A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY
OF TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION
IN THE SECOND YEAR OF SMP N 1 POLANHARJO

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ABSTRACT
This research paper is intended to describe a descriptive study on teaching reading comprehension in the second year of SMP N 1 Polanharjo. Natural Approach method adopted to teach reading is to enable students in being active in practicing English language. The present curriculum has been based on teaching reading, where the students are expected to master not only one skill, but all skills of English namely listening, reading, speaking and writing. Those skills must be one package of teaching. So, the four language skills have been taught in integrative way. The writer focuses the English teaching-learning process on the second year students. The purpose of this research is to know the implementation of teaching reading comprehension in the second year of SMP N 1 Polanharjo. The data are taken from all elements of teaching-learning process committed by the teacher and the students and other sources such as books, student’s worksheet, and hand lesson. The method of collecting data is descriptive method by employing interview, documentation and observation. This research is descriptive qualitative which does not include any calculation or statistic procedure. The result of the research is the implementation of teaching reading is divided into two main sections; (1) Teacher activity consists of all preparations of the teacher in teaching reading, and (2) The elements of reading course. The problems of teaching reading are about the less of the materials that can influence teaching learning process. Vocabulary or unfamiliar words and the level of difficulty of reading skills cause boring to the students in joining reading activity. Based on the data the portion of teaching reading is enough because the reading activity will be integrated with other English skills.

Key words : descriptive study, teaching reading
A. Introduction

Language is oral, and to use language one must string together a number of speech sounds in a limited number of “patterns”. The structure of a given language dictates what patterns are acceptable (Heilman, 1972:166). English language as the foreign language is needed in studying and learning particularly in the educational institution. Indonesian students from elementary school to university must learn it. Learning English involves the four kinds of language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Teachers should develop these four language skills in order that their students could use the skills to communicate or express their thoughts, feeling, and opinions in English.

One of the four skills that should be in comprehending English text is reading. It is defined as an understanding a message conveyed by the writer through visual and non-visual information (Smith (1971) in Fauziati (2002: 139). It is important to learn reading since it (1) helps us learn to think the new language, (2) helps us build a better vocabulary, (3) makes us more comfortable with written English, (4) can help us plan to study in English–speaking country.

The general meaning of reading itself is a process of decoding messages in which reader needs his or her own experiences and knowledge efficiently. Herber (1978) in Dupuis (1982:20) sees reading as a thinking process which includes decoding of symbols, interpreting the meanings of the symbols, and applying the ideas derived from the symbols. If students have prior knowledge of the topic or the style of the text to be read, they should recall that knowledge of the topic and use it to help them predict what might be in the text. This information might also be of help later as they read.

There are many advantages can be obtained through reading. By reading students can extract a lot of information and knowledge from many textbooks, references and related library reading they read. Reading can also serve pleasure feeling. It is mostly gained by reading magazine, newspaper, short story, novel, etc according to what they like. By reading those material, it can feel relax and joyful since in this type of reading it just read what we want. Reading then can be said as a means of studying and thinking as well as a means of enjoying.

Teaching reading is one of language skills learned in junior high school to understand and not only the content of it, but also the pronunciation and intonation. Reading comprehension is fundamental for English foreign learner in observing new information and knowledge. Since many source books for the students especially for higher students are in English, they to be able to comprehend their book well.

The function of the teacher does not tell the students what they should learn, but to help them to select what they want to learn. The teacher becomes a facilitator of learning of personal and social change by assisting the developing person at those points where help is requested. The students in
mastering the subject will greatly depend on the presentation of material given by the teacher beside the ability of the students themselves. The teacher may use the goal formulated as a guide in choosing the method of the teaching (Surakhmad, 1994: 44). It is really pleasure and positive experience to try various classroom activities because successful lessons depend on the using of a variety of teaching methods.

Based on the explanation above, the writer wants to analyze deeper about a descriptive study on teaching reading at the second year students of SMP N 1 Polanharjo. The reasons why the writer chooses this school are the first, the writer knows-well about the situation and condition of this school, second, it has a good grade quality especially in Klaten areas, and third, the school has good achievements of their graduations.

Based on the background of the study, the writer formulates their research problems as the following.

