

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION METHOD IN TEACHING READING
COMPREHENSION IN EIGHT GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP N 3 BANTUL IN
ACADEMIC YEAR 2017/2018**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to find out whether there is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension ability between students who are taught by small group discussion method and students who are taught by preaching method in eight grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Bantul in academic year 2017/2018.

This research was a quasi-experimental research. The design of this research was Nonequivalent pre-test post-test control group design. The population of this research was all of students class VIII. The sample was class VIII A as control class and VIII B as experimental class. The analysis techniques used t-test with α 0.05. The data collection used test.

The result of this research shows that there is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension ability between both experimental and control classes. It can be seen from the mean score in the post-test of experimental class and control class. The mean score of experimental class is higher than the mean score of control class ($70.85 > 51.28$). It is proved by the result of hypothesis testing through Independent samples T-Test. The significant value is lower than α 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$) which means that the result of this research are considered to have significant difference. Therefore, the hypothesis of this research is accepted. It means that small group discussion method is significantly effective for the students' reading comprehension ability in teaching learning process at SMP Negeri 3 Bantul.

Keywords: *Small Group Discussion Method, Students' reading comprehension ability.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is the way to get information from the text. The process of comprehension is needed mental and physic. Burhan (2011:9) states that reading comprehension involves of physic and mental activity to reveal the meaning of the written text, while in that activity there is a process of knowing letters. The physic activity is the parts of the body, our eyes particularly, do it. The mental activity is perception and memory as parts of thought are involved in it. The main goal of reading comprehension is getting information from the written text. There are many written text forms in life, such as advertisements, magazines, newspapers, piece of news; they are printed in written form. In order to get information, reader needs to have reading comprehension ability. Reading comprehension is considered as skill in reading, without it reader cannot get the information either implicit or explicit messages. Hafner (1974: 117) proposes two factors influencing reading comprehension ability. Intelligence is the first factor and the main factor of reader's capability in reading comprehension. The second factor is background knowledge of reader. If the reader has well sufficient background knowledge about the theme of the text he or she is going to read, it will help him or her a lot in comprehending the text. In addition, Cathrine (2002: 11) explains that there are four elements of reading comprehension, those are cognitive abilities (attention, memory, critical ability, inference, visualization); motivation (a purpose for reading and interest in the content); knowledge (vocabulary and topic knowledge, linguistic, and discourse knowledge, comprehension strategies); and experiences. These are varying among readers and varying within

understanding different text types and in the different reading activity.

Students of junior high school have to be able to read text types in English subject. In general, students of junior high school do their task by reading as fast as they can until they find words that they do not know the meaning. They will skip the words and move to the other sentences or jump to the other text, when they do not understand the content of the text. This is worst reading activity. In fact, student needs to get information in order to comprehend the text that they read. Student who does not read comprehensive will influence their achievement of getting information and will get low scores as an outcome in learning.

Student's reading comprehension ability can be measured by the student's knowledge of the text written that they have read. The measurement is a test from teacher. Students are given some questions about the text then they answer it correctly. So the result of students' scores is a tool to verify how far students' achievement in reading comprehension process. The reading comprehension process cannot be directly observed, all scores or data produced by reading test that measures students' reading process indirectly.

Students' achievement in reading comprehension is also influenced by teaching process in the class. Teaching process must be enjoyable. Moedjiono and Dimyati (2013: 23) say that teaching process involves students, teachers, contents, methods, media, evaluations, and the goals of learning. Those are called as components in teaching process. From the components, we know that teacher is one of the components in teaching process. She is as a creator that can create a creative teaching process in teaching reading comprehension. The other component that can help to create fun teaching process in the class is using method. It supports enjoyable teaching

learning process, so the students' final outcome will be better.

One of the method that teacher can use is small group discussion. According to Djamarah (2006: 73-74) small group discussion is learning method that gives effect for students to study more active in teaching and learning processes, because they can interact with their friends. It is conducted by making a group to achieve the goals of learning and to improve students' final outcome in learning. It also gives a technique of problem solving, communication actively, restore of team work, and increases students' participations in taking decision.

Applying small group discussion method gives benefits to overcome students' problems in reading comprehension through discussion the implicit information of the text that they have read and solve the difficult meaning of the text, then answer questions together. Besides that, small group discussion can decrease of students' anxiety in reading comprehension; they can share the difficulties to their friends in the same group easily. They will be more opened among them and they will help each other to read more comprehensively to get the main information of the text up to the end of task. McKeown, Beck, & Blake, in McLaughlin (2012: 433) state that class discussion plays an important role in reading comprehension. Students refine their understanding by negotiating meaning with others, i.e. through class discussion. It is engaging students in such discussion promote active engagement in constructing meaning from a text.

Reading comprehension is the key of success for the students. They can be said success when they get high scores in the final learning. Students' competency in reading comprehension will help them to increase their scores, through small group discussion method.

