

II. THE FRAME OF THEORIES

This chapter discusses the frame of theories that are used to support the research. It includes several points, i.e. the review of previous research, the related literature, theoretical assumption, and the hypothesis of the research.

2.1. Review of the Previous Research

In relation to this research, there are several previous studies which have been conducted by some researchers (see, e.g. Ahmad and Asraf, 2004; Wilingham, 2006; and Alfarini, 2008).

Ahmad and Asraf (2004) did a study in Missouri University concerning the language learners respond the English texts. The objective of their research was investigated how the learners made an effort to comprehend the texts by selecting the information from the context by comprehending the unfamiliar words in the text. They found that by understanding the unfamiliar words, the students are able to comprehend the text. They also divided the contextual clues into some categories, they are: (1) definition, (2) experiential background, (3) comparison or contrast, (4) synonym, (5) familiar expressions or language experience, (6) summary, and (7) reflection of mood or situation.

Willingham (2006) conducted the research for primary students New York Primary School. The result of his study found that students are encouraged to use background knowledge to make educated guesses about the meaning of unfamiliar words by the clues, so that they were able to comprehend the text. In addition, by prior knowledge, students are encouraged to apply what they know from their own lives to the text, or to consider the theme of the text before read the whole text.

Based on the explanation above, it can be assumed that the students' understanding of contextual clues may help the students to make educated guesses about the meaning of unfamiliar words. It would become one solution for the students' problem in comprehending the text especially for getting main idea, getting specific information from the text.

Another research related to contextual clues has been done by Alfarini (2008) at SMUN 3 Kotabumi. The aim of her research was to find out the difference of students' reading comprehension achievement with the students' understanding about contextual clues. She found that the students' mean scores within the experimental class were higher than the control class. She found that students' understanding of contextual clues increased the students' reading comprehension achievement.

However, there was still one issue which has not been studied about understanding contextual clues strategy which related to the study about comprehending the descriptive text for the junior high school students and the influence of this strategy on the students' reading comprehension achievement. In

short, based on the explanation above, the researcher proposed her research by implementing contextual clues strategy in order to know whether or not contextual clues strategy can give the influence on the students' reading comprehension achievement. Moreover, it was also hoped to overcome the students' problems comprehending the descriptive text which was explained in the background of the problems.

2.2. Review of Related Literature

For further explanation about the implementing of reading strategy for successful reading, the researcher explains some related literature about the reading comprehension and the strategies towards the students' achievement in reading comprehension.

2.2.1. Concept of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from the text. The goal of all reading instruction is ultimately targeted at helping a reader comprehend the text. Reading comprehension involves at least two parties: the reader and the writer. The process of comprehending what was written in the text by the author and then using background knowledge to construct an approximate understanding of the author's message.

There are two kinds of reading activity, namely reading aloud and silent reading. Reading aloud is to change the written sign (form) into oral sign giving the meaning. The most important characteristic of reading aloud (oral reading) are pronunciation, tone, speed and pause. Meanwhile, in silent reading is use the eyes

and ability to understand the meaning of the written sign, thus comprehending the text will be given more emphasizes in silent reading which will be conducted in this research.

As Downey (2006) defines reading as an active process of getting the information by using prior knowledge because in this activity the students are encouraged to apply what they know from their own lives to the text, or to consider the theme of the text. In reading, the students are encouraged to use background knowledge to make educated guesses about the information from the text in order to comprehend the text.

Meanwhile, reading as one of the language skills to be taught is a process of constructing or developing meaning for printed text (Cooper et al, 1988:3). This definition implies that the reading process includes an interaction between the reader and the prints. The reader tries to understand the ideas presented by the writer in the text.

According to Doyle (2004), comprehension is a progressive skill in attaching meaning beginning at the same level and proceeding to attaching meaning to entire reading selection. All comprehension revolves around the reader's ability in finding and determining main idea and topic sentence from the text.

Reading is an active process (Mackay quoted in Simanjuntak, 1988:15). The reader forms a preliminary expectation about the material, and then selects the

fewest, most productive cues necessary to confirm or reject that expectation. Reading involves an interaction between thought and language. It means that the reader brings to the task a formidable amount of information and ideas, attitude and beliefs.

Meanwhile, comprehension can be said as a crucial aspect of reading, in fact, it has been emphasized that true reading is reading with understanding, that is, comprehension. Simanjuntak (1988:4) states that the first point to be made about reading process is comprehension and the meaning is the basic element for comprehension. She also adds that comprehending a text is as interactive process between the readers' background knowledge and the text itself.

