

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English plays an important role nowadays. It becomes an international language. Therefore, in this modern era it is necessary for us to learn it. English also has been taught in many countries in the world as a second foreign language such as in Japan, Malaysia, China, Germany and Indonesia in those countries students always make many efforts to make the teaching English as a second or foreign language better and better.

Teaching a language, especially a foreign language is not an easy task. Since English is a foreign language for Indonesian students, it will surely cause some problems for them. Learning a foreign language is different from learning a native language because the students' environment in achieving their first language and a foreign language are different.

English as a subject matter in school covers the four basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In every subject, student's learning activities involve reading. Reading is defined as a set of skills that involves making sense and deriving meaning from the printed word.¹ For the beginner, reading is concerned mainly with learning to recognize the printed symbols that represent language and to respond intellectually and emotionally when being asked about the content of the text he/she has read. Elizabeth S. Pang et al explain that learning to read is a different process because it involves learning about a symbolic system (writing) used to represent speech.² Before children begin to learn to associate the written form with speech, they need to

¹ Caroline T. Linse, *Practical English Language Teaching: Young Learners*, (New York: Mc Graw- Hill companies, Inc, 2006), p. 69

² Elizabeth S. Pang et al, *Teaching Reading*, <http://www.curtin.edu.au/curtin/dept/smec/iae> p. 8 cited on 15th May, 2010

learn the vocabulary, grammar and sound system of the oral language. So, it will help students to get meaning of the text and understanding the content of text.

Reading is important for everybody in order to cope with new knowledge in the changing world of technological age. For both children and adults, the ability to read opens up new worlds and opportunities.³ It enables us to gain new knowledge, enjoy literature, and do everyday things that are part and parcel of modern life, such as, reading the newspapers, job listings, instruction manuals, maps and so on.

Teaching reading for junior high school students must be differed from children in elementary school because of their different characteristics of psychological background. In Indonesia, some English teachers still use traditional or conventional method to teach reading. Conventional method usually makes students bored because the method is monotonous, and the students are not active so it makes the learners get bored. One of the ways to make the teaching reading effective is making the students active, so they enjoy learning and they can improve their reading skill.

English teaching method is changeable. The method should be interesting and student-centered. One of the teaching methods is cooperative. Through this method, students are active in the learning process, because they will learn more through a process of constructing and creating, working in group and sharing knowledge. Nevertheless, individual's responsibility is still the key of success in learning English.

A cooperative learning method is believed as being able to give chance for students to be involved in discussion, has courage and critical thinking and is willing to take responsibility of his/her own learning. Although it considers as an active role of students as more important, does not mean that teacher in the classroom is not participating. In

³ Elizabeth S. Pang et al, *Ibid*, p. 6

learning process, teacher has roles as designer, facilitator and guide in the learning process.

Basically, cooperative learning corresponds to Islam teaching which is stated in Qur'an surah Al-Maidah verse 2.

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

“Help you one another in righteousness and piety, but help you not one another in sin and rancour.”⁴

The verse above shows that cooperation is very suggested in goodness, in this point is English language learning. In cooperative learning, there is mutual relationship among students which enable them to reach the goal of teaching learning.

A cooperative learning method has several types, namely write-pair-share, Group Investigation, Students Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD), Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT), Team Assisted Individualized (TAI) and Jigsaw.⁵ One of its interesting types is group investigation.

Group investigation is an organizational approach that allows a class to work actively and collaboratively in small groups and enables students to take an active role in determining their own learning goals and processes.⁶ Group investigation method requires the students to form small interest groups, plan and implement their investigation, synthesize the group members' findings, and make a presentation to the entire class.⁷

Therefore, the writer wants to take the research about The Use of Group Investigation (GI) Method to Improve Students' Reading Ability:

⁴ Yusuf Ali, *Translation*, Retrieved from <http://www.harunyahya.com/quran/translation/30.php>. Saturday 27th June, 2010

⁵ Robert E. Slavin, *Cooperative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice* (London: Allyn and Bacon, 2005), p.9

⁶ <http://www.eric.ed.gov/> cited on Saturday 27th Feb, 2010

⁷ Ivy Geok-chin Tan et al, *Group Investigation and Student Learning: An Experiment in Singapore Schools*, (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2006), p.