1. What is the objective of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo?
2. How is the technique of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo?
3. How is the process of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo?
4. What are the materials of reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo?

The writer finds other studies conducted the study on descriptive study by the other researchers. First, Rachmawati (UMS, 2007) studied a descriptive study entitled A Descriptive Study on Teaching Reading to the First Year Students of MTSN 1 Surakarta in 2008/2009 Academic Year. She discussed the technique which was applied by the teacher in teaching reading especially in MTSN 1 Surakarta.

The second Wijayanti (UMS, 2007). She writes A Descriptive Study on the Ability of Reading Comprehension by the Fifth Year Students of SDN 1 Limpung Batang in 2006/2007. She discussed the problem faced by the teacher and the students during teaching-learning process in reading comprehension.

The third Suryaningsih (UMS, 2005) in her studied entitled A Descriptive Study on the English Reading Test for the Sixth Level Students of SD Jetis 1 Sukoharjo in Academic Year 2002/2003, 2003/2004, 2004/2005 found some comparison on the problem of reading faced by students. She compared the dominant problem from 2002 to 2005 academic year students of the sixth level of SD Jetis 1 Sukoharjo.

In this research, the writer will analyze on descriptive analysis. The writer is considering the problem and methods which are suitable in teaching reading in junior high school.

The objectives of the study are to know and describe the teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo. To gain a better understanding, the writer focuses on the formulation of the study as follows:
1. To know the objective of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo.
2. To know the technique of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo.
3. To know the process of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo.
4. To know the materials of reading in SMP N 1 Polanharjo.

B. Research method

The research method used in this study is qualitative data. According to Miles and Huberman (1994:1) in qualitative study, the data are usually in the form of words rather than numbers, have always been the staple of some fields in the social sciences, notably anthropology, history, and political science. It involves essences of people, objects, and situations Berg (1989) in Miles and Huberman, (1994: 9).

In this case, the writer uses descriptive method to describe the English reading at the second year students of SMP N 1 Polanharjo by: (1) checking the objective of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo: (2) classifying the technique of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo: (3) analyzing whether the process of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo: (4) checking the materials of reading in SMP N 1 Polanharjo.

The sources of the data of this study are all elements of teaching learning process committed by teacher and the students and other sources such as books, student worksheet, lessons plan, syllabus, teaching and learning process.

There are three kinds of method in collecting data: observation, interview, and documentation. Those methods have been taken and based on the data source above.

The writer has observed the teaching reading comprehension process in classroom given by the teacher in classes of SMP N 1 Polanharjo. It is passive participant observation. Therefore, why the writer has come into the classroom and observed the teaching reading comprehension process, then he took notes of the event. The writer did not take part actively and interact with the teacher and students during the process. Observations took place on the first five minutes before the students prayed together. Then, the teacher came into class and start learning.

Interview enables the collecting data obtained in deep and complete way. The interview is flexible. The interviewer has got responses since the interviewer has explained and clarified about purposes of the research question. In this case, the writer has interviewed the teacher and the students. The goal is to get information about the teaching reading comprehension in the classroom.
The first interview consists of the questions in some order and type for each of the respondents based on the teacher and students. The interview was done after classroom activities. In a subsequent interview, the author gives a different question for each of them either demand or content. This way was taken to collect comprehensive information and data.

The writer has analyzed the related documents with the teaching reading comprehension at SMP N 1 Polanharjo. The aim is to complete information obtained through observation and interview. Among the observation, interview and document analysis are collected as materials of discussion.

In analyzing the collected data, the writer uses descriptive qualitative research. As using this technique, the writer collects the data, arranges the data and presents the data. To know the teaching reading in SMP N 1 Polanharjo, the steps done are as follows:

1. The writer presents the detail description of the objective of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo.
2. The writer presents the detail description of the technique of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo.
3. The writer presents the detail description of the process of teaching reading comprehension in SMP N 1 Polanharjo.

The writer presents the detail description of the materials of reading in SMP N 1 Polanharjo.

C. Findings and Discussion

1. Findings

In research finding, there are some dimensions found in the field that need to be presented. The dimensions are the objective of the teaching reading comprehension, the technique of teaching reading comprehension, the process of teaching reading comprehension and the role material of reading comprehension.

a. The Objective of Teaching Reading Comprehension

Mr. Susilo stated as the teacher, there are general and specific objective of teaching. The general of objective is to develop the mentality of the notion.

