

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is an important way to improve students' general language skills in English. It helps them to improve their productive skills, including speaking and writing. The students can be inspired to be more creative and active through reading. According to Patel and Jain (2008:113), reading is the most important activity in many language classes. Reading is not only a source of information and pleasurable activity but also a means of consolidating and extending one's knowledge of the language. The students may know a lot of knowledge and moral values from the book or the text they read. It also can help the students to spend time more effectively. They can gain more positive things by doing a reading activity instead.

Based on the observation which was conducted on the eighth-grade students at SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar, it showed that the students still had low achievement in reading, especially in identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference, and there was a significant difference in the ability of students' reading comprehension. The students said reading was boring because the teacher just followed the instructions in their textbook, such as asking them to read the topics without explaining the meaning and then the teacher asked them to answer the questions based on the topic. Furthermore, when they answered the questions, they were still confused about how to answer them because they did not understand the meaning of the paragraph.

In addition, the informal interview with an English teacher and the eighth-grade students in SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar showed that the teacher did not use certain

techniques in teaching reading comprehension. The teacher often asked the students to read aloud the text in front of the classroom. The teacher only focused on their performance without paying attention to their comprehension. Firstly, the teacher gave examples of how to read the passage. Then, the teacher asked them to reread it and answer the questions without giving more explanation. It was a simple reading without much exploration in comprehending the text; thus, it still made comprehending a whole text hard for them.

The weakness that the researcher found was the technique used by the teacher in teaching reading was boring and not interesting. Besides, the students got less exploration about the related text because the comprehension process only happened when they were given questions. Thus, it made them only find the information from the questions served without concern about the other supporting details in the text outside the questions. In addition, the technique made them individualistic. The high-achiever students were smarter, and the lower students were getting unwilling to read. Therefore, most were passive and could not fully participate because they could not follow the teaching and learning process.

Referring to those problems, it was essential to implement a technique to solve them and bring the students out of boredom. It encouraged the students to be interested in reading; thus, it could improve their reading comprehension. One of the ways to motivate them to read was by implementing the appropriate technique in teaching reading. There were some varieties of techniques to involve and enhance their reading comprehension. In this case, the researcher used the herringbone technique to improve students' reading comprehension, especially the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar. This teaching technique was expected to enrich the students' reading comprehension.

Further, the herringbone technique is a visual diagram of a fish skeleton that helps the students understand the connections between supporting details to identify the main idea of a text. According to McKnight (2010:50), herringbone is a graphic organizer used to establish supporting details for the main idea. Using the herringbone technique, the students could understand a text by classifying information on their own. It can be helpful for them to memorize each important detail of every single paragraph. It means that when they know the important details in the text, they can easily retell it in their own words.

In conclusion, it is very important to make the reading activity meaningful to achieve the goal of the reading activity itself. Besides, comprehending the text and finding new information are important parts of reading comprehension. However, the students have a problem comprehending a reading text. Consequently, the researcher has a strong desire to find the solution to those problems and the motivation to conduct research focused on improving the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 through the herringbone technique.

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background of the study stated above, the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 still faced problems in reading comprehension, especially in identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference in reading the passages. Therefore, the researcher decided to use herringbone in teaching reading comprehension to the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023. Based on the background, the research problem can be stated as

follows: can reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 be improved through herringbone?

1.3 Objective of the Study

To make the present study has a direction, there must be an objective that the researcher wants to achieve through conducting the research. The research would be successful if it achieves its objective. The objective of the study was conducted to answer the research problem which has been declared. The objective of the study could answer and solve the research problem which has been previously constructed. Based on the question in the research problem, the objective of this study was to find out whether reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 can be improved through the herringbone technique.

1.4 Limitation of Study

To avoid a wide discussion about this topic, the research was limited to improving reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 through implementing herringbone as the teaching technique. The study concerned with competence 3.11 about comparing and catching contextual meaning related to a social function, text structure, and linguistic element of the oral and written recount, very short and simple, related to personal experience in the past based on the latest syllabus used by the school in curriculum 2013 latest design. Reading comprehension in this study was limited to identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference of recount texts. The four aspects of reading comprehension were expected to improve after implementing the technique.

1.5 Significance of Study

This research was concerned with improving reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 through herringbone technique. Therefore, the research findings are expected to benefit teachers, students, and other researchers. Moreover, it can provide both theoretical and practical significance, described as follows.

