

## **CHAPTER II THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

In this chapter, the researcher would like to discuss two major points, that is, review of the previous research and review of related literature. They were elaborated as the following section.

### **2.1. Review of Previous Research**

In relation to this research, there is some previous research which has been conducted by the some researchers, such as: Ramsay and Sperling, 2011; Leopold and Leutner, 2012; Ji, 2008.

Ramsay and Sperling (2011) conducted the research related to the problems in finding the main idea. They focused on electronic note taking. Whereas the researcher would like to investigate the problems in finding main idea faced by the students.

Leopold and Leutner (2012) conducted the research related to the problems in finding the main idea. They focused on the strategy in facing main idea. But this research focuses on the problems in finding main idea.

Ji (2008) conducted the research about what do paragraph divisions indicate in narrative texts. He focused on paragraph especially in narrative text. But this

research will investigate not only in narrative text, but also other text especially the text existing in national examination.

On the other side, previous research has been done by Dwiarti (2005) at SMU Kosgoro Sekampung East Lampung. She conducts the research to investigate the students' problems meet in finding main idea of the text. The result of her research is there are four problems that the students facing in finding main idea of the text, they are: 1) lack of interest toward reading; 2) lack of background knowledge; 3) lack of vocabulary; 4) unaware on the parts of the paragraph. Whereas the researcher is attempting this research to reveal the problem in depth, that the problems not only come from the students themselves, but also the problems that arise from the future of the text. The research is conducted at MTs N 1 Kotabumi.

## **2.2. Review of Related Literature**

For the specific explanation about the main idea in reading, the researcher explains some related literature as follows:

### **2.2.1. Reading**

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. Eskey (2002)

defines that reading is the process of acquiring information from a written or printed text.

Afflerbach (2007: 12-13) says as quoted by Dewi (2013) that reading is a dynamic and complex process that involves skills, strategies, and prior knowledge. Reading is also an active process of predicting what is likely to come next. When someone is reading, her brain processes the visual information from our eyes. It uses our critical thinking to make an image in our brain based on the text.

By seeing the explanation above, it can be stated that reading is one of important skill the students should mastered in their language learning. Reading is important because by reading the students may be able to absorb the information, experience and ideas provided in books.

Reading may also open the students' minds by using and developing their critical thinking. In reading the reader needs the comprehension. Reading comprehension is very important for the students at Senior High School. According to Cooper (1986:11), comprehension is a process in which a reader may construct meaning by interacting with the text. When reading, a reader should have knowledge about understanding the reading passage.

According to Simanjuntak (1988:4), reading comprehension is the first point to be made about reading process. In reading process the readers are attempting to recreate the meaning intende by the author. But reading is not a simple task, readers should have educate knowledge of linguistics and prior knowledge of the world, and at the same time use both of knowledge to confirm the meaning. It has

been stated by Clarke and Silberstein (1977) in Brown (2001:299-300) that the readers understand what they read because they are able to take the stimulus beyond its graphic representation and assign its membership to an appropriate group of concepts already stored in their memories skill in reading depends on the efficient interaction between linguistics knowledge of the world.

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 he 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.

### **2.2.2. The Concept of Text**

*Text* is one of the main elements that play a significant role in communication. People communicating in language do not do so simply by means of individual words or fragments of sentences, but by means of texts. According to Fowler (1991: 59) defines *text* is made up of sentences, but there exist separate principles of text-construction, beyond the rules for making sentences. While Neubert and Greogory (1992) states that *texts* are used as tools and, at the same time, they reveal the tool-user. They communicate something and about someone.

Text is important because text is the part of reading. Text can be said as a number of sentence organized to carry a message in an order way. It means that text consist of sentences bringing some information in each sentence. For example of the text "*Sangkuriang*" tells about a young man that loves with his mother.

### **2.2.3. Paragraph**

Paragraph refers to a group of related sentences that supply the readers with detailed information on a single important topic to support main idea. Paragraph is important because it is a series of closely related sentences that supply the readers with detailed information, in which they explore, develop, and support one main idea.

To gain a unified concept about paragraph, it is appropriate to consider the following notions. Oshima and Houge (1981) state that, a paragraph is a basic unit

of organization in writing, in which a group of related sentences to develop one main idea. According to Kolin (1986), paragraph refers to a group of related sentences arranged in a logical order supplying the readers with detailed information on a single important topic. For example of the paragraph:

### ***Gold***

*First of all, gold has a lustrous beauty is resistant to corrosion. For example, Macedonian coin remains as untarnished today as the day it was minted twenty-three centuries ago. Another important characteristic of gold is its utility in industry and science. The most recent application of gold is in astronauts' suits.*

#### **2.2.3.1. Main Parts of a Paragraph**

A main part of paragraph is important because the parts of sentences are needed to help the students in finding the main idea in text.

Oshima and Houge (1981) classify the paragraph into three main structural parts, namely: a topic sentence, supporting sentence, and a concluding sentence.

