

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

In Indonesia, the English Language exists in Junior High School as a compulsory subject. The students of Junior High school should learn English to communicate orally or written. The skills that should be mastered are four skills; i.e., speaking, listening, reading and writing (Sinambela, et al., 2015). The purpose of teaching those skills is to enable the students mastering the English language. That is why English language is essential to be learned and mastered by the students.

One of English skill that the students learn is reading. Reading is an interactive process between reader and text. It is an essential skill in junior high school (Habib, 2016). In addition, reading is a multilevel process in which readers construct a meaningful representation of text using their schemata. However, reading comprehension seems to be difficult for students since it involves their knowledge and ability in comprehending texts. The lack of interest of reading can become an obstacle faced by students as well.

The students, especially in MTSAr-Roudloh, probably face some obstacles during the learning process. Generally, some problems faced by the students who learn reading are (1) students have difficulty in identifying the main idea of paragraph; (2) students have difficulty to comprehend the text as they lack vocabulary; (3) also, the students are passive and irresponsive towards learning English (Susmiati, et al., 2017). Based on Susmiati, et al. (2017), the English teachers need to apply an appropriate technique in teaching reading.

For reading to be meaningful, reading must be accompanied by comprehension. Reading comprehension refers to the ability of the students to comprehend or to understand printed text to get some information by connecting students' background knowledge to the printed text (Susmiati, et al., 2017). Besides, reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. The

goal, therefore, is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain sense from isolated words or sentences (Hedgcock& Ferris, 2018).

Besides reading comprehension, reading interest also becomes an essential thing for the students to gain the purpose of learning reading. This is in line with Ukoha et al. (2018) who stated that “Interest is an important variable in language learning. The term “interest” is also used to refer to students’ linking and enjoying tasks related to reading (Viljaranta et al., 2016). When the student is interested in learning reading, student will likely perform positively. Interest exists as expression of likes and dislikes in learning language (Ukoha et al., 2018). Therefore, the students have their passion for reading and they are motivated to achieve the goals of reading.

There are a lot of strategies in teaching reading applied by several previous researchers such as using direct training (He et al., 2014), research (Mutair & Alshammari, 2017), and schema (Mutair & Alshammari, 2017). Consequently, to overcome the problems in learning reading, activating students’ background schemata become the focus of the study. Schema (plural schemata) is a hypothetical mental structure for representing a generic concept in memory (Ajideh, 2003; Susmiati et al., 2017). Furthermore, schema is the prior knowledge gained through experiences stored in one mind (Susmiati, Setiyadi, et al., 2017). The implication of schema theory is the role of prior knowledge (Roozbeh, et al., 2016). Schema helps to better understanding how new learning is integrated with knowledge an individual already possesses (Mutair & Alshammari, 2017). In other words, the students can gain a better understanding of reading text textually or even contextually through activating students’ schemata.

Some previous researches related to activating students’ background schemata in promoting their reading interest and comprehension skill have been carried out by several researchers. The first research has done by Hassan et al., (2013) found that graphic organizer was significant role in developing the level of reading comprehension among Iranian EFL learners. The second research carried out by Susmiati et al., (2017) discovered that graphic organizers strategy was

significant for students based on schema activation in reading comprehension. The third research done by Language & Linguistics (2018) showed that activations of the mental process in reading foreign text were effective. To conclude, students' background schemata can improve students' reading. In this research focuses on pre-reading strategy to activating background schemata. Therefore, this research is different from previous study.

Based on the previous researches above, the researcher attempts to figure out how the process and the influence of activating students' background schemata to promote their reading interest and comprehension skill. Therefore, the researcher entitled "Activating Students' Background Schemata to Promote Their Reading Interest and Comprehension Skill: A Case Study at 8th Grade of MTSAr-Roudloh" to portray, describe and analyze how students' background schemata can promote their reading interest and comprehension.

B. Research Questions

In this research, the writer concentrates on solving the following questions:

1. What is the students' reading comprehension skill before their background schemata are activated?
2. What is the students' reading comprehension after their background schemata are activated?
3. How significant is the improvement of students' reading comprehension before and after their background schemata are activated?
4. What is the students' interest in reading activity when their background schemata are activated?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the questions formulated above, the purposes of the study are:

1. To find out the students' reading comprehension skill before their background schemata are activated.
2. To find out the students' reading comprehension skill after their background schemata are activated.
3. To find the significant is the activating of students' reading comprehension skill before and after their background schemata are activated.
4. To find the students' interest in reading activity when their background schemata are activated.

D. The Significances of the Research

This research is expected to provide practical and theoretical benefits.

