

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an investigation and explanation on improving reading comprehension, especially for students. This chapter covers the background of the study, the research question, the purpose of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, the definition of terms, and the organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

Reading is one of the four language skills that learner needs to master in order to ensure success in learning language. Reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Grabe and Stoller (2002) state that reading is the ability to draw meaning from printed page and interpret this information appropriately. It means comprehending and interpreting the information of the text are important. It implies that students need to learn a considerable amount of information from a text. By learning reading, they are able to learn more about language component like grammar and vocabulary, which are absolutely needed to master in learning language. It shows that if the students' reading skill is poor, they also will be less in reaching their ability in mastering other English skills. Purposes of reading are getting general information from the text, getting specific information from the text and for pleasure or for interest.

Reading is the most important component in learning process and social interaction due to several reasons. *First*, reading is an indispensable communication tool in a civilized society. *Second*, that the reading materials produced in any period of time in history most influenced by social background. *Third*, developments, that over the period of the recorded history of reading has led to two very different poles (Grey, as cited in Tarigan, 2015, p. 109). Elizabeth (2007) states that reading is a process of looking at a written or printed symbol and translating it into an

appropriate sound. This spoken symbol is further associated with an object for which it stands. Therefore, reading consists of three elements: the symbol (written and printed), the sound, and the sense. In reading, a message is interpreted by other people. Reading is not only looking at words and spelling of a written text, and following the letters carefully line by line of the text, but also understanding written text. In addition, reading is very important to be acquired by the students in the learning process. It is not only for academic purposes, but also for daily life. Obviously, there are many learning sources written in English, so it is important for students to have a good reading skill, especially reading comprehension skill. On the other hand, they also need reading skill to get up-to-date information from mass media such as newspapers, magazines, televisions and the internet.

According to Brown (2007), reading is a process of negotiation of meaning. It means that readers combine information from text and their background knowledge to build meaning. Readers have to employ all knowledge in their brain to make sense of the text and they pay attention to the text itself for the words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and the connection between sentences to comprehend the text. In the process of reading, the reader is influenced by his past experiences, language background, cultural framework and the purpose for reading. So, comprehension is very important in reading process.

Comprehension is the objective of reading. Reading without trying to comprehend it, is nonsense. Therefore, it is very essential for students to comprehend their reading. According to Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, comprehension is the ability to understand completely and be familiar with a situation, facts, etc. While reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text (Woolley, 2011).

Students without good reading comprehension skills will face some troubles in their English learning process. They will not be able to make notes in-class properly, understand what they are reading, summarize in writing what they have

read or produced the required piece of work as assigned by the instructor from course materials and the various online sources (Charoenwongsak, 2005).

In addition, Harris and Smith (1980) point out that the heart of the act of reading is obtaining appropriate meanings. Word recognition, which has been considered, is prerequisite of reading comprehension, but recognition without understanding is worth very little. Meanwhile, Bormuth (1969), as cited in Harris and Smith (1980) states that comprehension ability is thought to be a set of generalized knowledge acquisition skills that permit people to acquire and explore information gained in consequence of reading printed language.

Besides, Reading is bringing meaning to and getting meaning from printed or written material (Finochiaro and Bonomo, as cited in Tarigan, 2015, p. 119). Through the reading activity, the students can enlarge their knowledge and it can also make them wise and respectful. Students' reading ability must be developed. Teachers have duties to develop their skill and ability.

An observation held in one of high schools in Cimahi shows that students have many difficulties in reading comprehension. This is because each student has different background knowledge. For example, they have difficulties in understanding and finding the main idea in a text. They know how to pronounce the word but not really understand the meaning of the sentence is read. Therefore, teachers must have appropriate learning strategies to help students in reading comprehension. The technique used should increase students' interest in reading to avoid tedium. So that students can easy to understand in reading comprehension. In order to solve that problem, a good technique, method, or technique should be used in order to make students become active, enjoy, interest and comprehend about the main point of the reading text. In this case the researcher use the Think-Pair-Share technique to improve students' reading comprehension especially students of SMAN 2 Cimahi.

Think-Pair-Share is a technique introduced by Professor Frank Lyman at the University of Maryland in 1981. This is a cooperative learning technique where

students think about their response to a prompt or question, then discuss their individual answers in pairs. This is a low-risk technique to get many students actively involved in classes of any size. Using this technique, all of the students can be involved in the learning process effectively. Researcher believes that this teaching technique can improve students' reading comprehension effectively. To get a good achievement for English subject, students are taught to think individually and discuss the ideas with their partner and then share the result of discussion in the classroom.

