

## **CHAPTER II**

### **READING COMPREHENSION AND SCHEMA ACTIVATION STRATEGY**

#### **A. The Nature of Reading Comprehension**

##### **1. Definition of Reading and Reading Comprehension**

Reading is an important language skill that needs to be learned by the students in order to make their language skill improved. Reading skill is essential whether in the target of source language. If the students read the text in their own language, it is not really difficult for them to read it. But, when they read it in the foreign language they have difficulties in reading.

According to Urquhart and Weir in Grabe (2009:14), reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form via the medium of print. Then, according to Burt, Peyton & Adams (2003:34), reading is also seen as a process of gathering visual information from the text and analyzing that information through different systems (the brain). From those explanations, it can be concluded that the reading is the process which to get the information and receiving the information from the text through brain. Furthermore, Alderson (2000:25) suggests that reading involves a social context. He suggests that reading is socially

practiced. In short, reading is not an isolated activity. It is usually  
conducted for

various purposes in social contexts. Therefore, the social context contributes to a reader's ideas of what is the meaning of their activity (reading). In other words, the statement explains that the term reading can be defined as an active process of getting meaning intended by the author from printed or written verbal symbols.

According to Cline, Johnston and King (2006:2), reading is the process of deriving meaning from the text. Reading can be defined as essentially a process of getting important and meaningful information from written language, Goodman in Burt, Peyton, and Adams (2003:33). Moreillon (2007:10) states that reading is making meaning from print and from visual information. Reading becomes the main aim of language teaching which are skill and part of the teaching program. Its purposes are to make the students can read and understand about the text material correctly.

Reading comprehension is the ability to read text, process it and understand its meaning. Lenz (2005:1), states that reading comprehension is the process of constructing meanings from the text. It means that the reading comprehension process involves the reader's ability to make relationship between their background knowledge and their purpose of reading with the meanings of the text. Then, its process results a meaning of the text, which is being understood by the reader.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that reading is the process of receiving, interpreting and constructing meanings from

the text, involves the reader's ability to make relationship between their background knowledge and their purpose of reading with the meanings from the text.

## **2. Component of Reading Comprehension**

In this research there are some components of reading comprehension that need to be understood by the student to make them get the better comprehension when they are reading a text. According to King and Stanly in Karoline (2013) that there are five components of Reading comprehension may help the students to read carefully:

### **a. Finding factual information**

Finding factual information is one component of reading comprehension that is suitable for elementary school students. Factual information requires 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.

### **b. Finding main idea**

Recognition of the main idea of a paragraph is very important because it helps the students not only understand the paragraph on the first reading, but also helps the students to remember the content later. The main idea is not only in the

beginning of the paragraph, but also in the middle and at the end of the paragraph.

c. Finding the meaning of certain word

It means that the readers could develop students guessing ability to the word which is not familiar with the students, 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. In the other word, the students are expected to be able to form and understand the meaning.

d. 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 use it. Instead of repeating the same word or phrases 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, this, etc.

e. Identifying inferences

Inference is a skill where the reader has to be able to read between lines. King and Stanly divide into two attentions, draw

logical inferences, and make accurate prediction. Based on definitions above, it can be concluded that reading is an interactive and a thinking process of transferring printed letters into meaning in order to communicate certain message between the writer and the reader. In reading actively a reader brings her or his background knowledge, emotion, and experience to construct his or her idea in understanding meaning of the text.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the component of reading comprehension are finding the factual information, main idea, vocabulary, the reference and inference.

## **B. Schema Activation Strategy**

### **1. Definition of Schema Activation Strategy**

Teaching students in the classroom, the teacher should have some strategies to make the students interested to learn. One of the strategies is schema activation strategy. According to Brown (2006:2), prior knowledge is organized in schemata (the plural form of schema): abstract, generalized mental representations of our experience that are available to help us understand new experience. Vacca and Vacca (2002:20), schema activation is the mechanism in which people access what they know and match it to the information in a text. Then Richards and Schmidt (2002: 115) classify the term schema into two types. They are content schema and formal schema. Content schema

refers to background knowledge about the content of a text, depending  
on

whether it is a text about earthquake, economy, art or cooking. Furthermore, formal schema is knowledge about formal, rhetorical, organizational structure of different kinds of texts, such as whether the text is a simple story, a scientific text, a news report, etc. Knowledge of both types of schemata influence how a reader understands a text.

Keene and Zimmerman in Moreillon (2007:21) suggest that readers make three types of connection in building their schema. They are text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world.

#### 1) Text-to-self Connection

Text-to-self connections are highly personal connections that a reader makes between a piece of reading material and the reader's own experiences or life. An example of a text-to-self connection might be, "This story reminds me of a vacation we took to my grandfather's farm." Text-to-self connections require that educators know the children in their care and be familiar with students' home lives and local communities.

#### 2) Text-to-text Connection

Text-to-text connections are the readers gain insight during reading by thinking about how the information they are reading connects to other familiar text. Readers are reminded of other things that they have read other books by the same author, stories from a similar genre, or perhaps on the same topic. "This

character has the same problem that I read about in a story last year,” would be an example of a text-to-text connection.

