

# IMPROVING THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION AND THEIR READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT BY USING INDONESIAN FABLES AT SMP N 2 AMBULU JEMBER

Retno Andayani Lestari<sup>1</sup>, Wiwiek Istianah<sup>2</sup>, Sugeng Ariyanto<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract :** *This article is intended to describe the research result on the use of Indonesian Fables in improving VIII D Grade students' participation and their reading comprehension achievement. The research problem was the students' experienced difficulties in comprehending words, sentences, paragraph and text of the reading material. To solve this problem, the material in the form of Narrative (Fables) was used to improve students' active participation and their reading comprehension achievement. The research design was classroom action research and the primary data were collected by using reading comprehension test and observation. The result of the research showed that the use of Indonesian Fables could improve the students' active participation and their reading comprehension achievement.*

**Key Words:** *Reading comprehension achievement, students' participation, Indonesian Fables.*

## INTRODUCTION

English has been used by people around the world. English has become more important for all aspects, for example in business, science, technology, and surely education. The government of Indonesia has decided that English is one of the compulsory subjects for junior high school which have four major language skills that should be mastered by students during their period of learning in school. Teaching English involves four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Carrel, et. all (1995: 1) states that for many students, reading is one of an important skill beside the other skills such as listening, speaking and writing.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mahasiswa Program Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP UNEJ

<sup>2</sup> Staf Pengajar Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP UNEJ

<sup>3</sup> Staf Pengajar Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP UNEJ

Primarily, reading is a means of communicating information between the writer and the reader. The reader tries to understand ideas that the writer has put in print (Vacca, Vacca and Gove. 1991). In addition, Grabe (1998) confirms that reading is an interactive process. It is the process of combining textual information with the information a reader brings to a text. In this regard, reading is viewed as a kind of dialogue between the reader and the text.

Teaching and learning activities involve in an interaction between teachers, students and subject matters. The subject matter is one of the learning facilities that are used by teachers to create enthusiasm and passion to learn through the rise of interest in reading the book students is learning. According to Budiarso (2006: 25) the success of teaching reading is affected by three important factors: the syllabus, the learners, and the teacher.

Based on the observation that the researcher did by the researcher at SMP N 2 Ambulu, most of the students were not successful in reading. Based on the interview that was done on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012, the VIII D Grade students still experienced difficulties in comprehending words, sentences, paragraph and text of the reading material. Some students could not comprehend the whole text and less active in teaching learning process in reading comprehension. They are not interested in reading. The students have to understand the meaning and the purpose of the text. In fact, in VIII D they were 14 of 37 students who got score 65 and the next got score under the minimum passing level, that is 52,5. Meanwhile the standard score is 65.

Related to the above facts, preliminary studies were conducted to know the problem of reading achievement text which happens at SMPN 2 Ambulu. The problem of students' VIII D in Reading Comprehension Achievement need to be solved and their Reading Comprehension Achievement need to be improved.

Reading comprehension refers to the student ability to understand the reading text given. A reader should not only have a linguistic knowledge but also should have much background knowledge to support the linguistic one. According to Grellet (1996: 3) reading comprehension is regarded as an active process involving, predicting, checking, guessing and asking oneself question, so it is possible to develop the students'

power of inference to understand the meaning of the text. McNeil (1992: 16) defines reading comprehension as acquiring information from context and combining with the reader's existing knowledge or prior knowledge into a new whole. It can be said that the readers interact dynamically with the text as he or she tries to elicit the meaning and where the reader's background knowledge are being used.

According to the above explanations, reading comprehension means an interactive process of transferring information from text through thinking process with four steps, including the perception of words, a clear grasp of meaning, thoughtful reaction, and integration with requires that reader's knowledge, skills, and materials to comprehend.

Reading comprehension achievement according to Winkle (1984: 162), achievement is the result of successful effort that can be obtained. Referring to these explanations, it can be said that reading comprehension achievement means the level or the amount of reading ability owned by students after learning reading comprehension with effort. Achievement is related with the act of achieve something, in this case the achievement of the students is their comprehension in reading English text.

In this research, reading comprehension achievement is a degree of ability gained though skills and hard work in comprehending word, sentence, paragraph, and text. The students' reading comprehension achievement is indicated by the students' scores of reading test by using Indonesian Fables.

According to Brynes (2008), reading comprehension has some different purposes, they are:

- a. To gain information from the text
- b. To verify existing knowledge
- c. To critique one's idea
- d. To enhance knowledge of the language being read
- e. To get enjoyment or pleasure.

Fisher (2000: 79) defines narrative as a story and interpretation of some aspects of the world that is historically and culturally grounded and shaped by human personality. Emery (1997) says fable is a short allegorical narrative making a moral point, traditionally by means of animal characters speaks and acts like human beings.

There were several strength of fables on reading comprehension achievement.

1. Fables are short, it was easy to understand a whole text.
2. Fables are memorable
3. Fables are fun, many fables were entertaining and most of us have fond memories stories we have known since childhood.
4. By using fables, it can build ethical and moral development.
5. By using fables, the students became more interested in reading.

