning when it has it or nearly the same meaning as another word.

4. Identifying references

In English, as in other language, it would be clumsy and boring to have and repeat the same word or phrase every time you used it. Instead of repeating the same word or phrase several times, after it has been used we can usually refer to it than repeat it. For this purpose, we use reference words. Recognizing reference words and being able to identify the word to which they refer to will help the reader understand the reading passage. Reference words are usually short and very frequently pronoun, such as; it, she, he, they, this, etc.

5. Making inferences

Inference is a skill where the reader has to be able to read between lines. King and Stanley divide into two main attentions, draw logical inferences and make accurate prediction.

Based on some theories above, the researcher can infer that reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from the text. Because the researcher's aim is the goal of reading comprehension, the researcher use construct meaning as the goal of reading comprehension that has correlation with the student's ability to comprehend a reading text and decode words accurately and quickly when reading process. It means that constructing meaning has a link with main idea, factual or detail information, the meaning

of vocabulary, reference, and inference from the text, where all of that is used by the researcher to identify students' understanding in reading comprehension.

C. Recount Text

Recount text is one of the text that should be mastered by the eighth grade students of junior high school. Recount text tells about something that happen in the past. The purposes of recount text is to list and describe past experience by retelling event in which it happen (chronological order). It is to give the audience a description of what happened and when it happened. Recount text is written to retell events with the purpose of either informing or entertaining the readers. The detail in recount text can include what happened, who was involved, where it took place, when it happened, and why it occurred.

According to Derewianka (1995:45) there are three types of recount text: personal recount, factual recount, and imaginative recount. Personal recount usually retells an event that the researcher was personally involved in. Factual recount is kind of recording of an activity like police report, news report, and science experiment report. Imaginative recount is a writing of imaginary role and giving detail of an event. There are some kinds of text belong to recount, they are personal experience, news report, historical books, biographies, autobiographies, and diary entries.

In recount text, there are generic structure and language feature as follows:

1. Generic Structure of Recount Text

A recount text has certain elements as follows:

- a. Orientation: Introducing the participants, place and time;
- b. Events: Describing series of event that happened in the past;
- c. Reorientation: It is optional. Stating personal comment of the researcher to the story.

2. Language Feature of Recount Text

- a. Introducing personal participant : I, we, my group, etc;
- b. Using chronological connection : then, after that, first, etc;
- c. Using linking verb : was, were, became etc;
- d. Using action verb : went, saw, bought etc;
- e. Using simple past tense.

D. A Small Group Discussion Method

1. Definition of Small Group Discussion

Small group discussion is one of method that can used in teaching and learning process. The researcher used the implementation of small-group discussion as the variety in teaching methods in improving students' reading comprehension. First, it is necessary to understand each term in small group discussion method. According to Forsyth (2006: 3) "A group is defined as two or more individuals who are connected to one another by social relationships". In a group, the individuals in the same place will have interaction among the members. There is face to face communication that happen in a group.

Johnson & Johnson (1997: 13) cited in Mery stated that “Small group is two or more individuals in face to face interaction, each aware of their positive interdependence as they strive to achieve mutual goals, each aware of his or her membership in the group, and each aware of others who belong to the group”. Small group is one of the methods that promotes participation and interaction that can be used in the classroom. Working together in groups can give the students the opportunity to learn from each other.

If the class is a large one, a good way to make students can understand a text quickly is by dividing them into a small group. Thereby, they can discuss about the text in their own group. Kildavatter (1996: 242) cited in Hastoyo stated that “A small-group discussion is dividing the large classroom into small groups of students to achieve specific objectives permits students to assume more responsibility for their own learning, develop social and leadership skills and become involved in an alternative instructional approach”. Small group discussion that consists of small numbers of members work together to achieve their group’s goal by sharing the idea, cooperative and communicative each other.

2. The Procedures of Small Group Discussion

Steps of discussion are highly dependent on the type of discussion that is used. It is because each type has its own characteristics. The differences in characteristics make the implementation of steps or procedures is different from one another. Nevertheless, generally for the

requirement of learning process in the classroom, the steps of small group discussion can be implemented with the simpler procedures. Moedjiono, et al (1996) says that the general steps in the implementation of discussion are as follows:

- a. Formulate the problem clearly.
- b. By the teacher's guidance, students make the discussion groups, choose the leader's discussion (leader, secretary, reporting) arrange seat, room, facilities, and so on appropriate with the objective of discussion. The task of the leader's discussion include: (1) organizing and directing the discussions, (2) set the "traffic" discussion.
- c. Conducting the discussions. Each member of discussion should know exactly what will be discussed and how to discuss. The discussion should be run in a free situation, where each member knows that they have the same right to speak.
- d. Report the results of their discussion. The results are responded by all students, especially from the other groups. Teachers give a reason or explanation for the report.
- e. Finally, students record the results of discussion, and the teacher collects report of the result discussion from each group.

3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Small Group Discussion

According to Brewer (1997: 27), when using small group discussion there are advantages and disadvantages of this instructional strategy.

Advantages of small group discussion:

- a. All participants in the group can participate.
- b. It is a good way to get participants interested in a topic.
- c. Participants may more easily understand another participant's explanation than a presenter's explanation.
- d. The presenter can identify participants who need assistance.
- e. The presenter can identify individual opinions about the topic.
- f. It helps the participant see relationships among ideas or concepts related to the topic at hand.

Disadvantages of small group discussion:

- a. It is time-consuming.
- b. Some participants in the group may do all the talking.
- c. It involves less presenter involvement than other methods.
- d. The discussion can easily get off track.

In all small group discussion designs, however, the key to success will be in the instructors' direction to the group. They need to be clear on what they are to be doing. The instructors should be aware of what goes wrong during the implementation of small group discussion in a classroom activity. The instructor should be able to manage the time of discussion

and should also pay attention to the individual participant in group. The students should be made more aware of their role as individual learners who study and work in a team so that it encourages them to be active and cooperative during the activity.

E. Relevant Research

Implementation research related to objectivity about Small Group Discussion method and teaching reading, some previous studies can be a comparison with research conducted by the researcher. According to Ria (2007) with the title “The Teaching of Reading Comprehension by Using A Small Group Discussion At The First Year Students of SMP 1 Wanadadi In The Academic Year of 2006/2007” stated that implementation of Small Group Discussion, make the situation in this class was very enjoyable, where the students freely communicated with each other and they were more enthusiastic when they were joining this class.