

# **CHAPTER I**

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### 1.1 Background of the Study

The ability to read English text comprehensively is important for SMU students. This ability is essential because the students can broaden their knowledge through reading. They can get much knowledge, then use it in their life. Doeiring et al (1981:1) says that reading can add greatly to the quality of students' life. Moreover, according to Nababan as quoted by Ngadiman (1990:1) most textbooks used in higher education are written in English. Consequently, students of SMU must be prepared to be able to understand the English text in order to comprehend the subject.

Realizing the importance of reading, the Indonesian government, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan stipulates that teaching English as the first foreign language for SMU students in Indonesia involves integrated reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills with the emphasis on reading skill (GBPP 1994). This shows that reading takes the primary position to be achieved.

The conventions of reading in English are learned and taught to Indonesian students since they were at SLTP (Sekolah Lanjutan Tingkat Pertama). Students of SMU must have a good reading ability. However, many of them still have a low ability to read and comprehend the English passage. As a result, they cannot get the message of the reading passage. Moreover, students usually get bored in the reading class, especially when they have to do the exercises.

The teaching method conducted in reading class might make the students read poorly. Based on the writer's observation during her teaching practice at SMU, the writer noticed that the teacher applied the traditional lecture approach. In this approach the class was dominated by the teacher. It was usually started by asking the students to read the reading passage silently. Then the teacher gave opportunities to some students to ask some words that they did not understand. And, he explained them by giving the equivalent in English or Indonesian. After that, he asked the students to answer the provided questions given in the passage. This method is not effective since the students cannot learn actively in the class. There is not enough opportunity for the students to process information in the passage carefully and effectively, since the teacher is the authority in the class. He always dictates what the students do in order that the students can learn what he knows. In short, it can be said that the teacher is the main source of knowledge and information beside the text itself. Moreover, the size of reading class is usually large. The number of students in one class is more than 40 students. It means that in one class there is a varied level of fluency in learning and the teacher cannot give each student the same personal attention. The time allocation is also limited. It is only 45 minutes in a session.

To overcome the problem above, the teacher is suggested to apply the cooperative learning method in reading class. Lie (1995) in her paper says that cooperative learning is more than just putting the students into groups and asking them to work together. It is carefully organized so that each student can interact to each other and all students are motivated to increase each other's learning. Olsen and Kagan (1992:2) state that by doing cooperative learning, the students' learning can be

enhanced and their academic achievement can also be increased since the students can learn actively in class. They do mutual help in understanding the passage. They can get the sources of information not only from the teacher and the passage but also from the consultation with other.

Considering Lie and Olsen and Kagan's suggestions and considering the students' difficulties in reading comprehension stated above, the writer conducted a research on the effects of cooperative learning on students reading comprehension.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, the writer stipulates the major problems as follows:

1. Does cooperative learning affect students' achievement in reading comprehension?
2. Is there a significant difference in the reading achievement of students taught using cooperative learning over the students taught using non cooperative learning?

According to the 1994 English Curriculum for SMU, in order that SMU students are able to read comprehensively, they should have the skills of (1) identifying the explicitly stated information, (2) determining the topic, (3) identifying the main idea, (4) identifying the implied information, (5) interpreting the word, phrase, and sentence in context. Considering it, the first major problem has the following minor problems:

- 1.1 Does cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering factual question?
- 1.2 Does cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering inference question?
- 1.3 Does cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering subject matter question?
- 1.4 Does cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering main idea question?
- 1.5 Does cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering structural question?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

Derived directly from the above statements of the problem, the objectives of this study are:

1. To see whether cooperative learning affect students' achievement in reading comprehension.

In order to achieve this main objective, the following sub-objectives are investigated first, they are:

- 1.1 To see whether cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering factual question
- 1.2 To see whether cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering inference question

- 1.3 To see whether cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering subject matter question
  - 1.4 To see whether cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering main idea question
  - 1.5 To see whether cooperative learning affect students' achievement in answering structural question
2. To see whether there is a significant difference in the reading achievement of the students taught using cooperative learning over the students taught using non cooperative learning

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study is designed to give contribution to the teaching of reading at SMU and the readers as reference. It is hoped that the results of the study will give useful information about the effects of cooperative learning on students' reading ability.