Regarding the brief explanation and definition above, this study will concern on improving students reading comprehension through the think-pair-share technique. Another reason of using this technique is that on the previous study the technique successfully proved.

The previous related study by Gede Natha Darsana (2014), which held in SMK PGRI 4 Denpasar, stated that the technique significantly could improve the students' reading comprehension. Therefore, the researcher tried to implement the same technique in the study. The purpose is to know whether the technique could be successful or not. As for what has distinguished on this study, the researcher also ask about student responses about the technique.

Moreover, the result of the study hopefully could help the students improve their reading comprehension.

1.2 Research Questions

This study is carried out to answer the research questions as follows:

1. How can think-pair-share technique improve students' reading comprehension at high school students in Bandung?
2. What is the students' responses about think-pair-share technique in improving reading comprehension at high school students in Bandung?

1.3 Aims of the Study

Based on the research questions formulated above, the study aims to:

1. Investigate whether the think-pair-share technique could improve students' reading comprehension.
2. Identify the students' responses about the think-pair-share technique in improving reading comprehension.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focused on improving the students' reading comprehension through think-pair-share among high school students in Bandung. The analysis centered on how the method can improve the students' reading comprehension. The Classroom Action Research was used in the study.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to several significances for theoretical and practical benefits.

1. Theoretical benefit

The research findings can be used as the contribution and reference to the research about the improvement of students' reading comprehension.

2. Practical benefit

The result of the study is expected to be one of the potential reading comprehension methods for high school students.

1.6 Clarification of related terms

Reading

Reading skill is a helpful tool that students practice in order to improve reading (Hollas, 2002). Teachers teach various skills to improve understanding of

reading. Unfortunately, many of students while interpreting do not comprehend what they are reading.

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text (Woolley, 2011). Reading is not only looking at words and spelling of a written text, and following the letters carefully line by line of the text, but also understanding written text.

Reading Purpose and Reading Skills

Nunan (1999) states that it is important to bear in mind that reading is not an invariant skill, that there are different types of reading skills which correspond to the many different purposes we have for reading. Rivers and Temperley (as cited in Nunan 1989) suggest that there are seven main purposes for reading:

- a. To obtain information for some purpose or because we are curious about some topic;
- b. To obtain instructions on how to perform some task for our work or daily life (e.g., knowing how an appliance works);
- c. To act in a play, play a game, do a puzzle;
- d. To keep in touch with friends by correspondence or to understand business letters;
- e. To know when or where something will take place or what is available;
- f. To know what is happening or has happened (as reported in newspapers, magazines, reports);
- g. For enjoyment or excitement.

In order to accomplish those reading purposes maximally, reading skills or reading strategies are important to be learned by the reader. In addition, instead of

knowing what the purpose of their reading, efficient readers also have to know the strategies for achieving those purposes, and how to retain the information (Brown, 2001).

Think-Pair-Share

Think-Pair-Share is a cooperative learning discussion strategy first developed by Professor Frank Lyman at the University of Maryland in 1981 and adopted by many writers in the field of cooperative learning since then. In addition, Kagan (2009), also states that Frank Lyman created a very powerful frame sequencing three structures called think-pair-share.

Mc Candlish (2012) states that think-pair-share is a cooperative discussion that has 3 parts to the process – students think about a question or an issue, they talk with a partner about their thoughts, then some students share their discussion and thinking with the class.

Simply, think-pair-share technique is defined as a technique of teaching reading comprehension which is introduced by Lyman and his colleagues in Maryland. It gets its name from the three stages of student action, with emphasis on what students are due at each of those stages. The first step is thinking, give students several minutes to read the descriptive text and think about the question. The second step is a pair; the students then pair with a partner and discuss their idea about the answer for several minutes. The third step is share, after getting the answer; the students share their idea to the class. Generally, the students feel more comfortable when they share their ideas with support from their partner.

1.7 Organization of paper

In order to make this study systematically understandable, it is arranged into five chapters.

The first chapter explains the information related to the background of the study, the research questions, the aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, definition of related terms, and organization of the paper.

The second chapter consists of theoretical foundations of the study. This chapter also discusses the definition of reading, reading comprehension, think-pair-share technique, and other theories which are relevant to the study.

Then the third chapter provides the methodology of the study in conducting the study and description of research procedures used in order to answer the research questions provided in the Chapter I. This chapter consists of research questions, aims of the study, research design, the data collection, and finally the data analysis.

The next chapter explains the result of the study, including the analysis of data based on the data collection and the theoretical frameworks, and the interpretation of the findings from the study.

Finally, the last chapter consists of the conclusions about the study. Furthermore, it elaborates some suggestions for English teacher, students, and the other researcher.