Moreover, students have opportunity to share their ideas and questions.

Based on the observation that was conducted by the researcher in eight grade students in SMP Negeri 3 Bantul. It found that the condition was same with the previous problem mentioned in English teaching learning process. The problem mentioned that the teaching learning goal was not achieved because students' scores were low. It showed by their pre-test scores. Students' mean score were 16.00 from the minimal score 75.00. It was influenced by many factors in teaching learning process. One of them is teaching style in delivery the material. Teacher used preaching method in her teaching process. She gave tasks then students had to answer it according to the text that they had read. Teacher used preaching method in teaching process. It was caused students feel bored and uninterested. Students felt bored because students just got tasks to be finished. They cannot share their opinion in learning. The other problem that makes teaching reading process was not interesting i.e there was no feedback interaction between teacher and students. Students wanted to ask but felt shame and teacher did not have enough time to have discussion.

Reading comprehension is also language skill which most of the students are afraid. They are afraid if they do not understand the content of text, they cannot get information what is actually written. Reading comprehension skill is needed to answer the questions in English exam subject. Considering the importance of reading comprehension skill, it seems necessary to conduct a research and try to find out an alternative solution in teaching reading comprehension.

We can see from the background of the problems. It is clearly seen that most of the students have low reading comprehension ability. It is showed by the students' result in pre-test. Students'

mean scores of control and experimental classes were 16.00 from standard minimal score 75.00. There are three factors that create these problems. They are English teacher, method, and students. Those elements are having important effect of the students' outcome in reading comprehension. The following are the discussion of each element.

First, English teacher is not sensitive of students' problems in learning English subject, especially when students do their task. Teacher thought that she has given the theory of the text types, so students will answer the questions easily. Sometimes teacher has opinion that reading is easy, so she does not need to explain good reading process that is comprehensive. In addition, teacher uses preaching method.

Second, using of preaching method. The using of appropriate method will be influenced of students' achievement in learning. Preaching method emphasizes of listening process, so students are passive and teacher are more active in teaching learning process.

Third, students have influence that brings effect of achievement in their learning processes. It is widely believed that students bring their uniqueness. Each individual has their own characteristic, talents, interests, and different family background. This uniqueness, students become one impact of the important factor that is affected reading comprehension ability in this research.

The research focuses to know the effect of small group discussion method in teaching reading comprehension. It can help teacher to limit their explanations in teaching because students more active in a group. They can share their knowledge about the material and teacher can observe students' activity while learning process. Based on the identification of the problems above, it is impossible to

research all issues, because it is insufficient of time and cost. So, researcher limits one problem that influences the students' reading comprehension ability. The researcher focuses on the method of teaching process. The preaching method that English teacher used in teaching learning process at SMP N 3 Bantul caused students are unable to get their maximum achievement of reading comprehension ability. It did not give opportunity for students to express their idea, opinion, problems. Students are bored during the teaching learning process, and they still had difficulties dealing with reading comprehension, while reading is an important skill for students before acquiring other skills. It is needed a method to overcome this problem. The use of small group discussion is supposed to be alternative solution for the English teacher at grade eight students of SMP Negeri 3 Bantul in teaching reading comprehension.

Based on the backgrounds of study above, so the research question can be formulated. "Is there any significant difference of students' reading comprehension ability between students who are taught by small group discussion method and students who are taught by preaching method?"

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Small Group Discussion

According to Djamarah (2006: 73-74) small group discussion is learning method that gives effect for students to study more active in teaching and learning processes, because they can interact with their friends. It is conducted by making a group to achieve the goals of learning and to improve students' outcome in learning. It also gives a technique of problem solving, communication actively, restore of team work, and increasing of students' participations in taking decision.

Moreover, Bormann (1996: 44) small group discussion is something that composed three or more people working together to do a clearly specified activity or to reach a common goal.

Based on some definitions above, it is concluded that small group discussion is a group that contains of three to five students who joined together to interact or share about the teaching learning materials to achieve the goals of learning.

Discussion process is needed for students' activeness. Students who are passive because they are not interested in teaching learning process that teacher does by preaching method, they will be more interested and active by small group method. It is caused that they can make discussion with their friends about the text types in English subject.

2. Preaching Method

The oldest method of teaching is preaching method. It is applied in educational institution. This teaching method is one way channel of communication of information. Students' involvement in this teaching method is just to listen and sometimes write down some notes if necessary during the lecture, combine the information and organize it.

Sudjana (2013: 77) defines that preaching method is expression of learning materials orally. This method is familiar of teaching process in the classroom. It is the one of method which is ineffective because students follow passively. The characteristic of this method, teacher is a core of teaching process whereas students just follow the teacher explanation. This condition is not good in teaching especially reading comprehension, because students need time to focus on the text and they have their own opinion about the text. In this method students have not opportunity to share their idea, and solve their problems. Preaching method has advantages and disadvantages.

3. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the connection between what you are reading and what you already know (Jeffries, 2007: 16). In addition, Burns et al (1984: 148) state that the objective of all readers is, or should be comprehended of what they read. Furthermore, readers typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text (Pang et al, 2003: 6).

According to Grellet (1992: 3), reading comprehension means understanding a written text to extract the required information from it as efficiently as possible. Kennedy (1981: 192) states that reading comprehension is a thought process through which reader becomes aware of an idea, understands it in terms of their experiential background and interprets it in relation to their own needs and purposes.

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that the nature of reading comprehension is the process of understanding of written text that is included of reader's thought to interpret the content.

Table 5. The Aspects of the Reading Comprehension

Functions of Reading	Aspects of Reading
1. Reading to find information	Scanning for word, phrase or information
2. Reading for general understanding	Getting the: Topics implicit information
3. Reading to learn	understanding references synonym antonym

4. Reading to critique and evaluate	Identify the communicative purpose of the text. Making inferences based on related topics.

(Adopted and Adapted from Grabe in Troike, 2006: 157)

The questions in the instrument have to represent the function of reading. There are two types of question test. They are pre-test and post-test. Pre-test is used to know the initial condition of students' reading comprehension between control class and experimental class whereas post-test used to find the different scores between control class who are taught by preaching method and experimental class who are taught by small group discussion method.

The question tests have to find the validity and reliability. The researcher did try out at class VIII E for questions of pre-test and post-test. The questions which are not valid and reliable are discharged from instrument test. After the researcher conducted try out, the question test can be implemented for control class (class VIIIA) and experimental class (class VIIIB).

The instrument test tried out on Saturday, 22nd July 2017 at class VIII E. The total numbers of pre-test and post-test were 50 questions in multiple choice forms. The researcher selected valid items to arrange the pre-test and post-test. Then, the fixed blue print is presented below.

Table 6. The Aspects of Reading Comprehension of Pre-test

Functions of Reading	Aspects of Reading
1. Reading to find information	Scanning for word, phrase or information
2. Reading for general	ting the: Topics

understanding	implicit information
3. Reading to learn	1. understanding references nononym tononym
4. Reading to critique and evaluate	Identify the communicative purpose of the text. Making inferences based on related topics.
Total	5

(Adopted and Adapted from Grabe in Troike, 2006: 157)

RESEARCH METHOD

The population of the research was all of students class VIII of SMP N 3 Bantul in academic year 2017/2018. There were eight classes from class A until class H. They were totaly 218 students. The sample of the research was class VIII A as control class and class VIII B as experimental class. They were chosen by simple random techniques. This research was a design of quasi-experimental research. the independent of the research was the using of small group discussion method in teaching reading comprehension) and the dependent variable of the research was students' reading comprehension ability. The control class applied preaching method and the experimental class applied small group discussion method.

The research instrument was two set of reading comprehension ability, those were pre-test and post-test instruments. They were a series of multiple choice forms. The instrument tests were arranged by the indicators of reading comprehension. It was tested to know the quality by a try out. The validity was analyzed Point Biserial Correlation in SPSS version 16.00 and the reliability was analyzed by correlated coefficient reliability of table. The hipotesis are needed to answer, this research used pre-testing to know the normality and the homogeneity of the data. The hipotesis

was answered by comparing the students' pre-test and post-test scores. It was also supported by t-test of pre-test (to know the initial condition between both class) and t-test of post-test (the condition both class between class that was taught by preaching method and class that was taught by small group discussion method).

RESEARCH FINDING

The conclusion of the research found that the initial condition both class VIII A (control class) and class VIII B (experimental class) were same. It showed sig. Value $0.219 > 0.05$. The mean score of pre-test of control and experimental class showed that there is no significant difference 51.85 (control class) and 46.14 (experimental class). Teaching learning in class control and experimental class conducted during four days each class. The result of post-test was found that there is a significant difference between both class from pre-test and post-test and it was supported by t-test. The post-test mean score of control class was 51.28 and the opposite result of experimental class was 76.85. It means that the using of small group discussion method is effective than preaching method in teaching reading comprehension.

It has been explained before that small group discussion method in teaching reading comprehension is better on students' reading comprehension because they can read more comprehensive with their friends in a small group then discuss the information that they have read. Integrating the reading text into small group make sense to get students more sensitive to find the information of the text (Harmer, 2001: 70). All of these contribute to successful task orientation and increase students' motivation in reading to gain information through read

comprehension and discussion (Harmer, 2001: 114).

Based on the result of the research, It can be concluded that small group discussion method is a good method that can applied in teaching reading comprehension to the students in the junior high school level. This method enables students to be active and share their information that they have read comprehensively of the text written. This method engages students to solve their problem while answering the questions of reading test.

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