The specific objective is as motivator for the students interest in learning English especially in reading comprehension as early as possible and the students are expected to have a good knowledge about reading comprehension (vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar). In junior high school, he said the teacher should emphasize on teaching reading comprehension to increase students’ vocabulary. In the teaching reading comprehension he emphasizes on vocabulary,
pronunciation, and grammar, because it is the way of the teacher to the students to comprehend the message because in junior high school, the students are able to read the text.

Based on the teaching guideline KTSP curriculum, the general objective of language teaching at junior high school is to develop the four-language skills. The four-language skills should be taught in an integrated matter, including the two other components: vocabulary and grammar. The specific objective of the language teaching learning process in SMP N 1 Polanharjo is to make the students active in the language class both oral and written.

Although the government has enforced the new curriculum, all the schools including SMP N 1 Polanharjo have not implemented it. They still look for the appropriate time for implementing curriculum based competence.

b. The Technique of Teaching Reading Comprehension

In the observation, the writer found that there are several types of teaching learning process apply by the teacher, such as reading comprehension that consists of silent reading, reading aloud, and question and answer.

1) Silent Reading

First activity is silent reading. Silent reading is the activity where the students and teacher read the text at their independent reading level for uninterrupted period of the time. In this session the teacher asked the students to read the text given without a sound. They were suggested to know the substance of the text quickly.

The students’ background knowledge is very important to help them comprehend the text. The silent reading also can increase students’ ability to understand the text in English, because they have to analyze it themselves. Silent reading depends on a great extent of the good development of physical habits. Eye focus, effective eye-hand coordination, and smooth left-to-right eye movements are basic perceptual and motor skills not must be well developed. It is important to ensure that the material they are reading is not too difficult for them.

2) Reading Aloud

Second is reading aloud. Reading aloud was needed a speaker that delivers what is written on a page in some ways that the content were (eventually) be easily understood by listeners. In this section the students are asked to read some text loudly. The teacher invited three or more students to read in order to save the time.

From that situation the learners may read aloud fairly competent in terms of pronunciation of individual words, but fail to understand the meaning of what they are reading (Wallace, 1992:...
The following is an example process, subject could correctly pronounce non-words (i.e. words that do not exist).

The writer concludes that reading aloud can provide practice for the students in two areas, they are pronunciation practices and reading for comprehension practice.

3) Questions and Answer

The next was questions and answers related to the text. In the second year students of SMPN 1 Polanharjo, questions and answers mean that the teacher gives some of the questions or tasks that must be answered. The teacher writes some questions about the previous text on the board. The respond from the students was good relatively. They responded enthusiastically as if they were active in the class, their score would not be bad.

c. The Process of Teaching Reading Comprehension

There are three steps to teach reading comprehension process, such as: the opening, study session, and closing. The first step is opening. The opening session was the activity in which the teacher has come to the class first. In this activity the teacher opened the lesson by led the students for greeting, praying together, checking the student’s attendance and preparing the lesson.

The second step is learning session or explanation. The explanation took for twenty five minutes for reading comprehension. Based on the observation on reading comprehension class the teacher Mr. Susilo made a teacher role begin the teaching learning in the class. The teaching-learning process above include, such as:

1) Pre-Reading Activity

Pre-reading activity lasted for five minutes. The teacher asked the students about the topic. He asked some questions related to the topic and let the students respond.

2) While-Reading Activity

While-reading activity took for fifty minutes. The teacher asked the students to open the guide book and tried to read every sentence in the passage. Then, they looked for the difficult vocabulary to comprehend, if the students had a problem about vocabulary, the teacher gave the meaning of its explanation. After that, the teacher read the text and the students listened to him. If the students had comprehended about the text, the teacher asked to students one by one and he corrected their pronunciation and grammar. The message could be traced by asking the following questions:

1. The teacher asks students to retell the text.
2. The teacher asks students to appreciate about the text.
3. The teacher asks the students some questions which related to the text.