The procedures of teaching reading by using fables the first activity have been done is pre- reading activities. It has been conducted by asking leading questions to introduce the topic of discussion, introducing the text type that will be learned, and stating the objectives of the study. The second activity have been done is whilst – reading activities. In this activity, the researcher distribute the reading text and asking the students to read the material for detailed information, comprehend about the material, asking and answering questions related to the topic being, and finding the general information as well as the specific information from the text. The third activity have been done is Post- reading activities. This activity purposes to know how far the students comprehend and achieve the information from the text. This activity includes evaluating the students to comprehend the text by asking some questions to them. Then ask them to make a conclusion from the text.

The students' participation is the students' action in the class during the teaching and learning process of reading using Indonesian fables. Tyler (2008) says participation is the key of lively class, which means that participation becomes the major activities in the class. The students' participation in Reading Comprehension class is recorded by doing observation doing the process of teaching learning. When a student has a good participation in the classroom, it means that he/she interests to the lesson. It may increase their motivation to learn more about the lesson. It shows by their attention in

the lesson, their contribution in doing the exercises, involving in asking and answering the questions, and also doing task individually.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The design of this research is Classroom Action Research. According to Elliot (1991:69) classroom action research is a study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it. Further, McMillan (1992) explains that classroom action research is a specific type of applied research with the purpose to solve a specific classroom problem or make a decision at a single local site. Because its goal is to improve practices immediately within one or a few classrooms.

This classroom action research planned to be conducted in a cycle in which the cycle covers the activities of planning the action, implementing the action, class observation and evaluation, and reflection (Elliot, 1991). The researcher collaborated with the English teacher who teaches the Eighth D Grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Ambulu Jember. The collaboration is focused on identifying and defining research problem, planning the action, carrying out the action of the research, doing class observation and evaluation, reflection.

The supporting data were collected by using interview and documentation. Reading comprehension test was used to get the primary data in this research. The observation was done in each meeting of each cycle. In this research, the researcher used the indicators for observing the students' active participation during the teaching learning process. The indicators to be observed were students asking and answering questions, students' attention to the lesson and students reading the text of Indonesian Fables, also students doing the exercise individually. The indication of active students is if three or more indicators reached, on the contrary, students were less active if less than three of indicators were reached.

In this classroom action research, interview itself had been conducted with the English teacher to collect the supporting data covering the curriculum used in the VIII Grade students, the materials that were used by the teacher to teach reading, the textbook that were used, and students' problem in reading activity. Then, documentation was also used to get the supporting data. This classroom action research was considered

successful if it fulfilled the following criteria, at least 70% of the subjects of the research can reach the score of 65 or more for listening test. And at least 70% of the students are active during the teaching and learning process.

The last activity in this classroom action research was reflection, the reflection is conducted to know whether the action on the cycle is successful or not. It was done to know the strength and weaknesses of action. In this stage, the researcher collaborated with the English teacher to do the reflection to reflect the results of observation and listening comprehension test in each meeting of the cycle.

## **RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS**

The action which was teaching reading comprehension by using Fables in each cycle was implemented in one meeting and the reading comprehension test was administered afterwards. Based on the result of the observation in the first meeting, there were two students (number 8 and 22) who did not attend the reading class because of they were sick. There were 23 out of 36 students (63, 8%) who actively participated in the first meeting. It could be said that 23 students or 63, 8% of 36 students were active and 13 students or 36, 1% out of 36 students were categorized as less active. The result of reading comprehension test showed that the percentage of the improvement of students' reading comprehension achievement was 65, 21%.

It means that the test result had not been achieved the target score. The cycle of this research was considered successful if 70% of the students got score  $\geq 65$ . And there were 65, 21 % or 24 students out of 37 students got score  $\geq 65$ . It means that the target of percentage of the students gaining the score  $\geq 65$  had not been achieved. Then the action continued to the second cycle.

In the first meeting in Cycle 2 (table 4.2) there were two students who were absent because one student was sick and the other student joined the scout camp. There were 29 out of 35 students (82, 8%) who actively participated in the second meeting. In other words, the observation done during the second meeting indicated that 29 students or 82, 8% of 35 students were active while 6 students or 17, 1% of 35 students were less active.

It can be concluded that the students who were actively participated in Cycle 2 in the teaching learning process of reading by using fables fulfilled the research criteria of success ( $\geq 70\%$ ). In other words, the teaching learning process or reading comprehension through fables could make the students participate actively.

Meanwhile in cycle 2, the percentage of the students' reading comprehension achievement improved as many as 71, 63%. It means that the test result already had achieved the research target score. The cycle of this research was considered successful if 70% of the students got score  $\geq 65$ . And the result indicated there were 71, 63 % or 36 students out of 37 students got score  $\geq 65$ . It means that the target of percentage of the students gaining the score  $\geq 65$  had been achieved. Thus the action was stopped.