Theoretically, the study findings would be beneficial as theoretical evidence about implementing theory based on the problem faced. Then, the results of this study are expected to enrich theories and can give references as an empirical review for future studies related to the herringbone technique in teaching reading, especially reading comprehension. Besides, it could contribute the new research findings about the implementation of the herringbone technique in improving reading comprehension.

Practically, the findings of this research are expected to be useful for teachers, students, and other researchers. For the teachers, the researcher hopes that these research findings can reflect their teaching. It is expected that they could implement this technique in teaching reading to get a new atmosphere in the class during the lesson. For students, it is expected that the herringbone technique can gain their interest in studying, so they have various activities in studying using different techniques. The researcher also hopes that future findings of this research can be useful for future research to be the reference.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

The title of the present study was “Improving Reading Comprehension of the Eighth-grade Students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in Academic Year 2022/2023

through Herringbone Technique”. The term scientific research sound complicated to the readers because they are too broad. To avoid misunderstanding and confusion of the readers, the researcher then describes two operational definitions of the key terms in the present study as follows:

1. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension in the present study is defined as the ability of the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 to understand recount texts, especially in identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference.

2. Herringbone Technique

Herringbone technique is defined as a teaching technique that is used by the teacher to improve reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in which the students are asked to organize their comprehension of the text by completing the fish skeleton in accordance with the general information, specific information, textual meaning and textual reference. The students find the main idea by skimming and establishing some supporting details of the main idea by using the WH-question form.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Some theories related to the current research are needed as basic knowledge because it is important to implement a certain theory from experts in research. The researcher should examine some relevant theories from experts related to the study to strengthen the theoretical framework of the present study. In the present research, the researcher describes some important points from related references supporting the study. They are as follows: reading comprehension, herringbone, and reading assessment.

2.1.1 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is not reading a text aloud without getting meaning; it is defined as constructing meaning from the text. Moreover, it also refers to the ability of the students to understand the content of the reading text. It means, in reading activity, the readers do not only read the text aloud, but they should comprehend the content and try to catch the message, information, and knowledge from the text they read. Reading comprehension will be defined as an effective way to involve the internal process of thinking and understanding text.

According to Duffy (2009:14), reading is a section that focuses on vocabulary and comprehension. Comprehension is the essence of reading because the goal of written language is the communication of messages, and vocabulary is fundamentally important for understanding messages. It is because when the readers could not recognize the meaning of a vocabulary in a text, the readers will be hard to get meaning; hence, they could not understand the message from the text

well. A long process is needed to understand a text because it involves some aspects to help readers understand.

Moreover, Pang et al. (2003:6) state reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perceptions and thought. Reading consists of two related processes such as word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is making sense of words, sentences, and connected text. Readers typically use background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text, and other strategies to help them understand written text.

Serravallo (2010:43) states comprehension is at the heart of what it means to read. Reading is thinking and trying to understand the content of the message contained in the passage. This understanding is a prerequisite for the occurrence of an act of reading. Reading is not taking place if there is no understanding to the readers. Learning to read is an important educational goal. Chard & Santoro (2008:1) add that good readers become fluent and automatic at strategic comprehension processing. Strategic processing is necessary for efficient and effective comprehension, which involves using strategies to understand text, knowing when to use the various strategies, actively thinking about and monitoring what is read, understanding text structure, and engaging in meaningful discussions.

Supporting those statements, McNamara (2007:109) adds that comprehension arises from a series of cognitive processes and activities, including word decoding, lexical access, syntactic processing, inference generation, reading strategies, and post-reading activities (e.g., summarization, question, asking, and answering argumentation). To comprehend the text, the readers must be able to

decode or recognize words. These contribute to their ability to connect the meaning of multiple sentences into a coherently connected mental representation of the text's overall meaning. They try to understand what the text tells about, and they can catch the meaning of the text.

From that statement above, the researcher focused on the theory from McNamara (2007:109), who states that comprehension arises from a series of cognitive processes and activities, including word decoding, lexical access, syntactic processing, inference generation, reading strategies, and post-reading activities (e.g. summarization, question, asking and answering argumentation). To comprehend the texts, the readers must be able to decode or recognize words. These contribute to their ability to connect the meaning of multiple sentences into a coherently connected mental representation of the text's overall meaning. They try to understand what the text tells them about, and they can catch the meaning.

