

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

In the 1994 English Curriculum, it is stated that English is the first foreign language and a compulsory subject at school to be learnt by the students. For students who are learning English, studying English means mastering the four language skills namely speaking, writing, listening, and reading integratedly.

Reading as one of the English skills mentioned above is important for students to acquire. Anamaria (1980:34) explains that the objective of teaching students to read in a foreign language is to help them recognize, process, and retrieve meaningful information in the passage. Supporting this, Adenan (1989:82) and Nababan as quoted by Ngadiman (1990:1) strengthen that the skill of reading is viewed as the essential means of access to the information contained in textbooks needed for their studies.

Regarding the fact that reading skill plays an important role in the English learning, the 1994 English Curriculum then states that since the first year of junior high school, students are acquainted to all the English skills with reading as the main emphasis. In this case the 1994 English Curriculum says

Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris di sekolah lanjutan tingkat pertama mencakup ketrampilan membaca, menyimak, berbicara, dan menulis dalam bahasa Inggris yang sedapat mungkin disajikan secara terpadu; namun demikian, penekanannya terutama pada ketrampilan membaca (1993:1)

(The English version for the objective above is as follows :

The teaching of English in Junior High School includes the skills of Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing which are presented integrately with Reading as the main emphasis.)

In reality, however, many students find difficulties in comprehending a reading passage. Most of them complain that the passage is so difficult that they cannot make head or tail of the ideas presented. This condition is not supported with the limited time allotment for English classes. The time allotment for each session only lasts for 45 minutes.

Besides the limited time, most teachers still deal with the traditional reading technique. Students are told to read the passage, do the exercises, and check the answers together. If a different opinion arises, the teacher directly provides the correct answer and students accept it naturally. In other words, the teacher holds the main role and thus reducing students' opportunity to participate actively. Jacobs (1996:2) strengthens that in such a teacher-fronted class, teacher speaks about 80% of the time which leaves the students only a very limited time. And in a class consisting of approximately 40 students, this condition is a disadvantage for the students since they do not get enough time to share their opinion about the passage being discussed.

Due to the real condition inside the English classes mentioned above, the writer then suggests the idea of applying group work in teaching reading comprehension.

According to some experts, the implementation of group work can generate

some positive effects. Both Davies (1980:39) and Murphey (1990:4) agree that giving students opportunity to work in small groups and letting them experience the natural give-and-take of discussion from their peers can be more successful than providing students with direct correction from the teacher. In small groups, students can interact and exchange ideas with their peers freely. They are encouraged to actively search for the answers to the questions given without depending too much on the teacher.

In line with this, Farivar and Webb as quoted by Jacobs (1996:2) confirms that help from peers actually increases learning both for the students being helped as well as for those giving help. Besides as the students become more involved in the classroom activity, they are more motivated to follow the flow of the teaching learning process. In short, group work is helpful in helping students have better understanding of the material being studied.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The major problems posed in this study are :

1. Is there a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique ?
2. Is there a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique as related to the types of questions given ?

Of the two major problems above, only the second one has some minor problems as follows :

1. Is there a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique as related to the factual questions given ?
2. Is there a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique as related to the inference questions given ?
3. Is there a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique as related to the main idea questions given ?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statements of the problem above, the objectives of this study are as follows :

1. To see whether there is a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique.
2. To see whether there is a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique as related to the types of questions given.

Of the two major objectives above, only the second one has some minor objectives as follows :

1. To see whether there is a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique as related to the factual questions given.
2. To see whether there is a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique as related to the inference questions given.
3. To see whether there is a significant difference in the reading achievement of the second year students taught using group work and the one taught using traditional reading technique as related to the main idea questions given.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give contribution both to the teaching of reading to the junior high school students, especially the second grade ones, and also to the students themselves.

Hopefully, the use of group work in the teaching learning process can add the variety of techniques used in teaching reading skill. While for the students, the use of group work may help them improve their competence in their reading skill.

1.5 Hypothesis

In conducting her study, the writer uses two hypotheses as follows :

1. The Alternative Hypothesis which says that there is a significant difference between the reading achievement of the students taught using group work and the ones taught using traditional reading technique.

2. The Null Hypothesis which says that there is no significant difference between the reading achievement of the students taught using group work and the ones taught using traditional reading technique.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The writer finds it necessary to limit the scope of this study. This study is about teaching reading comprehension based on the 1994 English Curriculum for junior high school through group work.

The subject of this study is also limited to the second year students of SLTPK Santo Stanislaus I Surabaya belonging to the school year of 1997-1998. The writer considers that the second year students have already got enough practice in reading while they are in the first year.

The reading passages used during the research are taken from the main textbook used in the school. As additional sources, the writer also takes some passages from other textbooks for the second grade.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding, the writer finds it necessary to define these following key terms :

a. Effect

The result of the implementation of Group Work and Traditional Reading Technique on the students' reading comprehension achievement measured by Post Test design to determine if there is any significant difference between the

scores of the group taught using Group Work and the one taught using Traditional Reading.

b. Group

Group is a number of people who interact with one another, who are psychologically aware of one another, and who perceive themselves to be a group. (Brumfit, 1984:72)

c. Group Work

Group work is a way of learning which necessitates effective implementation of peers' ideas, cooperation and sharing of information, mutual help. (Bejarano, 1987:487)

d. Reading

Reading is not only recognizing the essential facts of ideas presented, but also reflecting on their significance, evaluating them critically, discovering relationship between them, and clarifying the understanding of the ideas apprehended. (Dupuis and Askov, 1982:20)

e. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension means reading with full understanding to obtain maximum comprehension of a text. To show an understanding, the readers should be able to re-express and give response to the content of the text. (Smith and Robinson, 1980:205)

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the theories of reading and group work. Wardhaugh (1969:133) regards reading as an active process in which a reader must make an active contribution by drawing upon and using concurrently various abilities he has acquired. This is strengthened by Dupuis and Askov (1982:20) who add that the active involvement includes the readers' efforts to reflect on the significance of the ideas, evaluate them critically, discover relationship between them, and clarify the understanding of the ideas apprehended.

Concerning group work, Bejarano (1987:487) defines group work as a way of learning which necessitates effective implementation of peers' ideas, cooperation and sharing of information, mutual help.

In reading classes, the use of group work is very useful. According to Christison (1990:9) an activity requiring an information exchange among students helps them have a deeper understanding of the passage.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter I deals with the Introduction consisting of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Objective of the Study, Significance of the Study, Hypothesis, Scope and Limitation of the Study, Definition of Key Terms, Theoretical Framework, and Organization of the Study. Chapter II deals with Review of Related Literature. Chapter III deals with Methodology. Chapter IV deals with Interpretation of the Findings and Chapter V is about Conclusion.