### 3) Text-to-world Connection

Text-to-world connections are the larger connections that a reader brings to a reading situation. We learn about things through television, movies, magazines, and newspapers. Often it is the text-to-world connections that teachers are trying to enhance when they teach lessons in science, social studies, and literature. An example of a text-to-world connection would be when a reader says, "I saw a program on television that talked about things described in this article."

In addition, Zhao and Zhu (2012:115-116) propose pre-reading activities, while-reading activities, and post-reading activities in schema activation. In line with Au, Willis (2008:130) also gives a set of strategies to activate prior knowledge. It consists of: activate students' background knowledge about interesting topic and then let the students know something about the topic. Furthermore, Willis (2008:130) gives the suggestion about the use of pictures as media to support the effort to activate students' background knowledge.

Based on explanation above, it can be concluded that building schema is an essential step in helping students to comprehend text easily. Such as activities text-to-self connection, text-to-text connection, text-to-world connection, accessing prior knowledge and

exploring the keywords. In addition, such media as pictures and video can also be used to support the schema activation strategy.

## **2. Procedure of Schema Activation Strategy**

In the applying of schema activation strategy, there are steps that need to be paid attention in order to make the teaching learning process can run well. According Au in Ajideh (2003:7) and Willis (2008:131-132), Schema Activation Strategy contains into the following steps:

- a) Building interest and attention
- b) Accessing prior knowledge and exploring keywords
- c) Building connection between students' prior knowledge and the new material
- d) Comprehending the new material

Those steps were chosen because they was appropriate to be implemented in the reading process just like the steps appropriate for pre reading phase recommended by Willis (2008: 132-133).

## **3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Schema Activation Strategy**

Every strategy has its own advantages and disadvantages. According to Anderson and Pearson (1984) the advantages and disadvantages of schema activation strategy are follows:

- a. Advantages
  - 1) It helps students make inferences about their reading.

- 2) It directs attention to information that is important in a knowledge domain.

3) It provides a plan for recall.

b. Disadvantages

1) It takes too long time for students to make their schema

## **C. The Nature of Descriptive Text**

### **1. Definition of Descriptive Text**

Descriptive text is a kind of a text describe something, someone or place. According to D'Angelo (1980) descriptive text is “a way of picturing images verbally in speech or writing and of arranging those images in some kind of logical or association pattern”. A descriptive text is considered as the simplest and easiest writing form compared to narrative, recount, or procedure, particularly for the beginning writers (Ellis et. al., 1989). Based on both of the arguments above, the researcher concludes that descriptive text is the simple way to describe something form compared to narrative and recount.

Moreover, descriptive text allows students to share interesting impressions of a person, a place, or an object surrounding them (Troyka, 1987). From the definition above, the researcher conclude that descriptive text is a way to share a place or an object that make the students interesting.

### **2. Generic Structure of Descriptive Text**

The descriptive text is built from two generic structures. Based on Pardiyo (2007: 33) states that write the descriptive text begins with the identification and description.

a. Identification

In the first part of the text, the reader identifies the object that will be explained. Generally, the text is started by stating the object that is the focus explanation of the text's content.

b. Description

In this part, the reader describes the object of the text. The details of the text allow the reader understanding the information to make the sense of the object in his mind.

Based on those explanation, the researcher concludes that teaching descriptive text for the students is quite simple that giving them theory and instructions, besides, it's more effectively to generate the ideas of reading comprehension.

**D. Teaching Reading Comprehension by Using Schema Activation Strategy in SMA N 1 Sungai Raya**

The procedure of using schema activation strategy in teaching reading:

1) Pre-reading Phase

- a. The teacher chooses interesting topics and presents picture/pictures related to the topic in order to attract students' attention and interest.
- b. The teacher asks some questions to the students about the picture to build their vocabulary related to the topic and the picture.

- c. The teacher presents another picture which is related to the text given with the title of the text.
- d. The teacher asks the students to predict the content of the text based on the picture and the title of the text.
- e. The teacher asks the students to write everything they have already known about the picture and the title of the text in groups.
- f. The teacher and the students discuss what the students had written.

## 2) Reading Phase

- a. The teacher asks the students to skim the text to match their prediction with the content of the text.
- b. The teacher asks the students to read the text in depth and predict the main idea of the text.
- c. The teacher asks the students to make notes about the new information they find.
- d. The teacher asks the students to read the text aloud in order to check their pronunciation.
- e. The teacher and the students discuss the students' notes.
- f. The teacher helps the students comprehending the text by discussing the content paragraph.

## 3) Post-reading Phase

The teacher aids the students' knowledge into a greater schema. It can be done through doing comprehension questions related to the text, drawing relationship (contrast and comparison) between their personal experiences and the material discussed by having a class discussion.

The activities above then were formulated into four steps. They were: a) building interest and attention, b) accessing prior knowledge and exploring key words, c) building connection between students' prior knowledge and the new material, and d) comprehending the new material.