

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with several sub chapters, that is 1). The background of the problems, 2). The identification of the problems, 3). The limitation of the problems, 4). The objectives, and 5). The significance of the research, as will be elaborated in the following sections.

1.1. Background of the problems

Language is a means of communication which is very important for us to adapt to the society. Language is used by human beings to interact with others and to express feeling and thought. It is their tool for carrying on their affairs, working, trading, and living together. So, we can say that language is very important to individual to live in a society in order that they can survive.

As it known, language is an important tool used by the people in the world to communicate each other. English is one of widely spoken languages in the whole world, that is the reason today English becomes an international language. As an international language, English is used in many fields all over the world. It is also a fact that English is widely needed by people, for example to transfer new modern science, technology, and information. Transferring new modern science, technology, and information can be done through reading process.

Reading is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When people read, they use eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and they use brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to them. Reading plays an important role in developing knowledge, through reading students can absorb all the information, experience and ideas provided in books.

Reading texts also provide some benefits in improving students skill, and language teaching as well. It helps students to find new vocabulary in real context, English grammar, punctuation and become good models for English writing, when teacher teaches the skill of writing he/she will need to show students models of what he/she is encouraging them to do. Moreover, good reading texts can introduce interesting topics, which can stimulate discussion.

According Davenport (2007: 61) as quoted by Dewi (2013), common types of question found in reading comprehension are included as follow:

1. Identifying main idea, main point, author purpose or an alternate title for the passage.
2. Recognizing the tone of the passage or identifying the style.
3. Comprehending information directly stated in the passage (finding supporting detail).
4. Answering relational questions about the author's opinion, even if not stated directly.
5. Recognizing the structural methodology employed to develop the passage, for example sequence, vocabulary, and represent pronoun (reference).

6. Extending limited information given by the author to a logical conclusion using inference (inference meaning).

From the types of question found in reading comprehension, identifying main idea is focused on the objective in this research. In reading for meaning, main idea will always come first and deserves the top priority. It happens because main idea is the essence of the paragraph that the author wants the readers to know and it is the idea that the whole paragraph explains or supports. The author usually put this main idea in some certain places, such as: at the first sentences of the paragraph, middle of the paragraph, last of the paragraph, or just lets the reader to infer it from the passage.

Based on the pre-observation, and interview the teacher, it was found several difficulties encountered by the students in MTs N 1 Kotabumi. The researcher found the students still got difficulties in reading skill, such as difficulties understanding the content of the paragraph, difficulties understanding the idea, and the teacher said the students also difficulties in determining main idea. Realizing to the phenomenon, the researcher's interested to conduct further research relating to the students' problems in finding main idea. To find out the problems of students in finding main idea, the researcher gave a test to class VIII A students which related with finding main idea and contained 20 questions.

Determining main idea is difficult to be mastered by the students because the learners not knowing about the meaning of "main idea" and the learners can not identify the main idea of reading text well. The researcher also found that the students have their own perceptions toward reading test. It was found after seeing

their perceptions in reading task was given by the teacher. Some students argued that the reading task was very difficult. The text given was too long. Therefore, this research will see the students' perception toward main idea in reading test.

This research will be focused on identifying students' problems in finding the main idea of the reading text and students' perceptions toward reading test. Therefore, this research is expected to find out whether there are any problems or not in determining the main idea and students' perceptions toward reading test.

1.2. Identification of the Problems

Based on the pre-observation and interview the students, there are several problems that can be identified, that is:

- a. Students get difficulties in mastering the text well.
- b. Students get difficulties in understanding the content of the paragraph and find the main idea.
- c. Students do not have big motivation to read the text.
- d. The topic of the text is not suitable for the students.
- e. Students are bored to read long texts.
- f. Lack of students' confidence to determine the main idea.

1.3. Limitation of the Problems

By seeing the identification of the problem, the research will be limited on investigating the following problems:

- a. Students' difficulties in mastering the text well.
- b. Students' difficulties in understanding the content of the paragraph and finding the main idea.

1.4. The Formulation of the Research Questions

In line with the limitation of the problems, the following research questions are formulated:

- a. What are students' problems in finding a main idea?
- b. What are students' perceptions toward a reading test?

1.5. The Objectives

The objectives of the research are:

- a. To find out and to describes the students' problems in finding a main idea.
- b. To find out the students' perception on a reading test.

1.6. The uses

The uses of this research are:

1. As the information for the teacher in order to improve students' performance in reading.
2. As the information for the readers about the causes that underlie the students choose wrong answer about the main idea of the text.
3. As the information for the readers to conduct further research relating to main idea, and reading as well.

1.7. The Significance of the Research

The findings of the research are expected to be beneficial not only theoretically but also practically:

- a. Theoretically, as a verification of the previous theories in finding a main idea.
- b. Practically, this research can be used to help the teacher to know about the students' problems in finding a main idea.