

**THE USE OF PICTURE STORIES TO IMPROVE READING
COMPREHENSION (A CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH
AT THE FIFTH YEAR STUDENTS OF *SD N I PLEDOKAN,
SUMOWONO, SEMARANG* IN 2008/2009
ACADEMIC YEAR)**



RESEARCH PAPER

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Up to now, English becomes the most important language because it is the language mostly used in international communication. As an international language, many people use it. The role of English is so great that no progress in all aspects of human life can be separated from it. It can be a medium in studying science, politics, economics, education, culture and technology, which are usually disseminated in English. Another fact of the importance of English is that many occupations require people who have an English competence.

In Indonesia English becomes the first foreign language that has to be taught at many levels of education, from elementary to tertiary education institution. In recent years, a number of elementary schools have begun to introduce English into their curriculum. Instead of compulsory subject in elementary school English is given as a local content. It is clearly stated in the curriculum of elementary school that it is given as a local content elected for the sub district elementary school. In the meantime, it is given in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade” (*GBPP-Muatan Lokal Bahasa Inggris, 2004*).

Although recommended as a local content in elementary school, English competence becomes a necessity because it will be the basis for the higher level and prepare the students to face the globalization era as early as possible. By the English learning in elementary school, the students are expected to have a language competence including listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

The success of learning any subject matter depends on the competence of reading comprehension. It functions as a major tool for finding and understanding information in term of what is already known. Reading also has the value of to help the students learn to express their own thoughts and to make them familiar with the language pattern and ways of using language efficiently. In the fast development of science and technology, people need to follow the latest information. This situation requires people to be aware of the important role of English as a language, which is broadly used to communicate a wide variety of information. The exchanges of information are influenced by media of communication such as internet, television, radio, newspaper, magazine, and also books. In getting the information from a written source, people must have good reading comprehension ability, in order to comprehend the information.

It is understood that most of information is presented in printed materials. By reading, people can absorb a lot of information can be gained from books, magazine, newspaper and bulletins. It can be assumed that the success of obtaining information depends on reading itself. Consequently, reading seems to be very important in a modern society today. Certain people read for getting information, while some other do not read for the shake information only, but also for enjoyment.

Learning to read is continuing process (Burns, *et al*, 1984: 21). As has been stated previously the students' past experience, their language competence, and their background of knowledge determine their own reading ability. These factors are closely interrelated to the students' prior capacity in reading, because reading is continuing process. All of us often hear or read news about the lack of

reading interest in society especially for students. In fact, this reading interest has close relationship with reading skill. The more a person does reading activity, the more he increases his reading skill. Related to the statement, the teachers need to see the reality that learning language specially learning reading has been not effective yet. Students argue that learning reading is boring. Therefore, teachers should be aware of this situation and they have to create a new solution of this problem.

The problems also happen in SD N 1 Pledokan, Semarang in which the students are less motivated in studying English. They feel that learning English is difficult. When they were given a text without any illustration, they fell bored and usually stop to read the text. Automatically, it influences their reading comprehension. They also get difficulty in understanding the text because they still have limited vocabulary and grammar. From that phenomenon, the researcher tried to solve this problem by using picture stories so that the class can be more interest in studying English.

Enjoyment of reading should be considered of prime importance (Burn et al, 1984: 23). The teachers should prove that reading is not boring activity even though the materials deal with scientific topic. We should try to present them such a way that they could make the students enjoy the activity.

Based on the reason above, the writer would like to discuss: **THE USE OF PICTURE STORIES TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION OF THE FIFTH YEAR STUDENTS AT *SD N 1 PLEDOKAN, SUMOWONO, SEMARANG* IN 2008/2009 ACADEMIC YEAR.**

B. Previous Study

A similar study has been conducted by Wijayanti (UMS/2007) who conducted a research “A Study on Ability of Reading Comprehension by the Fifth Year Students of SD N I Limpung Batang in 2006/2007 Academic Year”. She focused on the students’ ability in reading comprehension and the result is the students’ ability in reading comprehension is good. She also described the problem faced by the fifth year students in reading comprehension. The problems are having limited vocabulary, student’s background of knowledge, and facilities.

The other researcher is Dewi (UNS/2007) who conducted a research entitled “Improving Student Comprehension Ability by the Use of Printed Mass Media as Instructional Material in class VIII D Students of SMP N I Jiken Blora of the Academic Year 2006/2007. In her research, the writer uses text from magazine and newspapers as the materials to improve the students’ reading comprehension and the result is the students’ reading comprehension ability can be improved by making use of printed mass media in the process of teaching learning activities. In this research, the writer is going to do the similar research in same skill but in different media that is using picture stories to improve reading comprehension in elementary school students.

C. Limitation of the Study

The writer limits the scope of the study only on the use of picture stories to improve students’ reading comprehension.

D. Problem of the Study

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

1. How is the implementation of improving reading comprehension using picture stories at elementary school?
2. Do picture stories improve the students' reading comprehension?

E. Objective of the Study

The objectives of this research are:

1. To discuss the implementation of improving reading comprehension using picture stories at elementary school.
2. To improve the students reading comprehension particularly to:
 - a. Improving their understanding the content of the text.
 - b. Improving their reading interest.

F. Benefit of the Study

There are two kinds of benefits: theoretical and practical. The expected benefits of the study both theoretical and practical are:

1. Theoretical Benefit
 - a. The result of the research can be used as the reference for those who want to conduct a research in improving reading comprehension
 - b. The result of the research can have benefit for English teacher in their teaching

2. Practical Benefit

- a. This research will be helpful for the student to understand about reading comprehension.
- b. It can motivate student in their reading interest.
- c. The teachers are expected to give motivation for students in improving their reading comprehension by using picture stories.

G. Research Paper Organization

The researcher organizes this research paper dividing into five chapters in order to make it easily understood. Each of them is concerned with different issues but it is related to each other.

The first chapter is introduction it cover background of the study, previous study, problem statement, imitation of the study, objective of the study and research paper organization.

The second chapter is underlying theory which is consist of review on reading comprehension, the reading technique, questioning technique in comprehension skills, factor affecting comprehension skill, and the nature of picture stories.

The third chapter is research method. This chapter deals with type of research, subject of the research, object of the study, data and source of data, method of collecting data, technique for analyzing data, and the action procedure.

The fourth chapter is research finding and discussion

The fifth chapter is conclusion and suggestion.