##### **1. A Topic Sentence**

The topic sentence states the main idea of the paragraph. It is not only naming the topic of the paragraph, but also limits the topic to one or two areas that can be discussed completely in a space of single paragraph. The specific area is called the controlling idea. Notice how the topic sentence of the gold states both the topic and the controlling idea.

*(Topic)*

*(Controlling idea)*

*Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics.*

## 2. Supporting Sentence

Supporting sentence develops the topic sentence; they explain the topic sentence by giving definition, reasons, examples, facts, an incident, comparison, analogy, cause, and effect, statistics and quotations. Some of the supporting sentences that explain the topic sentence about gold are:

*First of all, gold has a lustrous beauty is resistant to corrosion. For example, Macedonian coin remains as untarnished today as the day it was minted twenty-three centuries ago. Another important characteristic of gold is its utility in industry and science. The most recent application of gold is in astronauts' suit (Oshima, et al, 1981: 4).*

## 3. A Concluding Sentence

The concluding sentence signals the end of the paragraph and leaves the reader with important point to remember.

*In conclusion, gold is treasured not only for its beauty but also for its utility.*

### 2.2.4. Main Idea

*Main idea* refers to the essence of the paragraph, or rather what the author is trying to get across to the reader. In the other words, the main idea may important that the author develops throughout the paragraph. The function of the entire paragraph is to explain, develop, and support the main idea. The main idea of paragraph tells us what the author wants to know about the topic. The writer in one or more sentences within the paragraph usually directly states the main idea. Once the people can find the topic, they are ready to find the main idea. The main idea is the point of the paragraph. It is the most important thought about the topic.

Brown (1987:203) says that if you get the main idea you can make some amazing inferences about details you never even read. But on the other hand, Brown proposes that some readers cannot see the forest for the trees, they get the details accurately, but do not see how they add up. When they hear a story, they are likely to miss the point.

According to Mc Whother (1989) the main idea is called the topic sentence. She adds that the main idea is not explicitly stated any one sentence. Instead, it is left to the reader to infer, or the reason out. She also explains that to find main idea of a paragraph, a reader may ask himself these questions: What is the main idea – What is the author trying to say about the topic? Which sentence states the main idea? The following paragraph illustrates this idea.

*The federal trade Commission has become increasingly interested in leading packing. Complaints have been filled against many food packagers because they make boxes unnecessarily large to give a false impression of quantity. Cosmetics manufacturers have been accused of using false bottoms in packing to make a small amount of their product appear to be much more (Mc. Whother, 1989).*

In the above paragraph, the topic is false picking. The main idea is “The Federal Trade Commission is becoming increasingly concerned about false or misleading packing”.

### **2.2.5. Where to Find the Topic Sentence**

One good way of organizing a paragraph is used a topic sentence. The topic sentence expresses the main idea of a paragraph, and the remaining sentences build around and support it. In a sense, the topic sentence serves as a headline for the paragraph and all other sentences supply the main point. Although the topic



sentence of a paragraph can be located anywhere in the paragraph, there are several positions where it is most likely to be found.

#### (1) The First Sentence

The most common placement of the topic is the first in the paragraph. In this type of paragraph, the author first states his/her main point and then elaborates the idea, for example:

*A Japanese woman has changed since the war. They have become prettier, brighter, more decisive, more outspoken. The young people certainly are far more logical and far less sentimental than the prewar generation some regret this. They think women in gaining their freedom, have lost their femininity-their modesty, their warmth and their shy grace. They accuse women of being drawn to superficial things.*

In this type of paragraph, the author employing a deductive thought pattern in which statement is made at the beginning and the supported through the paragraph.

#### (2) The Last Sentence

The second most common position of the topic sentence is in the last paragraph. In this type of paragraph, the author leads or builds up the main idea and then directly states it in a sentence at the very end, for example:

*Albert Einstein, one of the world's geniuses, failed his university entrance examination on his first attempt. William Faulkner is the one of America noted writers never finish his college because he could not pass his English courses. Sir Winston Churchill, who is considered one of the masters of English Language, had to have special tutoring in English during the Elementary School. These few examples show that failure in school does not always failure in life.*

### (3) Middle of the Paragraph

Another common placement of the topic is in the middle of the paragraph. In this case, the author builds up to the main idea, states it in the middle of the paragraph, and then goes on with further elaboration and detail, for example:

*Whenever possible, the good listener prepares in advance for the speech or lectures he/she plans to attend. He or She studies the topic to be discussed and finds out about the speaker and his or her beliefs. An affective listener, as you are beginning to see, takes specific steps to achieve accurate understanding of the lecture. Furthermore, on arriving at the place where the speech is to be given, he or she chooses a seat where it easy to see, hear and remain alert. Finally, when the speech is over, the effective listener reviews what was said and evaluates the idea expressed.*

### (4) The First and the Last Sentence

Sometimes an author uses two sentences to state the main idea or state the twice in one paragraph. Usually, in this type of paragraph, the writer states the main idea at the beginning paragraph, then explains or support the idea and finally restates the main idea at the very end, for example:

