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## THE EFFECT OF USING SMALL - GROUP WORK TECHNIQUE ON THE STUDENTS ACHIEVEMENT IN READING COMPREHENSION AT SMP MUHAMMADIYAH 06 MEDAN

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### Abstract

*This study deals with the effect of using small-group work (sgw) technique on Student's Reading Comprehension. The objective of the study is to find out whether the use of SGW learning has a significant effect on students reading comprehension. In carrying out this study. The research took 82 students of SMP MUHAMMADIYAH 06 MEDAN as the sample of the study. It was divided into two groups. The first group ( Experimental Group) which contain was taught by using SGW. Which contain of 43 students was taught by using conventional method. The result shows that the students were taught by using SGW were higher that the students taught by other text. Value were got is  $149,8 > 0,05$ . it means that SGW has applied to the students in teaching reading gave significant effect.*

**Keywords:** *small group work, reading comprehension, descriptive text*



## **A. Introduction**

Language is convey one's feelings though, intention or information to other both and the spoken form and in written form involves writer and reader. The role of teachers in giving motivation and the way to be developed the students ability in learning english in needed. Reading is the goal of english teaching in Indonesia has been not achieved yet it showed that the students weakness in reading is still unsolved.

The written word surrounds us daily. It confused us, it depresses and amuses us, with the ability of reading, one is able to gain information and improve knowledge. This is one of the most important factors in modern society, each individual has to search for information through the medium of reading, much information and knowledge are available in textbooks, journal, article, magazine, novel, short story, etc. Language proficiency consist of four skills namely : listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading is the important language skill for academic achievement, besides speaking, listening comprehension and then writing. Nuwnue ( 2010 : 3) states that reading is an activity to get information, increasing perception through written text and also interpreting and analyzing text. However reading comprehension is one of language skill, which needs to be mastered by students. Reading comprehension refers to the ability of understanding information presented in writen form. When student are learning to read, they are learning to get meaning and relate it to the knowledge that is alreadding stored in their mind.

Mastery of reading is a significant problem is schools especially for SMP. Almost the number of the students can not read the text and to build the meaning from the text. The students do not interest in reading a text because they are difficult to comprehend the text, the teaching technique from the teacher can nor solve the problem. The teacher still use conventional method that make the students get bored and mootonous. We know that when reading skills are inadequate or minimal, time is wasted, frustration can become overwhelming and the lost of interest may start the cycle which blocks further learning (Nuwnue 2010 : 3).

Most of the students felt difficult and got bored in reading a text. They were not interest in reading was not effective. Students were only asked to translate the whole reading material and answer the question which is given by the teacher.

Considering to the condition above. It is needed to provide various technique and strategies in teaching reading. The educators need to develop their ability in teaching reading, Arends (2007:17) states that the



final goal of teaching is to make the students to be an independent and self – regulation learner. It means that the ways of students learning is not books,their friends, adult and many more. One of the teaching technique that can be tolerance is small group work. Its an active reading technique. According to Snow ( 2002 : 21), Small Group Work Technique is one of the techniques in teaching learning process in which students are divided into several groups. Each group consists of four of five students, and they work together to solve a problem or a certain assignment. In brief, it can be inferred that the activity done in small group working technique is either to discuss ideas, to solve problems, or to complete the assignment collaboratively or cooperative either in the laboratory or in the classroom. According to Paris( 2005:194), there are several advantages of small group working technique. First the result of discussion is better than the individual work because in small group working, the students can share each other. Second, the student will be more motivated because they get new materials that they have never seen before. Third, the students are free to express their opinion and ideas as the leader of the member of a group. Fourth, all the members in a group will be involved in making a final result of the discussion. In addition, Further, Paris ( 2005 : 184 ) points out small group working technique is beneficial, because it will increase the motivation and responsibility of the groups members, all members on each group will be able to find the job’s weakness and try to make problem solving, and the activity involves all students in the classroom.

### The Nature of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning by coordinating a number of complex process that include word reading. Word and word knowledge and fluency ( Klinger, Vaughn and Boardman 2007:2-3) McNamara and Magliano (2009) emphasized that this process is a task of both reader and text factors that happen within a larger social context. Duke (2003) stated that comprehension is a process in which readers make meaning by interacting with text through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience, information in the text, and the views of readers related to the text. The purpose is to get an understanding of the text rather than to acquire meaning from individual words or sentences. The outcome of reading comprehension is the mental representation of a text meaning that is combined with the readers’ previous knowledge. Our knowledge and experiences realted to the key ideas in the text we read, influence what we learn and remember about



what we read. World knowledge and word meaning influence our understanding

Klingner, Vaughn and Broadman (2007, 6) notes some reasons for failure in comprehension. He divides the reasons into two types, namely : first, the reason are connected with defective reading habits : second, the reason arise directly from the text.

The Reason is connected with reading habits.