In conclusion, reading is not without getting the meaning, and vice versa. The students should understand what the text wants them to know, and it will not be done simply by reading a group of words. Comprehension is the thing that should be achieved in a reading activity; it is the goal of a reading activity where the students will get something from what they have read. Connecting the students' prior knowledge to reading activity is needed to achieve comprehension. Therefore, it is expected that after the reading activity, students will catch the meaning and get something new from what they have read.

2.1.2 Herringbone

Reading needs a long process to achieve the goal of comprehension. Understanding a text is always harder than just simply reading the text. Many

obstacles might be found in having students read their texts. Having students engage with the texts is hard to achieve; innovation is needed in the reading activity. Applying a technique that has never been applied before is one of the innovations to engage students in following the teaching and learning process, especially in reading. Mostly, people are more interested in reading a text when they have visualization. Giving a graphic organizer is one of the solutions to gain students' interest in reading.

Herringbone is a part of the graphic organizer technique. It is a simple way that leads students to focus on text details by simply classifying them into the forms of a fish skeleton. The herringbone provides readers with a framework for recognizing and recording main ideas and supporting details during and after reading. The categories included in the diagram are often the main idea (the spine of the fish) and "who, where, what, why, when, and how" (the ribs), but they can be altered to fit the particular text students are reading (Jacobs, 2010:11).

Supporting the statement, Zygouris and Glass (2004:2) state that herringbone is a visual organizer that provides students with a framework for making decisions about main ideas and supporting details in the material they are reading. When modelling, the teachers should remind the students to look for and identify the answers to the six questions. After all, questions have been answered; the information will be used to create a main idea sentence. The herringbone will also be used in reverse as a pre-writing technique.

According to McKnight (2010:50), herringbone is a graphic organizer used to establish supporting details for the main idea. It is said that graphic organizer is a teaching and learning tool; when integrated into classroom experiences, students can understand new material well. Furthermore, by creating a strong visual picture,

the graphic organizer supports students by enabling them to see connections and relationships between facts, information, and terms.

Herringbone has six diagonal rows to cover the details of the text that students have. It will help students to get more details information needed. According to Denton et al. (2007:325), herringbone is a part of a graphic organizer used to see the cause-and-effect relationship of the text. The herringbone graphic has six diagonal rows on both sides of the fish backbone and a single center point in the middle of the skeleton. The center point is determined as an effect, and the other six diagonal rows on both sides of the skeleton are used to present the causes. It means that a single or main thing that happened in the text is caused by other things that are explained in the sentences of the text as the details; there are some things to lead to a single main idea of the sentences.

There is no difference in the graphic visualization stated by either (Denton et al., 2007) or McKnight. However, the difference is the way they label the graphic. (Denton et al., 2007) say that visualization is a cause-and-effect relationship, while McKnight states that this graphic is a visualization of some supporting details that support the main idea; it is used to classify that information. In the present study, the researcher will use the graphic from (Denton et al., 2007:115); the steps in applying the herringbone technique are as follows:

Before reading, the teacher gives a reading text, shows the herringbone graphic to the students, and discusses their prior knowledge. The graphic is used as a tool to preview the reading text. The teacher asks them to construct a herringbone diagram based on the teacher's diagram while explaining the function of the graphic. The teacher asks them to make predictions about the text based on the herringbone graphic, such as the kind of its text that will be discussed. Then, the

teacher asks them to record some questions by using the W-H Question form. They look for answers to: Who is the author talking about, What did they do? When did they do it? Where did they do it? How did they do it? Why did they do it?

During reading, the teacher asks students to read the text to find specific information of the text by answering the questions given and recording the answers in the six-diagonal side of the fish backbone graphic. They have to answer it with a complete grammatical sentence. After answering those questions and getting specific information from the text, the students write the main idea using the information from the herringbone diagram in the middle side of the graphic. After finishing a paragraph, students redo the previous activity by drawing a new herringbone diagram for the next paragraph. It is continuously done for each paragraph in the text. Then, the teacher and students discuss the text's specific information and main idea or cause-effect. The last is students write a summary of the text using their own words and the herringbone graphic as a guide; they then read the summary result in front of the classroom.

From those statements above, the researcher focused on the theory from McKnight, and herringbone consists of a short graphic organizer. McKnight (2010) finds it an effective way to establish supporting details to find the main idea in a reading text. The fishbone pattern guides the students to make a statement representing a topic sentence of the text in the graphic organizer part of the graphic organizer which is used to see the cause-and-effect relationship of the text.

