

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of Study

Students are often told to study by picking out main ideas from readings. For many students, however, textbooks can seem so fact-filled that every idea looks like a main idea. This is one reason that students may sometimes end up with more than half a page of a textbook highlighted when they only meant to make a note of important ideas. Not everything in a paragraph is important. Generally, the most important part of any paragraph is the topic sentence. This is usually the first (or sometimes the last) sentence of a paragraph, and it should give you an idea of what the entire paragraph is about.

According to Mc Whoter (1989: 78) main idea is called the topic sentence. She adds that the main idea is not explicitly stated in any one sentence. Instead, it is left to the reader to infer, or the reason out. She also explains that to decide main idea of a paragraph, a reader may ask himself these questions: What is the main idea – What is the author trying to say about the topic, and which sentence states the main idea.

Brown (1987:203) says that if you get the main idea you can make some amazing inferences about details you never even read. But on the other hand, Brown proposes that some readers cannot see the forest for the trees, they get the details accurately, but do not see how they add up. When they hear a story, they are likely to miss the point.

Based on the theory above, the researcher can be said that the main idea is one component that is very important for a person in understanding the meaning contained in a sentence or text. Furthermore, that when a person is able to determine the main idea in a text or sentence it will be very easy to understand what is the content of the text that is being read. Then, there is also someone who is able to understand the main idea in a text but has difficulty in developing the contents of his reading. Besides, it can be said that one's ability to understand and decide the main idea is different.

The main idea is the main point or the central thought of the reading selection. It is usually a complete sentence that includes the gist of every idea from the paragraph. According to Jacobowitz, (1990: 19) problem in deciding is not a difficult reading task for many people due to the fact that they can search for

the main points of the text in a particular location of the paragraph (ie the first, second or last sentence). deciding on the main idea implied, however, requires different cognitive abilities. This is much more difficult and can be problematic for most readers, especially EFL readers who have more limited linguistic knowledge and discourse than L1 readers. For EFL learners, this skill is difficult because it requires them to think at the same time about some information and often there is no way to ascertain what a central theme is.

Based on the Jacobowitz theory, he said that students have different difficulties in deciding main idea, because someone ability and skill its different. For someone to assume that his or her determination of the main idea is not difficult, but for some others people to determine the main idea takes a long time as well as a long thought. although, capable of knowing the story of a text, not necessarily the person is able to deciding the main idea in the text, for example in descriptive text.

Furthermore, in generally the researcher find that students difficulties in deciding main idea, they have problems in reading a text and how to solve the main idea in each paragraph. Then, deciding main idea in a text very important for students in learning especially in reading skill. Because, if the students can found the main idea in a text, they can more easier understanding meaning about story of text. Based in the fact, the researcher want to analysis students difficulties in deciding main idea, especially descriptive text.

In fact, many student confused in deciding main idea, most students when deciding on their main ideas only guess from their possibilities. Not only, that

students often do not like reading English texts especially because they are not limited in mastering vocabulary as an obstacle for them in determining main ideas. whereas being able to determine main ideas in a text will be an important point for the reader because it will be easy for them to understand the overall content of the text.

Descriptive text is a kind of genre which paints a colorful picture of a person, place, thing or idea. It should make the reader see, hear, smell, taste, and feel what the author is describing, the aim of description is to reveal character, set the scenes, and to establish the mood. The writer first should decide the topic that will be talked about specifically, because to understand the point of paragraph is not easy for the reader if it is not specified.

As in previous research by Rima Mauli AD (2009), an Jannatul Irma (2011), the result of research can be concluded students still get difficulties in finding main idea because they do not know what main idea is and many difficult words make them confused to find main idea of reading text. There were used experimental research with use pre-post test design. There were used test and questionnaire as instrument. Based on prior research that has been applied, there are still many students who have difficulty in finding main ideas. With these results, researchers are very interested in conducting research related to the same problem in determining play ideas. This research will be focused on identifying students' problem in deciding main idea on descriptive text. Therefore, this research entitled, "The Students' Difficulties in Deciding Main Idea on Descriptive Text."

1.2 The Problem of Study

Based on identification of the problem, the problem of study is formulated as follow :

1. What are students' difficulties in deciding a main idea on descriptive text at the second grade students of MAN 2 Langsa?
2. How students perception about difficulties in deciding a main idea on descriptive text at the second grade students of MAN 2 Langsa?

1.3 The Purpose of Study

Based on the problem the researcher has some purpose for the research, the purpose of study are :

1. To know students' difficulties in deciding a main idea on descriptive text at the second grade students of MAN 2 Langsa.
2. To find out students perception about difficulties in deciding a main idea on descriptive text at the second grade students of MAN 2 Langsa.

1.4 Scope of Study

This research focused on students problem in deciding main idea on descriptive text. In this study the subject of this research is students second grade at MAN 2 Langsa.

1.5 Significance of Study

Significant of this study are to improve students' in English learning and to assist teachers in teaching process. it is described as follows: The findings of the research are expected to be beneficial not only theoretically but also practically:

a. Theoretically,

The result of this study is expected to give contribution for the teachers as feed back its students difficulties in deciding main idea on descriptive text. The writer hopes that the result of this study is expected to give feed back to motivate the students' to get a good result, especially in reading.

b. Practically

This research is expected to be used as a reference in conducting further research in the same field. The result of this study can be used as a reference for teachers to increase knowledge the teaching process in English learning.

a. For school

The problem of students in deciding main idea is hopefully useful as informative data focusing on the appropriate teacher's in increase students achievement in English class.

b. For the readers in general

This research is expected to give contribution of any value to the other writers in conducting further research of a similar topic