

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the reason for conducting the research. It consists of several discussions. They are an introduction that deals with a research background, research questions, research purposes, research significances, rationale, and previous study.

A. Research Background

Reading comprehension is the way to get information from the text. The comprehension process requires mental and physical. Burhan (2011) cited in Ningsih (2017) states that reading comprehension engages physic and mental activity to show the meaning of the written text, while there is a process of knowing letters in that activity. Furthermore, Hafner (1974) cited in Ningsih (2017) states that there are two factors affecting reading comprehension ability. The first and the main factor of the reader's capability in reading comprehension is intelligence. The second factor is the reader's background knowledge. It means that in understanding a text, there are several strategies to help the readers when reading a text, such as involving physic and mental activity, the intelligence of the reader, and the background knowledge of the reader.

Moreover, in teaching reading comprehension, the students demand to comprehend some of the text types. One of them is narrative text. According to Pardiyono (2007), the narrative text draws moral or message from the event of the text. More than that, he explains "the three elements of narrative text are first orientation that includes about the topic of the story, the second complication tells about the problem and the event of the story, and the third resolution tells about ending of the story". Besides, Derewianka (1991) states "the narrative text begins with an orientation where the writer attempts to sketch a possible word of his

particular story. It is followed by a series of events that is complication brought about”.

Furthermore, in the teaching-learning process of reading comprehension, there have been persistent problems when teachers demonstrate how to use reading strategies in the classroom. When teaching the predicting process, asking a student not to read the next paragraph before generating a prediction is difficult. Besides, discussion in the classroom has also been criticized because it commonly centers on the teacher, and only a small number of students participate in classroom discussion (Crombie et al., 2003); Karp & Yoels 1976) cited in (Liu, 2014). Furthermore, Howard (2002) found that students tended to be silent in face-to-face whole-class discussions; however, they participated in online discussions vigorously.

Online discussion forums are considered an extension of traditional learning that promotes dialogue, reflection, knowledge construction, and self-assessment (Gerosa et al., 2010). Given their potential benefits, online discussion forums have been widely adopted as tools for online learning (Apostolou et al., 2010); (Vonderwell et al., 2007). Online discussion has the potential to improve students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills, decision-making ability, and written communication skills and contribute to students' ability to organize and analyze information (Zalpaska, A. M., Falnegin, F., and Rudd, D., 2004) cited in (Seethamraju, 2014).

Based on the experience in the teaching practice program (October-December 2019) at ninth grade in SMP Al-Hasan Panyileukan Bandung, it found that there were several problems in reading comprehension faced by the students. They were difficult to read a written text because of a lack of vocabulary mastery, grammatical knowledge, and background knowledge. Moreover, based on the theory by Pang & Elizabeth (2003), to help readers understand a written text, they typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text, and

other strategies. Therefore, it was hard for them to determine the main idea while reading a text and to understand the context of the sentences without having those several strategies such as background knowledge, vocabulary mastery, grammatical knowledge, and so on. Moreover, the students were more likely to ask some friends about difficult materials. The students who were basically difficult to understand reading materials, they ask their friends step by step, so that the students can understand the reading materials given by the teacher.

To solve the problems, this research would plan to use online small group discussion method because of this pandemic situation or Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), there are no teaching-learning activities in the classroom. Therefore, this research would plan to take the data from online method, especially online small group discussion method. Besides, students' participation in online discussion is higher than in face-to-face discussion (Davidson-Shivers et al., 2001); (Warschauer, 1995). Moreover, the students are also helped by online small group discussion method in the learning process. Through online discussion forums, students have the opportunity to interact, construct hypotheses, view knowledge and information from multiple perspectives, and reflect upon this information (Nicaise & Barnes, 1996). Online discussion forums have become a central element within every online learning management system allowing for the extension of teaching beyond the traditional face-to-face classroom (Levine, 2007). Klingner & Vaughn in Wu (2008) emphasized that ESL students gathering in a collaborative talk during content reading, they helped each other in finding the main ideas and answer the question from what they read. In other words, the students would get easier in comprehending text in reading subject that uses small group discussion method. Because when they are confused to find out the main ideas or the appropriate answers for questions given, they would be helped by their friends to solve the problem. Besides, the students become more active in the process of comprehending English text.

