

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

One of the importances of English learning is reading texts. Reading is one of the receptive language skills that should be learned by the students. Generally, reading is an activity to get meaning of the text which involves the reader's knowledge and the text they read. According to Nunan, reading is fluent process of the readers combining from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning.¹ However, reading is not just to read aloud the text without any goal. The readers should set their reading purposes before they are going to read, whether it is to get information, enhance the knowledge, learn something or get some pleasure.

Reading is a complex skill. In reading, the students need comprehension skill. Reading comprehension occurs as the reader builds a mental representation of a text message. Comprehending the message is the primary purpose of reading. A good reader easily identifies which parts are important and which ones are not. On the other hand, a bad reader cannot recognize the differences between key ideas and complementary ideas. Therefore, reading comprehension is not a problem to some people, but it is a real problem to students.

¹ David Nunan, *Practical English Language Teaching [Electronic Book]*, New York: Mc Graw Hill, 2003, p. 69

According to Yeselson, students have problems in reading comprehension, such as they cannot understand the text at all, they misread the text by totally changing its meaning, and they misread the text by taking words and phrases out of context.² Therefore, a teacher plays a vital role to create students who have good ability to comprehend particular texts in teaching English. In other words, teacher should find a way to facilitate students to comprehend and understand the text. The way can be method, technique or strategy in teaching reading comprehension.

Based on the purposes of teaching English, the implementation of School-Based Curriculum (SBC) has oriented on the mastery of four language skills. One of them is reading. In reading skill, the students are expected to understand meaning of simple, short, functional (interpersonal and transactional) reading text formally or informally. In this case, the students are hoped to understand five types of text, namely: descriptive, recount, narrative, report, and procedure in simple form of daily life situation.³ But, the writer only focuses on narrative text.

The aim of English in junior High School is to achieve the functional level of literacy. That is functional level in which the students are able to use

Ruth Yeselson, *Common Reading Comprehension Problems and Basic Exercise*, Retrieved on October 2, 2010.
<http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:obIYQpAt1hoJ:plangere.rutgers.edu/documents/tutors/commonreadingcomprehensionproblems.pdf>

³ Department Pendidikan Nasional. *Model Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) SMP dan MTS*, (PT. Tiga Serangkai, Solo, 2006) p.13

English for survival purpose, to communicate for daily needs such as reading newspapers and talking by using English etc.⁴

Based on the School-Based Curriculum, in reading English skill for junior High School, there are three basic competences that should be achieved by the students at the eighth grade semester. First, the students are able to read aloud the meaning of functional text and short essay in recount and narrative texts by spelling, stressing, and intonating. Second, the students are able to respond the meaning of functional text and short essay accurately, fluently, and understandably with the closest environment, such as mysteries, science fiction, romances, horror stories, legends, historical narratives, personal experience and so on. Third, the students are able to respond to the meaning in short essay accurately, fluently, and understandably in daily life, especially in narrative text.

Furthermore, students should be able to understand English text types in various contexts and adjust themselves to new communication demands, especially in narrative text form. In this case, the students are required to:

1. Read a narrative text
2. Identify the structure of a narrative text correctly (simple past tense)
3. Identify characteristics of a narrative text correctly (orientation, complication and resolution).

⁴ Kalayo Hasibuan and Muhammad Fauzan Ansyari. *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*. (Pekanbaru: Alfa Riau Graha UNRI Press, 2007). P.2

4. Read and understands narrative text correctly.

Based on the writer's preliminary research at SMPN 4 Kunto Darussalam, it showed that reading had been taught by using conventional technique. The teacher had taught the types of genre available in students' textbook. Through the types of genre in their textbook, the student would recognize and understand about kind of the texts. Besides, the teacher read text and then the teacher gave students some questions to be answered based on the text or paragraph, then, teacher asked them to collect their papers and the teacher gave the true answers to the students.

As a result, some students were bored of learning reading text. They frequently felt sleepy in the classroom, so that they did not pay attention to the teachers' explanation. After learning lesson, the students were not able to identify the structure of narrative text, characteristic of narrative, and understand the meaning of narrative text. Finally, they were not able to get Passing Grade (KKM) 75.⁵ Based on explanation above, the writer can find the symptoms as follows:

1. Some of the students are not able to identify the main idea of a narrative text.
2. Some of the students are not able to identify the generic structure of a narrative text.
3. Some of the students are not able to identify pronominal reference in narrative text.

⁵ Tim penyusun syllabus SMPN 14 Kunto Darrusalam, Rohul

4. Some of the students are not able to identify supporting detail in a narrative text.
5. Some of the students are not able to infer the meaning of unknown word from context.

To achieve the goal of curriculum, there are some strategies that can be used by the teachers to improve the students' reading comprehension in narrative text, one of them is by using Finding Signal Word strategy. Finding Signal Word provides students with a variety of prompts that help them generate questions before, during, and after they read.⁶ The purpose of Finding Signal Word is to encourage students to think about what they already know, relate the information to what they read from a text, and visualize the text content.⁷ This strategy is very useful for the students to guide them in comprehending difficult texts.