Good reading comprehension means that the reader can get the message of the passage he reads. The students, however, still have the difficulty in this matter. To overcome this problem, the students can be organized in cooperative learning. They are assigned to work in groups to understand the passage. The application of cooperative learning in this study should give much useful information about cooperative learning practice in the reading class. Thus, then it may help the teacher to develop an approach of teaching reading to the students of English as a second/foreign language.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This study is limited to studying the effectiveness of cooperative learning on students' reading comprehension. In this study, the students' reading comprehension includes five skills. They are (1) identifying the explicitly stated information, (2) determining the topic, (3) identifying the main idea, (4) identifying the implied information, (5) interpreting the word, phrase, and sentence in context. Thus, this study deals with five questions of comprehension: factual question, subject matter question, main idea question, inference question, and structural question.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation, the following key are necessary to be defined.

#### **a. Reading comprehension**

It is getting the meaning from the passage as proved by the ability to find the explicitly and implicitly stated information, the topic, main ideas, and the ability of interpreting word, phrase, or sentence in context.

#### **b. Factual question**

Type of question which concerns with the information stated explicitly in the passage. It requires the students to recognize the information, facts, statements, and opinions stated by the author (GBPP 1994).

#### **c. Inference question**

Type of question which requires the students to recognize the information stated implicitly in the passage (GBPP 1994).

d. Subject matter question

Type of question which requires the students to determine the topic of the passage; what the passage is about (GBPP 1994).

e. Main idea question

Type of question which requires the students to find the main idea of the paragraphs in the passage (GBPP 1994).

f. Structural question

Type of question which requires the students to interpret the word, phrase, and sentence in context (GBPP 1994). This question includes the question about the vocabulary found in the passage and the structure of sentences in the passage.

g. Cooperative learning

According to Olsen and Kagan as cited by Kessler, cooperative learning is a group learning that is organized so that each learner in group can exchange information and increase his own learning and the learning of others. In this study, the practice of cooperative learning is done by dividing the class into the group of four. Each group member will have one different paragraph of the passage to read, and together all the group members have to find out the entire content of the passage through a process of cooperating.

### 1.7 Assumption

This study is based on the following assumptions.

1. The subjects of this study are considered having the same level of English competence.
2. The first year of SMU students have mastered 1.500 words and the structural knowledge.
3. The selection of reading passage is in line with 1994 English curriculum for SMU students. Thus, the passage is valid as the teaching material for SMU students.

### 1.8 Hypotheses

The first major hypothesis of the study is "The cooperative learning affects The students' achievement in reading comprehension". Before this main hypothesis is answered, the following minor alternative hypotheses are tested:

1. The cooperative learning affects students' achievement in answering factual question.
2. The cooperative learning affects students' achievement in answering inference question.
3. The cooperative learning affects students' achievement in answering subject matter question.
4. The cooperative learning affects students' achievement in answering main idea question.
5. The cooperative learning affects students' achievement in answering structural question.

The second major hypothesis to be tested is “Students who are taught by using Cooperative learning show a significant difference in reading comprehension achievement over students who are not taught by using cooperative learning”. This alternative hypothesis is then formulated in its null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) to be tested, that is “There is no significant difference in reading comprehension achievement made by the students taught by using cooperative learning over those who taught by non cooperative learning.

### **1.9 Organisational Patterns of the Study**

This study consists of five chapters. In chapter one, the writer would like to present the introduction of the study, that deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, definition of key terms, assumption, hypotheses, and the organizational patterns of the study. Chapter two deals with the review of the related literature. Chapter three is about research methodology. Chapter four is concerning with data analysis. In the last chapter, the writer gives conclusion and some suggestions.