From the statement above, it can be said that in comprehending the texts the students have to know their understanding about the learning strategy in reading. It means to make them easy to identify the specific information in the texts. One aspect that becomes essential in students' reading in the reading strategy. It has a connection in comprehension and strategy or technique. The researcher assumed that reading comprehension was students' competence in comprehending the specific information, word and surface meaning in texts is described by students' score with an appropriate strategy.

2.2.2. Teaching of Reading

Alyousef (2005:143) says that in teaching reading, contemporary reading tasks, unlike the traditional materials, involve three-phase procedures: *pre-*, *while-*, and

post- reading stages helps in activating the relevant schema. For example, teachers are able to ask the students questions that arouse their interest while previewing the text. The aim of *while-* reading stage (or interactive process) is to develop students' ability in tackling texts by developing their linguistic and schematic knowledge. Post-reading includes activities, which enhance learning comprehension using matching exercises, cloze exercises, cut-up sentences, and comprehension questions.

Suparman (2005:1) states reading is a construct process of guessing. There are two major reasons for reading: (1) reading for pleasure, (2) Reading for information (in order to find out something or in order to do something with the information readers get).

Harmer (1987:70) states the principles behind the teaching reading:

1. Reading is not a passive skill.
2. Students need to be engaged with what they are reading.
3. Students should be encouraged to respond to the content of a reading text, not just to the language.
4. Prediction is a major factor in reading.
5. Match the task to the topic.
6. Good teachers exploit reading texts to the full.

The researcher assumed that in teaching reading, appropriate and possible techniques or strategies should be applied based on the purposes of reading in

order to get the comprehension better. There are many kinds of reading techniques and strategies that can be applied in teaching reading.

In this research, the researcher proposed contextual clues strategy as the solution to overcome the problems in identifying the main idea, get the specific information, making inferences, reference and the vocabularies from the text given by the teacher and including the unfamiliar vocabulary. This strategy also developed students' understanding and stimulates the students to be engaged with the text.

2.2.3. Aspects of Reading

In reading there are five aspects which help the students to comprehend the English text, they are:

1. Identifying Main Idea

In line with Mc Whorter (1986:36) the sentence with that states this main idea is called the topic sentence. She adds that the topic sentence tells what the rest paragraph is about in some paragraph; the main idea is not explicitly stated in any one of sentence. Instead, it is left to the reader to infer, or reason out. In other words, the main idea is the most important idea that author develops throughout the paragraph.

2. Specific Information

Supporting sentence or specific information develops the topic sentence by giving definitions, examples, facts, an incidents, comparison, analogy, cause and effect and quotation.

3. References

According to Latulippe (1986:20) references are words or phrase used either before or after the reference in the reading material. They are used to avoid unnecessary repetition of words or phrases. It means that, such words are used, they are signals to the reader find the meaning elsewhere in the text.

4. Inference

In relation to inferences, Kathleen (1983:31) states that an inference is an educational guess or prediction about something unknown based on available facts and information. It is the logical connection that the reader draw between his observes or unknown and what he does not know.

5. Vocabulary

According to Wallace (1987:30) vocabulary is the stock of word used by the people or even person. Concerning with those statements indeed vocabulary is fundamental for everyone who wants to speak or to produce utterances for reading.

2.2.4. Concept of Descriptive Text

Based on English curriculum 2006 that was applied in most of senior high school namely KTSP, the students are expected to comprehend the meaning of materials from various texts. One of them is descriptive text. Why it was important because the students had to have the ability to look at and get the meaning of written text, that was called reading comprehension. Because of that, reading was very important to be taught to the students.

A descriptive text is used to create a vivid image of a person, place, or thing. It draws on all of the senses, not merely the visual. Its purpose is to enable the reader to share the writer's sensory experience of the subject (Salem, 2001: 325). Descriptive writing portrays people, places, things, moment and theories with enough vivid detail to help the reader create a mental picture of what is being written about.

Moreover, Crimon (1983: 163) stated that descriptive is a kind of text for presenting a verbal portrait of a person, a place, or a thing. It can be used as a technique to enrich other forms of writing or as a dominant strategy for developing a picture of "what it looks like". It means that when we describe something, we need to capture both details so that the reader can understand what we mean.

