

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter present Background of the Study, Reason for Choosing the Topic, Research Question, Objective of the Study, Hypothesis, Significance of Study, Limitation of the Study, Definition of Key Terms, and Outline of the Study.

1.1 Background of the Study

In learning English, we learn four basic skill; they are speaking, reading, writing and listening. Reading and Listening are receptive skills. “Respective skills are the way in which people extract meaning from discourse that they see or heard” (Harmer, 2001: 199). It means that people will use their knowledge that they knew before to get the best understanding when they are hear some information or read a book. While speaking and writing are productive skills. “Productive skills include a number of language production processes which have to be done through whichever medium people are working in (Harmer, 2001 :246). It means that they need other people as participants. In other words, we can say that reading and listening are they input to get some information, whereas speaking and writing are to output.

In educational field, Indonesian government sets English as compulsory foreign language subject in the schools. It is taught in formal education, officially in junior high school and senior high school, but English is also started to be given in some kindergarten and elementary school as a local subject. In order to be successful in using English for communication, students have to master four language skills, they are: speaking skill, reading skill, writing skill and listening skill.

Reading is one of English skills that students need to master, because by reading students can get information and knowledge from books, magazines, newspapers and others. In senior high school curriculum, reading is one of the competences taught to the students. In 2013 curriculum, one of the reading competences which should be learnt by the eleventh grade students is to comprehend the meaning of short functional text such as narrative text, descriptive text, recount text, news item and others.

Reading is an interactive process involving the utilization of both real world and linguistic knowledge (Nunan, 2004; Khalily & Seyvandzadeh, 2008). When we read, we read for a variety of purposes. Mostly, we read the text to learn information, perhaps most often we read for general comprehension and persisting supporting information (Murcia, 2001). This condition eventually makes teacher tend to focus on the reading skills. Therefore, teachers have to find out appropriate strategy to help the students' to improve students' reading comprehension and help them to control themselves in the easier way.

Many techniques can be applied in teaching reading. One of them is top-down reading strategy. According to Harmer (2001:201) states that in the process of top-down reader gets a general view of the passage, in many ways, understand the overall picture, so that they get the knowledge about the topic and situation, can catch the specific meaning of the most important parts of a sentences, phrases and words. In top-down processing, we draw on our intelligence and experience to understand the text (Brown, 2001:299). In the other words, to understand the text, the readers do not focus on the meaning of the reading, they include external factors such as knowledge, emotion, experience and culture which is compiled with words systematically. Therefore, the writer takes the title "the effectiveness

of using top-down reading strategy to improve students reading comprehension on descriptive text”.

1.2 Reason for Choosing the Topic

The writer chooses the topic for this research with the following consideration:

1. The students’ need a new reading model, and top-down model seems to be useful for language learning, because students have the capability to decode graphical input automatically.
2. It will build the sense of curiosity of the students to solve the problem in the material they find.
3. Using top-down strategy makes the students active in the class, so they will catch the material directly.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the writer formulates the problem as follows: “is the use of top-down reading strategy effective to improve students’ reading comprehension on descriptive text of the Eighth grade students of MTs Darul Hasanah Semarang in the academic years of 2016/2017?”

1.4 Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to find out whether or not the use of top-down reading strategy is effective to improve students’ reading comprehension on descriptive text of the Eighth grade students of MTs Darul Hasanah Semarang in the academic years of 2016/2017.

1.5 Hypotheses

According to Airasian (2001: 71) hypotheses are the researcher's expectations concerning the relationship of the variable of the study after conducting the study.

In this study, hypothesis can be formulated as follows

H_a: There is a significant difference on students' reading comprehension on descriptive text of the eighth graders of MTs Darul Hasanah Semarang between the students who were taught by using top-down reading strategy and the ones who were taught by using conventional strategy.

H₀: There is no significant difference on students' reading comprehension on descriptive text of the eighth graders of MTs Darul Hasanah Semarang between the students who were taught by using top-down reading strategy and the ones who were taught by using conventional strategy.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The writer believes that the study brings some benefits to many people. The significance of the study is divided into two parts; for the students and for the teachers.

1. For the students

For the students, using top down strategy makes the students interesting in learning English especially in reading comprehension.

It makes the students more active and creative in the class.

2. For the teacher

It is expected that, the teacher gets new strategy in teaching reading comprehension.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The limitation of the study is to make it effective and it do not make the problem to be wider. In this research, the writer focuses on the use of top-down strategy to improve reading comprehension.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

1. Top-down Reading strategy

Top-down reading strategy is a strategy to gain information and knowledge in sequence. It means that needed background knowledge when using this strategy. The reader gets a general view of the reading passage by, in some way, absorbing the overall picture in top-down processing. So based on their knowledge of the topic and situation, they can figure out the specific meaning of a passage especially the sentences, phrases and word Harmer (2001).

2. Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. The goal, therefore, is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences (Kintsch1998; van Dijk and Kintsch 1983).

1.9 Outline of the Study

The outlines of the report are:

Chapter I is Introduction which contains Background of the Study, Reason for Choosing the Topic, Statements of the Problems, Objectives of the Study, Hypothesis, Significance of Study, Limitation of the Study, Definition of Key Terms, and Outline of the Study.

Chapter II is Review of Related Literatures; it Includes Teaching Learning for Young Learners, the Definition of Top-down Strategy, the General Concept of Reading, Teaching Reading, Reading Comprehension.

Chapter III is Research Method of Investigation which includes of Research Design, Object of the Study, Instrument Data Analysis, Method of the Data Collection and Method of Data Analysis.

Chapter IV is Analysis of Result and Discussion. It consist of the Profile of the School, Description of Respondent, Validity and Reliability of the Instrument, Pre-test, Post-test, and the Discussion of the Research Findings.

Chapter V is conclusion and Discussion.