In this text, the teacher explained *The Prince And His Best Friend*. It is one example of narrative text. It was explained about a
story where the prince and his friend were attacked by the bandits in the forest. The teacher also explained about the genre of the narrative text. So learning objective here is the teacher explained the topic from that vocabulary, pronunciation, and genre.

In this paragraph, the teacher explained this paragraph and the students can ask him, if they had a problem about vocabulary and grammar, the teacher asked the students to read and he corrected the student’s pronunciation and grammar.

3) Post-Reading Activity

Post-reading activity is doing the exercise. After explaining the material, the teacher ordered the students to do the exercise for ten minutes. He asked them to answer some questions that consist of retelling of the text, comprehending the text and answering the questions which related to the text.

The third step is closing. The closing session is the teacher closed the meeting in the end of the lesson. First he asked the students whether they had difficulty or not and let them to pray together.

In this part, the writer also discussed the important parts in the teaching learning process such as: teacher’s role and learner’s role.

a) Teacher’s Role

Based on the observation in SMPN 1 Polanharjo there are some teacher roles, such as: as facilitator, as an organizer, as a guide and as the counselor.

(1) As a Facilitator

The teacher is as a facilitator of the communication processes in the classroom activities. He provided everything needed in the teaching learning process and helped the students to understand the materials, this activity could be seen as the following example: The teacher focuses on the text: *The Prince and his Friend* in this activity, the students were asked to read the first sentence of the passage.

“Once upon a time, there lived a kind young prince named Jonathan”.

(2) As an Organizer

The teacher must be responsible to organize what material he will give to the students. The teacher of SMPN 1 Polanharjo always prepares the next material before he gives it to the students, good preparation would help the teacher to present a good quality of teaching learning process. From the observation the writer found that the teacher often reads some books to increase his knowledge, even he reads a textbook which is not related to English but it also can support the teaching learning process. After he
read the book, he delivered his knowledge to the students. It could be such kind of motivation to the students.

(3) As a Guide
The teacher of SMPN 1 Polanharjo especially the second year is also as a guide during the teaching learning process. He must be able to guide the classroom activities into reading lesson with the capability to guide the students during lesson.

(4) As the Counselor
Teachers act as a counselor who helps the students when they find some difficulties in learning English. For example: When they found difficulties about the vocabulary in the textbook they would ask to the teacher.

b. Students’ Role
The second year students in SMPN 1 Polanharjo still depended on the teacher’s explanation. But when they have experienced a variety of activities, they get a challenge to solve it and eventually they have to communicate with their friends like a discussion. In every English lesson the students are trying to be actively involved, it could be seen when they answered the questions from the teacher in oral or written questions. It seems that they were considered they have to be responsible to their own process of learning. From the observations author found that student is as well as communicator and manager.

(1) As Communicator
It means that in every teaching learning process they can’t do everything alone. They discussed the material with their friends. When they found difficult questions they often discussed them together and the teacher also allowed them to discuss. For example, when there were a task to do, they did it in pairs, discussed the exercise together with his or him partner. From the statement the writer know that the students often discuss the task with their friends, especially the complicated task.

(2) Manager
It means the students of SMPN 1 Polanharjo realized that they had to manage and directing their learning process to be better and better. They know when they must study and whether they already have the maximum effort to improve their knowledge and skill or not. It could be illustrated when the writer observed. Writer may conclude an evaluation of the other friends, he could know whether he would do it or not. As the result his friend could be such a manager for him, as well as himself.
c. Role of Instructional Material

The material had important effect in the teaching learning process. The material could be useful for the teacher as a main point. It could support the teacher creativity in the classroom activity. A good material would support the teaching learning process. If the material is already well arranged the teacher will be easier to teach in class. Therefore, the role of the material was very crucial, because it also could be a media to express the idea, opinion, feeling and the ability of the learner.

The materials of teaching reading comprehension were taken from textbook that consists of theme, student’s activity and comprehend focuses. The teacher of SMPN 1 Polanharjo used textbook entitled English For Junior High School: Second Year Students, written by Artono Wardiman, Masduki B. Jahur and M. Sukirman Djasuma, published by Pusat Perbukuan Departemen Pendidikan Nasional Tahun 2008. Beside the teacher uses the other book for reference entitled Student Spread Sheet (Lks) English 2b, written by Drs. Ahmad Thohir Yoga and Drs. Suparno, M. Pd. Published by PT. Dinamika Karya.