It is strengthened by Kabawata (2007) who stated that discussion with groups and the teacher at this level might give general information about the topic and structure of the text, and the students might be able to guess further information of the text. It means that the students would comprehend a text clearly due to they get several pieces of informations about the topic and the structure of the text from either their friends or teachers. It also gives a chance for the students to take part in discussing a reading text, and it also improves the students' motivation to participate in reading subjects.

There were several research related to the use of small group discussion method on reading comprehension. First, research by Ningsih (2017) discussed "Small Group Discussion Method in Teaching Reading Comprehension" revealed that a small group discussion method was a good method that can be applied in teaching reading comprehension to the students at eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Bantul. Second, research by Izefti (2018) discussed "The Effect of Small Group Discussion Toward Eighth Graders Reading Comprehension" indicated the effect of using small group discussion method for students' reading comprehension at eighth grade of SMP Negeri 22 Kota Jambi accepted. Third, research by Seethamraju (2014) discussed "Effectiveness of Using Online Discussion Forum for Case Study Analysis" revealed that the opportunities for learning from each other have improved by transferring discussions to an online environment. Fourth, research by Liu (2014) discussed "Learning Reading Strategies with Online Discussions" showed that the messaging discussion (online discussion) contributed to enhance students' reading comprehension in single strategy instruction.

While those previous research mostly used quantitative approach with quasi-experimental design. The method of this research is qualitative approach with descriptive method. In the previous research, there is no specific research that investigates the students' responses in reading comprehension especially in narrative text, and focused on pointing the

progression by impact, influence, and effect of the small group discussion method. Hence, this research aims to find out the responses of students in implementing online small group discussion as the method to enhance students' reading comprehension in narrative text. Therefore, the research was conducted with the title "Students' Responses Toward The Implementation of Online Small Group Discussion Method to Enhance Reading Comprehension".

B. Research Questions

Based on the research background, the problems are formulated into two following questions:

1. How is the process of implementing online small group discussion method to enhance students' reading comprehension?
2. How are students' responses to implementing online small group discussion method to enhance students' reading comprehension?

C. Research Purposes

From the research question above, this research is aimed at obtaining two following objectives:

1. To find out the process of implementing online small group discussion method to enhance students' reading comprehension.
2. To find out students' responses to implementing online small group discussion method to enhance students' reading comprehension.

D. Research Significances

This research is expected to be beneficial both theoretically and practically. In theoretical significance, this research is expected to provide theoretical information on the contribution of the implementation of online small group discussion in enhancing students' reading comprehension. For practical significance, this research is expected to help students in enhancing their reading comprehension.

Moreover, this research might also contribute to all teachers to considers students' reading comprehension and determine the most appropriate method in the teaching-learning process to minimize student's gap and maximize their ability in learning English, particularly in reading comprehension.

E. Rationale

According to Muslaini (2017), reading is the process of receiving information from the written text; from the writer to the reader. The purpose of all reading is to understand the meaning that is given in the written text. Reading is an activity of receiving information from all readable sources. It is an active process comprising of perception and comprehension ability (Patel & Jain, 2008). Someone can be declared that he has done the reading process and get information that appears in the text when he has comprehension. Comprehension is the core of reading because the aim of the written language is massages communication (Duffy, 2009). We have not been said to have read if we do not comprehend the massage. In other words, comprehension is the crucial thing of reading.

Furthermore, Jeffries (2007) argued that reading comprehension is the connection between what you are reading and what you already know. Moreover, Kennedy (1981) cited in Ningsih (2017) stated that reading comprehension is a process of thinking through which the reader becomes aware of an idea, comprehends it in terms of their experiential background, and interprets it regarding their own needs and objectives. Based on the theories, it could be assumed that reading comprehension is the process of understanding of the written text that needs the thought of readers to interpret the content of the text.

Teaching reading comprehension needs some strategies for helping the students to achieve the learning goal by sharing opinions and knowledge. One of them is an online small group discussion method.

Based on Bormann (1996) cited in Ningsih (2017) stated that small group discussion is something composed of three or more people working together to do a specified activity or to reach a common goal. Students are greatly helped by applying the group in small group discussions. The students could share their opinion and knowledge in doing the assignments and discussing the assignment answers (Giri, 2003) cited in (Rahmat, 2017).