- Some students find it difficult to see the wood for trees. They may read slowly and carefully, paying a lot attention to individuals points, but without succesfull in getting a clear idea of the overall meaning of a text.
- Other student (especially those who read quickly ) do not always pay enough attention to detail. They may have a good idea general meaning of the text, but misunderstand the particular points. Sometimes, by overlooking an important small word (for instance) a conjunction,a negotiation, and as modal verb. They may get completely false impresion of the meaning of part of the passage.
- Some students are imaginative readers especially if they know something about the subject , or have a strong opinion about it. They may interpret the text in the light of their own experience and view points, so that they find it difficult to saporate what the writer says from what they fell themselves.

The Reason Arise Directly from the text.

- Long and complicated sentences are difficult to cope with in a foreign language, even when the words are easy, syntactic completely may cause a reader to lose the read.
- Some writers favor a word and repetitive style : practice is needed to be able to see through the words to the ideas which is underlined them.
- A writer may express an important idea indirectly. In order to understand some text, one needs to be sensitive to the implication of a remark : to draw the necessary inference from what is not stated directly. This is of course particularly difficult in a foreign language.
- Words and expression, which the student does not know, obviously present a problem ( unless he is working with a dictionary ). However students do not always realize how easy it is guess many unknown words simply by studying the context. Some students indeed are so disturbed by unfamiliar vocabulary that their comprehension of the whole passage suffer.



## Kinds of Reading comprehension

There are two different kinds of reading. They are extensive reading and intensive reading. There are different definitions for extensive reading. Hedge (2003) described it as skimming and scanning activities while Hafiz and Tudor (1989 as cited in Alyousef 2005) expressed that exposing learners to large quantities of meaningful and fascinating materials and activities will have a significant impact on the learners' knowledge of L2. A lot of researchers have shown great interest in extensive reading in the last years. A three-month extensive reading study was carried out by Hafiz and Tudor (1989 as cited in Alyousef 2005). The subjects of this study were Pakistani ESL learners in a UK school. The results obtained from this research indicated a significant advancement in the performance of the experimental subjects, particularly their writing skills. The subjects' improvement was somehow related to exposure to many lexical, syntactic, and textual features in the reading materials and the nature of the extensive reading materials. Hedge (2003) declared that extensive reading differs based on learners' motivation and School resources. A highly motivated and well-trained teacher can certainly select appropriate materials and activities for their own learners. Hedge (2003) stressed that because extensive reading assists in expanding learners' reading skill, it should be incorporated into the EFL/ESL programmes provided that the chosen texts are valid and classified. In addition, extensive reading helps learners to gain their independency through reading either in class or at home. According to Carrell and Eisterhold (1983 as cited in Alyousef 2005), extensive reading activities can be beneficial in aiding learners to become self-directed individuals who are searching for meaning provided that they are based on student-selected texts that learners will be interested in what they are reading. The process of choosing reading texts will be done according to content, level of difficulty, and length. Hedge (2003) mentioned the benefits of extensive reading as follows: Students can make their language proficiency, advance in their reading skill, become more independent in their learning, learn cultural knowledge, and expand confidence and incentive to continue their own learning.

In this type of reading, learners read a page to find the meaning and to be familiar with the strategies of writing. Through this reading, students can get fundamental practice in performing these strategies based on a series of materials. These strategies can be either text-related or learner-related. The first involves recognition of text organization and the



second involves strategies such as linguistic, schematic, and metacognitive strategies (Hedge, 2003). Yang, Dai, and Gao (2012) expressed that intensive reading is useful to develop reading comprehension. According to Waring (2001), intensive reading is very important for learning vocabulary and understanding how text is formed. Stahl (2003) found that there is relationship between intensive reading activities and language proficiency. According to Paran (2003), teachers need intensive reading to increase the three phases of learning called pre, during, and post-reading for better language readiness, retention, and activation strategies. Pollar, Durodo, Gonzalez, Simmons, Kwok, Taylor, Davis, and Simmons (2011) said that intensive reading is considered as a significant instrument for improving reading comprehension.

#### The factors of reading comprehension

A reader understanding of text is influenced by a road range of factors, including his or her motivation, interest, vocabulary, general knowledge, knowledge of the particular subject. Word identification, skills, reasoning ability, use of effective strategies to identify main idea and supporting detail, and an appreciation of text structure (westwood 2001-23). Reading with understanding involves the smooth co-ordinating of higher order cognitive processes (thinking, reasoning, analysing, connecting, reflecting ) and lower order processes (word recognition, decoding).

Some students are poor comprehension because they lack fluency in lower order reading processes. For example. Slow reading caused by inefficient decoding enhances it. In the case of good readers, automatically in word recognition allows short term cognitive capacity (working memory ) to be devoted almost entirely to comprehension.

Students with limited vocabulary have comprehension difficulties for obvious reasons. They do not know the meaning of many words on the page, unless the text is very simple. So reading comprehension is closely related to a students oral language comprehension and vocabulary.

#### Levels of Reading

Westwood (2001:21-22) states level of comprehension based on reading comprehension is considered to occur at four levels of complexity. These levels are often referred to as literal level, inferential level, critical level and creative level.

1. Literal level
2. Inferential of interpretative level



3. Critical level
4. Creative level

### Models of Reading Process

There are three models for the second-language reading process: the bottom-up model, the top-down model, and the interactive model.