On the other hand, D' Angelo (1977: 247) states that description is used to make the reader see or to point a verbal picture, and cover the significant physical or

abstract quality of a person, a place, an event, an idea or an object. It means that when we describe our subject, we must be able to make the reader understands what the writer means. Coffey (1973: 38) says that when the writers describe the subject have to use two kinds of details: objective details and subjective details. It means that when the writer want to describe something, writer must describe our subject in a variety of ways.

Furthermore, Mckay (1985: 4) says that when writer want to describe something we must be able to make the reader understand what writer mean. She also mentions several common types of descriptive text, i.e. describing as process, describing an object, describing a place, describing a personality and describing an event. In this research, the researcher emphasized one kind of describing a famous person and interesting place.

According to Gerot and Wignell (1994: 208), the generic structure of descriptive text as follows:

1. Identification : identifies phenomenon to be described.
2. Description : describes parts, qualities, characteristics.

The stages above are the generic structure/ text organization of the descriptive text. It also has language features:

1. Focus on specific participants: a particular class or thing, person, or place.

2. Use of attributive and identifying process: additional adverbs of the subject mentioned (e.g. adjective clause, adjective phrase, and linking verbs such as taste, smell, appear, look, is, am, are, and so on).
3. Use of simple present tense.
4. Frequent use of classifier in nominal group (e.g. one of..., many of..., so on).

It can be concluded that by reading and understanding descriptive text enables students share what they have seen from someone, something or one information how it looked, felt, smelled, and so on.

2.2.5. Concept of Contextual Clues Strategy

Contextual clues are word clues that can help the readers figure out the meaning of an unknown word and the clues related to the text. They may be in the same sentence as an unfamiliar word, or in nearby sentences. Furthermore, Joffe (1997) suggested that the clues might be appeared within the same sentence as the word which refers to the meaning or it might be in the preceding or subsequent sentence.

In reading activity, sometimes the students were not able to get the point of the information from the text because they could not use their semantic prediction to identify the meaning of unfamiliar words in the text (Brown, 2001). The students used dictionary to find out the meaning of unfamiliar words. If they want to make a further analysis and use their prediction to get the meaning of word, they would

identify important words and their relationship to one another words to find out the meaning.

According to Ahmad and Asraf (2004), contextual clues are divided into 7 categories: (1) definition: it is explain what the definition or explanation about the topic in reading text, (2) experimental background: it will be helpful for the reader use their background knowledge understanding the text, (3) comparison or contrast (4) synonym, (5) familiar expressions or language experience, (6) summary, and (7) reflection of mood or situation. The learners made an effort to comprehend the texts by selecting the information from the context by comprehending the unfamiliar words in the text and drawing the inferences from it. They found that the use of understanding the unfamiliar words are able to help the students comprehending the text.

By using contextual clues strategy, it was hoped that the students enable to overcome their problems in reading process. According to Joffe (1997) There were four categories of contextual clues:

1. **Synonym** is the word with the same meaning in the sentence.

For example: Most castles had high walls and were surrounded by *water - filled ditch* called a *moat*

The synonym of the *water-filled ditch* is *a moat*. The writer can guess the synonym from the clue word of “**called**” that means the same or nearly the same as the word before the next word.

2. **Antonym** is word or group of words that has the opposite meaning reveals the meaning of an unknown term.

For example: Jerry is very clumsy, but his sister Jenny is adroit.

The antonym of *clumsy* is *adroit*. The writer can guess the antonym by the clue of **but**, that means the contrary or nearly the opposite as the word before the next word or phrases.

3. **Explanation or definition:** The unknown word is explained within the sentence or in a sentence immediately preceding.

For example: The patient is so somnolent that *she requires medication to help her stay awake for more than a short time.*

In order to explain something or definition, usually the writer uses the words such as, *is, that, which* etc.

4. **Example** is the specific examples are used to define the term.

For example: Celestial bodies, *such as the sun, moon, and stars*, are governed by predictable laws.

In order to explain something or give the example, usually the writer uses these words (such as, for example, for instance) that readers may indicate as the example.

Considering the explanation above, there are some categories of contextual clues that can be used to help the readers in reading activity. For example, the categories clues might help the readers to determine what the definition of something in reading process. But, in this research the researcher was only focused on the category clues of definition, synonym, antonym, and the explanation in order to help the students to answer the questions about main idea, the specific information, inferences, reference and the vocabularies by using the

clues were related to the text. Based on the researcher's opinion, these categories are easy to understand by the students, so that they can get the meaning and understand about the text. Moreover, it was hoped as the solution to overcome the students' problems comprehending the main idea, the specific information, making inferences, reference and identifies the vocabularies from the text.