A Classroom Action Research with the Eight Grade Students of MTs Sabilul Ulum Mayong Jepara in the Academic Year of 2010/2011.

B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

Based on the background, the writer concludes that reading is one of language skills, which is necessary to be developed for students learning English because it can open up the students to various kinds of information available in books, magazines, newspapers and other types of writing.

Considering the importance of reading process, the teacher should improve the teaching of reading ability. The teacher can use a teaching method that can make the students enjoy and be stimulated in learning English. One of them is group investigation (GI).

C. Statements of the Problem

The problems can be stated as follows:

1. How is the implementation of group investigation method to improve students' reading ability in descriptive text of 8th grade students of MTs Sabilul Ulum Mayong Jepara?
2. How is the improvement of students' reading ability in descriptive text after being taught through using group investigation of 8th grade students of MTs Sabilul Ulum Mayong Jepara?

D. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study in this thesis as follow:

1. To describe the implementation of group investigation method to improve students' reading ability in descriptive text of 8th grade students of MTs Sabilul Ulum Mayong Jepara.
2. To identify the improvement of students' reading ability in descriptive text after being taught through using group investigation method of 8th grade students of MTs Sabilul Ulum Mayong Jepara.

E. Significances of the Study

The writer hopes that after this study has been completed, it will give some significance values. The significance values are:

1. The process of the research will be useful for the students to improve their reading ability and develop their study in order to be successful.
2. It will give experience and clear understanding about the process of teaching reading using cooperative method especially group investigation to the readers.
3. The result of the study will give contribution to English teacher and can be a reference to improve his performance and competence in teaching English.

F. Scope of the Study

The writer conducted the observation for this study to the eight grade students of MTs Sabilul Ulum Mayong Jepara in the academic year of 2010/2011. The study limited to know whether the use of group investigation method can improve students' reading ability.

G. Definition of the Key Terms

This research uses a classroom action research approach. Before discussing this research deeply, however, in order to make it clear, the writer explains some words definitions that might help the readers to understand the research. There are some terms need to be defined. The terms used in this study are as follow:

1. Group Investigation Method

According to Robert E. Slavin Group investigation is planning of common class setting where the students work in small group using

cooperative question, group discussion, planning, and project cooperative.⁸

According to Agus Suprijono the study with Group Investigation method started of group division. Then, the teacher and the students select of certain topics and the problems that can be developed from the topics. After the topic and the problem approved, the students and the teacher determine of research method which developed to solve the problem.⁹

Each group work based on group investigation method which they have formulated. This activity involve of data collection, data analysis and conclusion.

The next step is present a report to the whole class. In this step expected occur of objective and inter subjective knowledge that has built by a group. Several of perspective expected can be developed by the whole class from the result presentation of each group. In the end of study did evaluation. Evaluation is used to individual and group assessment.

2. Reading Ability

According to Grabe and Stoller reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately.¹⁰ So, vocabulary and grammar have role important in order to understand what we read. McEldowney said that the essential linguistic component for comprehending a text is grammar. The role grammar in language is to signal the meaning arising from the relationship between the lexical words.¹¹

⁸ Lita, *Translation from Cooperative Learning: Theory, Research and Practice*, (London: Allymand Bacon, 2005), p. 24

⁹ Agus Suprijono, *Cooperative Learning: Teori & Aplikasi PAIKEM*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010), p. 93

¹⁰ William Grabe and Fedricka L. Stoller, *Teaching and Researching Reading*, (Great Britain: Pearson Education, 2002), p. 9

¹¹ Anhari Basuki et al, *Lembaran Sastra*, (Semarang: Fakultas Sastra UNDIP), p. 127

Reading ability will be developed best in association with writing, listening and speaking activities. The ability of students in reading is very important because by having the ability to read, they will be able to improve their knowledge. Although many of information can be found from other media such as TV and radio, but the role of reading can not substituted. Reading is very important in daily life because not at all of information can be found from the TV and the radio.