

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the problem, formulation of the problem, objectives of the research, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of terms clarified like the following.

1.1 Background of the Problem

In Indonesia, English is one of the subjects learned from elementary school until university level. By learning English, students are expected be able to communicate in English both in written and oral forms and they also hoped to have substantial language skills e.g., listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Reading, as one of language skills, has an important role for those who wants to master English well. Reading is one way for the reader to receive information from the writer in the form of text. Reading can also improve the reader's vocabulary.

Based on the syllabus of KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan / School Based Curriculum), the standard competence of the reading in Junior High School is understanding the meaning of short simple functional text and essay in form of descriptive and recount texts related to the surrounded environment. Meanwhile, the basic competence in reading at Junior High School is to be able to read the short simple functional text and essay loudly in form of descriptive and recount texts with the sound, stress and intonation related to the surrounded environment (Depdiknas, 2006)

Reading has a purpose. It is something that almost everyone does everyday, it is an integral part of daily lives, taken very much for granted and generally assumed to be something that everyone can do it. The reason for reading depends very much on the purpose for reading.

For example, when she/he reads an article about an actress, she/he wants to know and to get the information about the actress. To be able to read effectively and efficiently, readers should have particular purpose in their mind before they interact with the texts. For that reason, they should know what they have to do with the text based on their reading purpose.

Based on the curriculum of KTSP 2006 (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan / School Based Curriculum), the students in junior high school are able to understand monologue and functional texts, especially for second grade students. The second grade students have to interact with types of texts whereas they do not know what they have to do with the texts. The students just read and they do not get anything. It is difficult for them to answer the question from the text. This problem rises because they read alone and do not discuss the text together with their friends. For example, when the students get the texts from the teacher, they directly read the whole of the texts to get the information without discussing with their friends about the content of the texts. Then, they answer the questions based on what they have read before. Finally, they are confused to identify the information in the text.

Recently, teaching reading in Junior High School is commonly done classically. It means that teaching reading is done based on the average speed of students. There are students with high speed and low speed in understanding the content of text. Students who have high speed can understand the meaning of the text and found the information quickly in the text. Meanwhile, the students with low speed will need long time to find the information in the text.

In other words, students with high speed will be bored, and students with low speed will be confused. Low students need help to understand the content of the text together with their

friends. Beside that, students are made to practice thinking critically and creatively to understand the content of the text. It can be seen when the students have difficulties to express their argument and idea in simple English, orally or written form.

Based on that fact, the writer conducted cooperative learning method as one of the alternative technique to handle that problem. Cooperative learning refers to any kinds of teaching in which the students work together in small groups for helping each other in learning a certain lesson material (Slavin, 2008:4). This statement implies that the success of a group's member succeeds the others and so does the failure. When there is a problem, it should be encountered and solved together. The process of solving problem is assumed to lead different people that subsequently stimulate them to interact to each other.

One types of the cooperative learning is Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition (CIRC). CIRC, one of the learning techniques based on cooperation, is designed to develop reading, writing and other language skills in the upper grades of primary education. CIRC technique presents a structure that increases not only opportunities for direct teaching in reading and writing but also applicability of composition writing techniques (Açıkgöz, 1992; Yaman, 1999).

In line with the implementation of CIRC, Safry (2007) who has applied this technique reports that 85% of the students were interested in participating the lesson conducted through this technique and during the teaching learning process they were very active and it has made fun and active reading class. When he applied this technique, he used narrative text. He saw the students' interaction in the class. Before applying this technique, the students in the class were not practiced to think critically and active in understanding the content of the texts.

In this case, CIRC is suitable if it is applied for reading class in Junior High School. CIRC treats the students to work in group together and discuss their difficulties in reading together. Therefore, the writer applied this technique in order to increase the students' comprehension achievement in reading text. The text that was used in this research was descriptive text.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

According to the background above, the writer formulate a question as the main problem of the research.

Is there any difference of students' comprehension achievement in reading descriptive text after being taught through CIRC?

1.3 Objective of the Research

In relation to the research problem, the objective of the research is to find out whether there is difference of students' comprehension achievement in reading descriptive text after being taught through CIRC.

1.4 Uses of the Research

The result of this research may have the following uses:

1. Theoretically:

- a. The result of this research is to confirm or disconfirm the theories of teaching reading by cooperative learning method.
- b. The result of this research can be used as a reference for those who want to conduct the research in English teaching learning process with the same topic.

2. Practically:

- a. For teacher: The result can give information to the English teachers especially in Junior High School, that cooperative learning is an alternative to increase the students' comprehension achievement in reading.
- b. For students: the implementation of CIRC technique in this research can attract the students to read the various texts so that it can increase the students' comprehension to understand descriptive text in learning activity.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research was conducted at SMP N 1 Kalirejo, Lampung Tengah. The population of this research was the second year students of SMP N 1 Kalirejo period 2011/2012 and the sample of this research was one class of second year in second semester. Then, the text in this research was descriptive text because this text is learnt by Junior High School based on syllabus of KTSP. The materials were taken from various types of reading materials and sources, e.g. English magazine, newspaper and students textbooks. In this research, the variable that used was CIRC technique because the writer saw whether CIRC technique could be used to difference students' reading comprehension achievement in reading descriptive text.

1.6 Definition of Terms

In order to make readers easy in understanding the content of this writing, the writer defines the terms that are used in her writing. Those terms are explained as follows:

Reading

Reading is more than knowing what each letter of alphabet standing for; reading involves more than word recognition; that comprehension is an essential of reading that without comprehension no reading (Dallman (1982:23).

Cooperative learning

Cooperative Learning refers to any kinds of teaching methods in which the students work together in small groups for helping each others in learning a certain lesson material (Slavin (2008:4).

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)

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In teaching reading, contemporary reading tasks, unlike the traditional materials, involve three-phase procedures: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages Alyousef (2005:142).