Based on the explanation and the problems above, the writer is very interested in carrying out a research entitled: "The Effect of Using Finding Signal Word Strategy on Students' Reading Comrehension in Narrative Text at SMPN 4 Kunto Darussalam"

⁶ B. Rosenshine, et.all., (1996), *Teaching Students to Generate Questions: A Review of the Intervention Studies, Review of Educational Research*, 66, 181-221, p. 6

⁷ Cross-Curricular Literacy: Strategies for Improving Secondary Students' Reading and Writing Skills, pp. 20-21.

B. The Definition of Term

In order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation about the topic of this research, it is necessary for the writer to define the following term;

1. Effect

Effect is a measure of the strength of one variable's effect on another or the relationship between two or more variables.⁸ Effect is the power to produce an outcome or achieve a result.⁹ On the other hand, the writer concludes that effect is the result that comes or changes because something else. However, in this research, the term of effect refers to the effect of using finding signal word strategy on reading comprehension in narrative text at SMPN 4 kunto darussalam

2. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a multi component, highly complex process that involves many interactions between reader and what they bring to the text (previous knowledge, strategy use) as well as variables related to the text itself (interest in text, understanding of the text).¹⁰ In this study, the students must be able to understand the meanings, respond to the meaning and rhetorical step of short simple essay accurately, fluently and acceptably of narrative text to the interaction in daily life contexts.

⁸ Jack c. Richard and Richard Schmidt, *Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistic*, Malaysia: Pearson Education Limited [Electronic Book], 2002, p. 175

⁹ Anne H. Souk hanov, *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (Third edition)*, p.2383

¹⁰ Karen R. Harris and Steve Graham, *Teaching Reading Comprehension to Students with Learning Difficulties*, New York: The Guilford Press [Electronic Book], 2007, p. 23

3. Narrative text

Narrative text is text that explains the series of events and actions that are organized using the time order pattern.¹¹ Narrative is text focusing specific participants. Its social function is to tell stories or past events and entertain the readers. Narrative is a fundamental tool in the construction of inter subjectivity of the ability to recognize mental states in ourselves, and through imagination and projection to recognize the potential reciprocity of mental states of their beliefs, intentions, desires and the like – and it (not simply the existence of language) makes us distinctive as human beings.¹²

4. Finding Signal Word

Finding Signal Word provides students with a variety of prompts that help them generate questions before, during, and after they read. *Signal words* are words or phrases that cue the reader about an organizational pattern in the text or show a link or transition between ideas.¹³

¹¹ Kathleen T. Mcwhorter. *Efficient and Flexible Reading*. 3rd ED. (United States America: Harper Collins Publisher, 1992), p. 262

¹² Colin Harison, *Understand Reading Development*, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, SAGE Publications, 2004, p. 16

¹³ Cross-Curricular Literacy: Strategies for Improving Secondary Students' Reading and Writing Skills, pp. 20-21.

C. The Problems

1. The Identification of the Problem

Based on the background that has been explained above, we know that most of the students of SMPN 4 Kunto Darussalam of the eighth grade are still having trouble in learning English especially in reading narrative text. To make it more clear, there are the problems in this research: Some of the students are not able to comprehend the main idea of the narrative text, some of the students are not able to identify the description of information from the narrative texts clearly, some of the students are confused to recognize the generic structure of the text, some of the students are not able to identify pronominal reference of the text.

2. Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification of the problem above, it can be known clearly that there are many problems that ought to be investigated. The writer limited the problem on the students' reading comprehension of the main idea and teachers' strategy. Therefore, the focus of writer is using Finding Signal Word strategy on reading comprehension in narrative text at SMPN 4 Kunto Darussalam.

3. The Formulation of the Problem

Based on the limitation above, research questions are formulated as follows:

- a. How is students' reading comprehension in narrative text taught by using the Finding Signal Word strategy at the eighth grade of SMPN 4 Kunto Darusalam?
- b. How is students' reading comprehension in narrative text taught without using the Finding Signal Word strategy at the eighth grade of SMPN 4 Kunto Darusalam?
- c. Is there any significant effect of using Finding Signal Word on students' reading comprehension in narrative text at SMPN 4 Kunto Darrusalam?

D. The Objective and Significant of the Problem

1. The Objective of the Research

For general, the objectives of the research are the description of the research. Based on the formulation of the problem previously, the objectives of this research are as follows:

- 1) To find out the students' reading comprehension in narrative text taught by using Finding Signal Word strategy
- 2) To find out the students' reading comprehension in narrative text taught without using Finding Signal Word strategy.

- 3) To find out whether or not there is significant effect of using Finding Signal Word strategy on students' reading comprehension in narrative text.

2. The Significance of the Research

Related to the objectives of the research above, the significance of the research is as follows:

- 1) The research findings are to give the valuable input to the teachers of English at SMPN 4 Kunto Darussalam particularly and all English teachers generally as an attempt to improve the students' ability in English reading.
- 2) The research finding is expected to provide foreign language especially for those who have great concern in teaching reading.
- 3) To improve students' proficiency in reading ability, in order to give chance for students to master English.