2.1.3 Reading Assessment

According to Brown (2004:4), assessment is an ongoing process encompassing a wider domain. Whenever a student responds to a question, offers

comments, or tries out a new word or structure, the teacher subconsciously assesses the student's performance. There are four types of assessment; (1) informal assessment is incidental, unplanned assessment; (2) formal assessment is a systematically planned sampling technique, and it is constructed to give teachers and students an appraisal of students' achievement; (3) formative assessment is an ongoing process of assessment, it occurs every time; (4) summative assessment measures what a student has grasped, it occurs at the end of the course.

Moreover, Caldwell (2008:3) states that reading assessment involves four steps: identifying what to assess, collecting evidence, analyzing the evidence, and making a decision. Assessing cannot be done without a process, we cannot simply give the score based on our feelings toward the subject we assess, but some points should be concerned to assess the subject to know their ability in having done the reading activity. Supporting the statements above, reading comprehension assessment has different purposes; one is determining if students have met pre-established criteria for their grade level.

According to Bailey and Heritage (2008:158), reading can be assessed through writing since both are communicative activities. Reading supports writing and vice versa. By reading, students will get knowledge, and then they can share the knowledge they got from what they read by writing the information they could catch and understand. If students can comprehend a text, they will be able to retell the information to others, and how they rewrite information can reflect how far they understand it.

In designing the reading assessment task, the researcher should consider the reading first because an assessment task is constructed by considering the purpose and type of the reading activity. The type of reading applied in the present study is

interactive reading. According to Brown (2004:201), interactive reading can be assessed using several tests. They are cloze tasks, impromptu reading plus comprehension questions, short answer tasks, editing, scanning, ordering, information transfer, and interpretation.

In this study, reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP PGRI 2 Denpasar in academic year 2022/2023 was assessed using a short answer task that assessed four aspects of reading (general information, specific information, textual meaning and textual reference). Using short answer tasks, the researcher assessed not only students' comprehension but also the students' vocabulary and grammatical ability.

From those statements above, the researcher focuses on the theory from Brown (2004:4) that assessment is an ongoing process encompassing a much wider domain. Whenever a student responds to a question, offers comments, or tries out a new word or structure, the teacher subconsciously assesses the performance.

2.2 Empirical Review

An empirical review is provided to show the relevant studies according to previous researchers with the same purposes as the present study. In empirical review, the purpose is to find similar studies related to the present study as the references; furthermore, it is also used to compare the previous research with the present research to make it more empirical evidence about the applied technique. Empirical review in the present study should explain important points related to the present study. They are as follows.

Dewi conducted the first research that was used as an empirical review in 2018 entitled "The Implementation of Herringbone Technique to Improve Reading

Comprehension of the Eighth Grade Student of SMPN 5 Denpasar in Academic Year 2018/2019". The objective of this study was intended to know the effectiveness of the herringbone technique in improving students' reading comprehension. The results of the study showed that the herringbone technique succeeded in improving the student's reading comprehension of the tenth-grade students of SMAN 5 Denpasar.

The study showed that the researcher has already been good at presenting the data and solving the problem through the technique applied. The researcher used a clear theory and steps about the herringbone graphic. Still, in completing the diagram, the researcher did not give clear instructions on whether the students had to answer the WH question in short answers or complete grammatical sentences. It confused students in answering the questions because there were no definite, clear instructions. In the present study, the researcher asked students to answer the WH question in a complete grammatical sentence so they were not confused answering it, and it would be easier to arrange a summary by simply taking out the answer from the herringbone graphic.

Furthermore, the second similar research was conducted by Wati in 2017, entitled "Improving Reading Comprehension through Herringbone of the Eleventh Grade Students of SMAN 2 Denpasar in Academic Year 2016/2017". The objective of the study was to discover whether or not reading comprehension of the eleventh-grade students of SMAN 2 Denpasar can be improved through the herringbone technique. The results of the study showed that the implementation of the Herringbone technique could improve the students' reading comprehension.

Considering the data, the earlier study showed that using the herringbone technique could improve the students' reading comprehension. The researcher has

already put many underlining theories of herringbone graphics that can be used as references by other researchers. However, in implementing the technique, the researcher did not do a discussion session after students got supporting details and the main idea. It made students wonder whether the answers were right or wrong, and they became unconfident when making a summary based on the information they found. In this study, the researcher would use the clear steps of how to apply the herringbone technique based on Denton et al. (2007:115). The researcher would do a discussion session after students got supporting details and the main idea. Hence, the students knew the correct supporting details and main idea of the text and became confident when making a summary based on the information.