The reflection in Cycle 2 was done after the result of the observation and the result of the reading comprehension test were known. The result of the observation in meeting 1 in Cycle 2 showed that there were 29 students or 82, 8% of 35 students were active and 6 students or 17, 1% of 35 students were less active. It means that the target requirement of process evaluation had been achieved (as many as 82, 8% of the students are actively participated in the teaching learning process of reading by using fables). Besides that, from the results of reading comprehension achievement test in cycle 2, the percentage of the students who got  $\geq 65$  had been achieved (at least 71, 63% students got the score  $\geq 65$ ). It means that the target percentage of the students gaining score  $\geq 65$  had been achieved. The students were asked to open their dictionary so that they could find the unfamiliar words, the students who not felt reluctant to ask question related to the Fable because they have known how to read Fables, and the students worked in pair to do the Reading Comprehension Achievement task so the students easier to share their tasks.

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that teaching reading comprehension through Indonesian Fables can improve the VIII D grade students' participation and their reading comprehension achievement at SMP Negeri 2 Ambulu Jember in 2012/2013 Academic Year. This research based on the result of the action that covered teaching reading by using Indonesian Fables, giving exercises and giving the reading comprehension test. The use of Indonesian Fables which could improve the students' reading comprehension achievement covered word

comprehension, sentence comprehension, paragraph comprehension and text comprehension. Considered the result of this classroom action research which showed that the use of Indonesian fables as reading material could improve the VIII D grade students' participation and their reading comprehension achievement, some suggestions are proposed to the English teacher, the students, and the future researchers.

It suggested that the English teacher showed use the fables as alternative material in teaching reading since Indonesian fables is interesting. The students are suggested to be more active in the teaching learning activities of reading. The students are also suggested reading more reading not only Indonesian but also English Fables in learning reading comprehension to help improve their reading comprehension achievement and participation. The future teacher researchers who have similar problems are suggested to use the present research results as information or input to conduct a further research either with the same or different research design, using Indonesian Fables as fables from other countries and investigating different level of students.

The improvement of the students' reading comprehension achievement was represented by the percentage (65, 21% to 71, 63) students' who got scores 65 or more. Besides that the use of Indonesian Fables could improve the students' participation in the teaching learning process. The students' participation improved from 63, 8% to 82, 8%, they were active during the teaching learning process in the first cycle was increased and in the second cycle.

These research result were also strengthened the previous research result. The previous research findings conducted by Nurawaliyah (2011) from University of IBN Khaldun-Bogor investigated teaching Reading. In her research she used Legend. She proved that the application of Legend on Reading Narrative Text through Fables. Another research conducted by Lestari (2008) at SMPN 1 Kalibaru Banyuwangi in the 2006/ 2007 Academic Year, in her research she used Fables to improve the second year students' writing achievement.



## REFERENCES

- Ali, M. 1993. *Penelitian Pendidikan Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*. Bandung: PT. Angkasa.
- Arikunto, S. 1998. *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta: PT Rineka Cipta
- Budiarso, T. 2006. *English Language in Teaching, Discourse Analysis, And Contrastive Rhetoric*. Samarinda : Certel books
- Burns, P. C., Roe, B. D., and Ross, E. P. 1996. *Teaching Reading in Today's Elementary Schools. Sixth Edition*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Carrel, P. L., J. Devine, and D. E. Eskey. 1995. *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Dimiyanti and Suranto. 2000. *Action Research in Educational and Teaching and Learning Process*. Jakarta: Karunia Jakarta
- Elliot, J. 1991. *Action Research for Educational Change*. London: Open University Press archives/2003/q2/ftro30624b.htm. Retrieved on January, 11<sup>th</sup> 2009.
- Fisher. 2000. *Narrative Text*. Geelong Australia: Deakin University Press.
- Grellet, F. 1996. *Developing Reading Skills*. Cambridge University : Cambridge University Press
- Grellet, F. 1981. *Developing Reading Skills*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- McMillan, J. H. 1992. *Educational Research : Fundamentals for the Consumer*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- McNeils. 1992. *Acquiring Information on Reading Comprehension*. New York: Contemporary Publishing Group
- McWhorter, K. T. 1989. *Guide to College Reading*. New York. Harper Collins Publisher
- Otto. 1997. *Reading Comprehension*. New York: McGraw- Hill inc.
- Winkel. 1984. *Psikologi Pendidikan dan evaluasi Belajar*. Jakarta: IT Gramedia.
- Wood, N. V. 1991. *Strategies for College Reading & Thinking*. New York: McGraw-Hill inc.

**Internet**

Emery, D. 1997. *Fable*. Available at <http://www.about.com>. Retrieved on November, 12, 2008.

Erickson, K. 2003. Reading comprehension in AAC. *The ASHA Leader* , Vol. 8, No. 12, pp. 6-9. Available <http://www.asha.org/about/publications/leader-online/>

Tyler, J. 2008. *Class Participation Assessment Guidelines*. Available at [http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian\\_Studies/dweb/pedagogy/particip-assessm-](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/pedagogy/particip-assessm-)

[35k-](#) . Retrieved on March, 11<sup>th</sup> 2009