Carrell (1989 as cited in Ahmadi & Pourhosein Gilakjani 2012) said that the main focus of this model is the smaller units of a text like letters, words, phrases, and sentences. The reader reads all of the words in a phrase, or a sentence before understanding it. This model starts with decoding the smallest linguistic units, particularly phonemes, graphemes, and words and then makes meaning from the smallest to the largest units. The reader uses his/her background knowledge to the information that they find into the texts. There are some difficulties in this model. One of the drawbacks is that the reader is successful in reading when he/she deciphers the linguistic units and understands the connection between words. The reader is not able to keep in his/her memory the meaning of every word. The other difficulty is that it is not possible to connect one word to the other words.

Goodman (1967 as cited in Ahmadi & Pourhosein Gilakjani 2012) stated reading as a “psycholinguistic guessing game” in which readers apply their previous knowledge to relate with a text and to connect these to new information found in the text in order to understand it. The readers do not read every word of a text but they focus on identifying the next words. They try to guess the meaning of words or phrases. Readers begin forecasting from the title of the reading text that permits them to restrict the scope of their reading. Then they assume the message the writer wants to transfer and change their hypotheses based on what they read in the text. Comprehension starts with higher levels of processing and continues to the application of the lower levels (Nuttall, 1996 as cited in Ahmadi & Pourhosein Gilakjani 2012).

The effective reading needs both top-down and bottom-up decoding. L2 readers can use top-down reading to make up for deficits in bottom-up reading. To obtain meaning, they apply their schemata to make up for the absence of bottom-up knowledge (as cited in Ahmadi & Pourhosein Gilakjani 2012). According to Stanovich (1980 as cited in Ahmadi & Pourhosein Gilakjani 2012), this model is based on information from various sources like orthographic, lexical, syntactic, semantic knowledge, and schemata. While readers are reading, decoding processes support each other. If they do not understand texts, they should apply



their previous knowledge to help them. Readers who are dependent on top-down model use textual signs and infer the meaning but they should make up for deficiencies like weaknesses in word identification and lack of effective bottom-up processing. This model results in the most effective processing of texts. Teachers should find reading instructions according to this model to boost L2 readers' skills. The mutual teaching method is a reading instruction that is based on the interactive model. It involves four principal reading technique.

The measurements of reading comprehension

Turner (2000:161) state that in scoring the students reading comprehension, there are some aspects of measuring reading comprehension.

They are :

- a) Paraphrase recognition
- b) Information transfer
- c) Finding the Unstated Information

## **B. Method**

The place of the research was SMP Muhammadiyah 06 Medan, the students will be taught reading in English lesson and it is accessible in terms of time and fund.

Type of research in this research was conducted by using experimental research, which will done with two tests groups randomized pre-test and post test design. The design is applied to determine the influence of small group work techniques in reading comprehension.

To know the effect of reading teaching by using small group work technique on reading comprehension, treatment is done in experimental group. As a procedure, the teacher gives some text to the students and apply small group work technique to understand the text.

## **C. Research Finding**

The result of this research shows that there is differences of output between both of classes. Based on statistic calculation, t-observed ( 149.8) is higher for the degree of freedom (df) 80 at level of significance (a) 0.05. This differences takes places because the effect of different treatment in each class. The experimental class was taught by using small group work





technique while group was taught without using SGW technique. Based on theoretical and statistical findings, this research concludes that teaching reading comprehension by using SGW technique significantly effects that teaching reading comprehension without using SGW technique.

#### D. Discussion

The Data of this study are collected by applying multiple choice test. Multiple choice test. Multiple choice formats are practical, reliable and they give the possibility of an easy and consistent process of scoring. The test is consisted of 30 items. Each item of test included options, namely a,b,c and d, students are asked to choose the correct answer of descriptive text by crossing the correct answer.

##### 1. Experimental Class.

At the first meeting before material is taught, a pre- test is given to determine to the student's preliminary ability.

Table 1. Data in Experimental Class

Basic Statistic	Pre-Test (Y1)	Post - Test (Y2)	Standard Deviation (d)	Squared Deviation (d2)
N	39	39	39	39
Mean	37,38	82,38	1674	91340

##### 2. Class Control

Teacher opened the class by greeting the students and explaining about what topic the students are going do in this section. Students responded the greeting and listened to the teacher explanation.

Table 2 . Data in Class Control

Basic Statistic	Pre-Test (Y1)	Post - Test (Y2)	Standard Deviation (d)	Squared Deviation (d2)
N	43	43	43	43
Mean	33,90	71,09	1599	65035

##### 3. T- Test



Based on the data above, the writer concluded that alternative hypothesis (ha) is accepted and null hypothesis (ho) is rejected. It means that "there is a significant effect of applying SGW technique on students reading comprehension".

### E. Conclusion

1. Based on research findings, the researcher concludes that there is a significant effect of teaching by applying SGW technique on students reading comprehension. Reading comprehension by applying SGW technique gives better result than that teaching reading comprehension without applying SGW technique.
2. Reading comprehension by applying SGW technique has more significant effect that reading comprehension without applying SGW technique.

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