Meanwhile, Wang & Gearhart (2005) stated that online discussion is a discussion system that uses an electronic message database on a website where people can sign and write messages or posts. This method is very effectively done in a forum especially for students to exchange views and share experiences. Effective online discussion requires clarification, elaboration, exploration, negotiation, reflection, and revision. In other words, online discussion is an activity to post a message posted in a discussion forum or discussion board where learners or students can exchange the views and experiences. Some important points noted when doing online discussion that the instructor must declare and explain the purpose and ensure that they are being evaluated in the discussion forum (Zhang, 2007).

Several studies have shown a strong positive correlation between the levels of engagement in online discussion forums and final grade performance (Bliuc et al., 2010). Picciano (2002) found that students perceived greater quality and quantity of learning as a result of participating in the discussions. Meyer (2003) observed that students involved in asynchronous online discussion tend to exhibit a higher level of thinking that may not be seen in the classroom, particularly when they contribute comments that are exploratory in nature.

Besides, Liu (2014) revealed that the messaging discussion (online discussion) contributed to enhancing students' reading comprehension. Those statements are strong enough to line up a conclusion that an online

small group discussion method can be used to improve students' reading comprehension.

F. Previous Study

Several studies are related to this research. The first study was conducted by Ningsih (2017) that discussed the small group discussion method in teaching reading comprehension. This research is conducted on eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Bantul in the academic year 2017/2018. The research method was quasi-experimental research. Students class VIII was taken as the population of this research, with the research sample that was from class VIII A as a control class and VIII B as an experimental class. The result of this research shows that there is a significant difference in students' reading comprehension ability between both experimental and control classes. To conclude, the small group discussion method is significantly effective for the students' reading comprehension ability in the teaching-learning process at SMP Negeri 3 Bantul.

The second study was conducted by Izefti (2018) that explained the effect of small group discussion on eighth-graders' reading comprehension. She researched eighth-graders SMP Negeri 22 Kota Jambi. The method that used in this research is experimental research in quasi-experimental. In this research, the population was all the eighth-graders students of SMP Negeri 22 Kota Jambi in the academic year 2017/2018. The research sample was taken from two classes. The result of the research reveals that there is a significant mean score of students' reading comprehension who taught by small group discussion method. That is the effect of using the small group discussion method for reading comprehension of students in SMP Negeri 22 Kota Jambi accepted.

The third study was conducted by Seethamraju (2014) that discussed the effectiveness of using the online discussion forum for case study analysis". The method used in this research is using content analysis that involves a qualitative analysis of the student responses. The

participant in this research is international students from different countries. The number of students is 48 students. The result of the study is the opportunities for learning from each other have improved by transferring discussions to an online environment. Students perceived improvement in learning because of the online environment and appreciated the opportunities that have provided for a deeper understanding of content-based issues, appreciation of multiple views, and reflection of their learning and perceptions.

The fourth study was conducted by Liu (2014) that explained learning reading strategies with online discussions. This study had a pre-test and post-test experimental design. In this study, the participant was four 5th-grade classes, which consisted of a total of 113 students from an urban district, who volunteered to participate in this experiment. The result of the research indicated that in discussion in the single strategy instruction system, students exhibited extremely high participation rates.

Based on the previous studies, the implementation of the small group discussion method in improving students' reading comprehension has been used many times. First research by Ningsih (2017) revealed that the small group discussion method was a good method that can be applied in teaching reading comprehension to the students at eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 3 Bantul. Second, research by Izefti (2018) indicated the effect of using the small group discussion method for students' reading comprehension at eighth grade of SMP Negeri 22 Kota Jambi accepted. Third, research by Seethamraju (2014) revealed that the opportunities for learning from each other have improved by transferring discussions to an online environment. Fourth, research by Liu (2014) showed that the messaging discussion (online discussion) contributed to enhancing students' reading comprehension in single strategy instruction.

From some studies above, it is clear that the implementation of the small group discussion method can be considered in improving students' reading comprehension. However, this research is different from previous

studies. Those studies mostly used a quantitative approach with quasi-experimental design in implementing an online small group discussion method to enhance students' reading comprehension, while this research would use a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Moreover, in the previous research, there is no specific research that investigates the students' responses in reading comprehension especially in narrative text, and focused on pointing the progression by impact, influence, and effect of the small group discussion method. Hence, this research aims to find out the responses of students in implementing online small group discussion as the method to enhance students' reading comprehension in narrative text.