2.2.5.1. Procedures of Teaching Reading by Using Contextual Clues Strategy

- a. The materials are selected by the teacher based on the students' level of background knowledge and a suitable material based on the curriculum.
- b. In the classroom activity, the students are divided into several group consist of 3 until 4 students in one group.
- c. The students are explained the procedural of contextual clues strategy during the learning process.
- d. The students are explained what are the categories of contextual clues and they are given the example of each category.
- e. The students are asked by to answer the questions that given by the teacher directly, it purposed to measure the students' understanding about contextual clues strategy and the categories.
- f. The students are given the exercises and they have to answer based on what clues are in the text.

The illustration:

Adaptation

What is an adaptation? An adaptation is a feature or way of behaving that makes a plant or an animal more likely to survive. In every species, some individuals are better at surviving than others. These individuals live long enough

to mate have babies and pass on their genetic characteristics. Adaptation does not occur during one animal's lifetime. It is a long, slow process that happens over many generations. However, results of adaptation can be seen in individual animals. For example, the toucan's colorful and lightweight beak is specially adapted for grasping fruit from the branches of rainforest trees.

Direction: The word in bold is indicate as the clue. After you read the text, then tick the box to name the type of context clue based on the sample text!

Sample Text	Type of Clues
“.....An adaptation is a feature or way of behaving that makes a plant or an animal more likely to survive.	<input type="checkbox"/> Synonym <input type="checkbox"/> Antonym <input type="checkbox"/> Explanation/ definition <input type="checkbox"/> Example
“ <u>a plant or an animal</u> more likely to survive. <u>These individuals</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Synonym <input type="checkbox"/> Antonym <input type="checkbox"/> Explanation/ definition <input type="checkbox"/> Example
“..... For example , the toucan's colorful and lightweight beak is specially adapted for grasping fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> Synonym <input type="checkbox"/> Antonym <input type="checkbox"/> Explanation/ definition <input type="checkbox"/> Example

- g. The students are asked to guess the type of clues based on the sample text given by the teacher.
- h. The students are asked to discuss the content of text, the unfamiliar words and also to find out the antonym or synonym of unfamiliar words.
- i. The students are asked to review the different types of contextual clues, such as examples, synonyms, antonyms, definitions.
- j. The students are asked to make a guess; they should re-read the sentence, inserting their definition in place of the vocabulary word to see if it makes sense.
- k. Then, the students are asked to look the word up in the dictionary to see how close they were in guessing the meaning of the word.

1. After the students have finished the exercises, they are asked to do the other exercises with another text by using contextual clues to help them answering the questions.

2.2.5.2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Contextual Clues Strategy

There are some advantages and disadvantages of using contextual clues in teaching reading comprehension:

1. Advantages of Contextual Clues Strategy:

- a. Contextual clues strategy can be used to increase the students' motivation and their awareness in reading process.
- b. By using the word clues the students are able to overcome their problems answering the questions by themselves.
- c. Contextual clues strategy helps the students to define difficult or unfamiliar words and develop their background knowledge in understanding content of the text.
- d. The use of contextual clues can also increase their existing vocabulary base because of this strategy, the students to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words without having to look them up in a dictionary.
- e. Teaching learning process can be more interesting for the students activate their awareness of the subject.
- f. Contextual clues strategy helps the students to build up their ability to interact with each others and the teaching learning process become more effective.

2. Disadvantage of Contextual Clues Strategy:

- a. The teacher is rather difficult to select the reading materials, which are accompanied with suitable words level based on the students' background knowledge.
- b. The students imitate what the teacher does. If the teacher makes mistakes help the students in defining the unknown words, the students will do too. In this case, the teacher should pay more attention for students in making decision about the definition of unfamiliar words.

2.3. Theoretical Assumption

The researcher assumed that contextual clues can give the influence to the students' reading achievement. It also can be used to overcome the students' problems which were explained in the background of the problems by using all clues related to the text. Realizing the use of contextual clues strategy, the researcher assumed that it might be one way to increase the students' reading comprehension achievement, so that they are able to understand the content of the text. In addition, contextual clues strategy also can be the solution to overcome

2.4. Hypothesis

Based on the frame of theory above, the researcher formulated the hypothesis that contextual clues can give influence on the students' reading comprehension achievement.