1. Practical Significances

a. Students

The students are expected to understand the activating schemata in reading interest and comprehension.

b. Readers

The readers can get new and more information about students' schemata, how to activating schemata in reading interest and comprehension.

2. Theoretical Significances

This research is significant in helping the teacher to find out the way of teaching their students in understanding students' schemata because if their students have the problem in reading interest and comprehension, especially in reading English, it can make some misunderstanding for their reading comprehension.

E. Rationale

Reading is the path to success in school and life. This is supported by Khairuddin (2013), who stated that good readers could expand their views, experiences, and thought. By reading, the reader can enrich their knowledge. By reading, the reader can enrich their knowledge, broaden their views and make them understand many things about the world (Küçüköğlü, 2013).

Link to academic success as students who love to read will be able to write well and have more ideas which will make them more creative and innovative, it is called reading interest (Khairuddin, 2013). This means that the students read for pleasure and read for academic purpose. Then, reading interest is one of best predictors of a child's growth in reading (Khairuddin, 2013; Fielding and Wilson 1998). It can be a positive impact students' reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension is a process of creating meaning from text. Reading comprehension is a mental representation of a text meaning and combined the readers' previous knowledge (Gilakjani, 2017). It is the combination of students' prior knowledge and previous experience. Reading comprehension is also defined as the process of creating meaning (Gilakjani, 2017). Reading comprehension remains an important aspect of students' area of study in the schools (Ukoha et al., 2018). It is very important for students to acquire good reading. Akpama et al., (2005) saw reading and comprehension as complementary. Thus, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is the students' ability in creating the meaning from the reading text both, textually and contextually.

To be able to achieve good reading comprehension skills, there are some indicators such as decoding, fluency, vocabulary, sentence construction and cohesion, reasoning and background knowledge, and working memory and attention (Gilakjani, 2017).

Present in the text, the significance of 'schema theory' is mainly combination to the comprehension that can be supported by the content schemata (Language & Linguistics, 2018). According to schema theory, a text is an interactive process to involve the reader's exiting schema and the text (Ali, 2016).

When new information is obtained, it is processed and formed in the brain. Furthermore, the information is complicately accepted and stored as a schema (Chen, 2017).

Additionally, background knowledge of also benefits as prior knowledge on comprehension for readers (Hassan et al., 2013). The role of prior knowledge in processing is the most important implication of schema theory (Hassan et al., 2013). One of reading instructional strategies is logically centered on schemata theory. Adapting detailed prior knowledge to the new knowledge, which makes readers change their thoughts leads to improve schemata (Language & Linguistics, 2018).

F. Hypothesis

According to Siregar (2015), hypothesis is an answer or a temporary guess that must be tested for its truth. This research has two variables: the first is background schemata as the “X” independent variable, and the second is student’s reading interest and comprehension as “Y” dependent variable. The relation of the hypothesis is proposed as follow: “activating students’ background schemata to promote their reading interest and comprehension skill: a case study at grade 7 of MtsAr-Roudloh”.

The hypothesis in this study is an alternative hypothesis (H_a) and the null hypothesis (H_0). The formulated hypothesis is described as follows:

H_a : There is an improvement of students’ reading comprehension before and after their background schemata are activated.

H_0 : There is no improvement of students’ reading comprehension before and after their background schemata are activated.

G. Previous Studies

There are several previous studies focusing on schemata to activating students’ reading interest and comprehension which shows that such a strategy was effective. The first research was carried out by Hassan et al., (2013). The

research was about the effectiveness of graphic organizers on Iranian EFL. As a result, it was found that the graphic organizer played a significant role in developing the level of reading comprehension among Iranian EFL learners.

The second research was carried out by Susmiati et al., (2017). This research investigated the significant difference between Schema Activation Strategy and Graphic Organizers in students' comprehension achievement and to find out what reading aspect improves. As a result, it was found that graphic organizers based on schema activation were helpful for students in better reading comprehension.

The third research was carried out by Azhari (2017)-It showed that research identifies the technique applied by LBPP-LIA in Padang. As a result, it was found that helpful strategy for activating student's schemata using the techniques pre-reading, whilst-reading and post-reading.

The fourth research was the study carried out by Salbego & Osborne (2016). It showed the use of pre-reading activity for teaching of proverbs in a Portuguese as a foreign language class in a multilingual context, in which minimal interference from the teacher is required and dialogical interaction among students is promoted. As a result, it is found that shows an overwhelmingly positive response to the pre-reading activities.

Based on several previous studies, it shows that background schemata can be used as a strategy to activating students' reading interest and comprehension.