*The good listener, in order to achieve the purpose of acquiring information, is careful to follow specific steps to achieve accurate understanding. First, whenever possible the good listener prepares in advance for the speech of the lecture or he/she is going to attend. He or she studies the topic to be discussed and finds out about the speaker and his or her beliefs. Second, on arriving at the place where seeing, hearing and remaining alert are easy. Finally, when the speech is over, he or she reviews what was said and reacts to evaluate the ideas expressed. Effective listening is an active process in which a listener deliberately takes certain actions to ensure that accurate communication has occurred.*

### 2.2.6. Factors That Influence Reading Comprehension

Mc Wrother (1989:345-349) classified the factors that influence comprehension into three general categories: text characteristic, reader characteristic, and reader's purpose. Text characteristics are features of the printed material that influence how easy or difficult it is to read. The skills and traits of the person that determine or affect rate and comprehension are called reader characteristics. Reader's purpose refers to the reason he material is read and the level of comprehension needed.

#### 1. Text Characteristics

The way the writes write, the words they use, how they put words together, and how clearly they can express ideas all contribute to how it is to read a passage.

**Sentence length :** A passage with very long sentences can make reading more difficult and will force a reader to read more slowly, notice how the length of sentence seems to rise this problem:

*Caught in global recession and inflation, forced by Washington to revalue their currency in a direction injurious to their prosperity, and ance again conscious of their vulnerability to fereign economic decisions, the Japanese also saw domestic capital flow out to lucrative investment opportuniteis elsewhere (Jones, 1985:99)*

**Vocabulary :** A passage with difficult or unfamiliar vocabulary can have the same effect-understanding becomes difficult or impossible. Try the following passage:

*The liberal-cynical criminologist is skeptical about the perfect of crime control efforts, and locates criminogenic forces in the basic structure and institution of society, but he still retains a belief in the continued viability of American society in its present form (Barlow, 1984:26)*

**Ideas and Concepts :** In addition to these mechanical features of language, ideas, and concepts also affect difficult. Even written in fairly simple language, an article may discuss complicated or follow a sophisticated line of reasoning. In the the following sample shows that, although the language used is clear and direct, a difficult concept is discussed.

*The whole universe may have an overall curvature. If it is negatively curved, it is open-ended and extends without limit; if it is positively curved, it closes in on itself. The surface of the earth, for example, forms a closed curvature; so that if you travel a long a geodesic, you come back to your starting point. Similarly, if the universe were positively curved, it would be closed; so that if could look infinitely into space through an ideal telescope, you would see the back of your own head! This is assuming that you waited a long enough time or that light traveled infinitely fast ( Hewitt, 1985:587)*

## **2. Reader's Characteristics**

A second set of factors that influence how fast reader are able to read and how well they can comprehend is related to the readers themselves. Here is only a partial list of the many things about readers that affect reading comprehension.

**Physical State :** How the readers feel physically affects both rate and comprehension. If they are extremely tired, or just recovering from the flu, they will not be able to perform at their peak level. Concentration may become a problems, or they may not able to force themselves to stay awake. If readers are

hungry, or if the room is extremely hot or cold, their reading performance may also be affected.

**State of Mind :** Just as physical state can affect reading comprehension, so mental or emotional state. If the readers are depressed or worried, they may not be able to concentrate easily, if they are excited or anxious about something, their mental state may not be conducive effective reading.

**Interest in the Material :** Readers' interest in what they reading influences how fast and with what degree of comprehension they read. If they are reading about a topic that interest them, they are likely to read faster and with more understanding than if they are reading about a subject in which they have little or no interest.

**Background Knowledge :** The amount of knowledge the readers have about a topic partially determines how well they will be able to read about it. Suppose they are assigned to read a passage taken from the middle of an introductory botany textbook. If they have completed a course in botany, the passage will probably be understanding and easy enough to read. On the other hand, if they have never studied botany, the passage will be extremely difficult and confusing; it will be necessary to read very slowly, and they might have to stop to look up any unfamiliar terms and concepts.

### **3. Reader's Purpose**

Reader's purpose for reading is an important factor related to comprehension. If they are reading a magazine article for enjoyment, their purpose is different from when they are reading a textbook chapter to prepare for an exam. If readers are

paging through the newspaper, their purpose differs from the purpose when they are reading a poem for English literature class. There are four basic types of reading, ranging from an extremely slow analysis to an extremely rapid overview of the material. Each type is related a specific kind of material and has a define purpose. These are summarized in the table 1.

Table 1

### Types of Reading

Method of Reading	Purpose in Reading	Types of Material
Analytical	Detailed comprehension Analysis, evaluation, critique	Poetry, argumentative Writing
Study reading	High comprehension and High recall	Textbooks, library Research
Casual reading	Moderate comprehension of Main ideas, entertainment. Enjoyment, general	Novels, newspapers, Magazine
Accelerated reading	Information Overview of material, rapid Location of a specific fact	Reference material Magazine, Novels

The writer used the aspects of text characteristics and reader's characteristics as the basis in determing students' problems in finding main idea of reading text. the reader's purpose was not included in this research, since the purpose has been set up, that is to find the main idea of the text. but there are many possibilities that the problems occur will be more or even during the research.