2. Discussion

Based on the research finding above, the writer discussed the finding on the measure of the objective of teaching-reading comprehension, the technique of teaching-reading comprehension, the process of teaching-reading comprehension and the role of material reading comprehension.

1. The Objective of Teaching Reading Comprehension

The goal of teaching reading comprehension in SMPN 1 Polanharjo is to enable the students to understand that English text as a means to comprehend and to enable the students to be active practice reading English text as a specific objective. Integration is a way to reach the English text reading skill. Reading comprehension is appropriate to understand the text and answer question related to the text.

In general objective, the teacher of SMPN 1 Polanharjo applied the four English skills based on the KTSP curriculum named: mastering in listening, speaking, reading and writing. While in reading class the teacher also teaches to speak, read and write well. This way was already appropriate to the goal of the KTSP curriculum. According to the KTSP curriculum, the final instructional objective of teaching English has clearly stated that the mastery of four language skills is: reading, listening, speaking and writing. The teaching and learning activities should always be oriented toward the mastery of the four language skills. The learners was expected to be able to read language comprehend English text. The learners was also suggested to be able communicate in spoken English.
2. The Technique of Teaching Reading Comprehension

According to Wallace (1996: 54-56) there were three techniques for teaching reading comprehension, namely: silent reading, reading aloud, and question and answer.

In this part the writer will explain each step, the first was silent reading. This is the activity when the student and teacher read the text on reading independently within the specified time. In this session, the teacher asked the students to read the text given without a sound. The second is to read aloud.

It requires the speaker to deliver what was the listener wrote. In this session, the students were asked to read the same text loudly. While one of the students read loudly, the teacher also corrects the students’ pronunciation and grammar. The last is question and answer. It means the teacher gives some questions or tasks to students related to the text and they should answer it.

3. The Process of Teaching Reading Comprehension

According to William (1998: 51), the teaching reading comprehension consists of three steps, there are: pre-reading activities, while-reading activities, and post-reading activities.

The process of teaching reading comprehension is learning, that is the teacher asks the students about the topic and then the teacher explains the text in detail, after that the teacher gives some questions related to the text and the students answer it.

English teaching learning process in SMPN 1 Polanharjo especially in reading comprehension adopt the theory purposed by William. Teaching reading comprehension processes consist of three steps. Firstly, before starting the lesson, the teacher asked the students about the topic related to the text and the student’s respond it. Secondly, the teacher asked the students to read the text and try to comprehend it, if the students meet difficult vocabulary, the teacher should explain it. After that, the teachers read the text clearly and explain the content of the text in detail. The last step is the teacher gives some questions related to the text and students must answer it.

4. Role of Instructional Material

Material had an important role in teaching learning process. The teacher used the material to develop the student’s ability and knowledge; hopefully it will help the student to understand the lesson easily.

The material for second year of SMPN 1 Polanharjo especially in reading comprehension was suitable inform text book. The text book consists of the message, exercise and students activity. From the finding, the hand-out books had some roles as medium of information and developed the students’ interest, so it could illustrate thing to them. All of those indicate that the role is instructional material is suitable to the theory
by the expert that is the instructional material can be the medium of information, illustrate things the students and develop the students ability.

D. Conclusion

After describing and analyzing the data, the writer could draw a conclusion based on the result of the observation of teaching learning process especially in reading comprehension to the second year at SMPN 1 Polanharjo.

The techniques of teaching reading comprehension are: silent reading, reading a loud, and answer and question. Silent reading is where the teacher asked to students to read the text without a sound. Reading a loud is the writer delivered what is written on a page that the content is easily understood and the students are asked to read the some text loudly. The question and answer is the teacher given some question and the students must answer it.

The process of teaching reading comprehension consists of pre-reading actively, while-reading actively, and post-reading activity. Pre-reading activity means before the lesson is beginning, the teacher asks to students related to the text. While-reading activity is the teacher explained about the text with detail. Post-reading activity is the teacher gives some question to students and they must answer it.

The material of reading comprehension is taken from the guide book. The teacher used this book to develop the students’ ability and knowledge and hopefully, because it should help the students to understand and comprehend the lesson easily.
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