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## Utilizing Group Investigation Techniques to Enhance Students' Reading Comprehension Skills on Recount Text

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### ABSTRACT

Recount text is one of the texts in writing which must be taught and stated in Junior High School curriculum. Some students felt that reading text is boring because the students tend to be very lazy to read the text, so that they are not interested in English lessons. The researchers used group investigation technique as one of alternatives in teaching and learning to develop the material and make students more active and interested in class. The objective of this research is to find out whether teaching using group investigation technique is able to develop the students' reading in recount text at the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Kota Serang. The methodology of this research was a quantitative research method by using true experimental design. The study was carried out into two classes, Class VIII E as experimental class, and Class VIII C as control class. The results of the study showed that group investigation was able to develop students' reading comprehension in recount text. Mean of posttest score of the experimental class (67.31) was higher than the control class (64.18). Based on the statistical analysis using t-test analysis, it showed the value of  $t_{count} \geq t_{table} = 49.12 \geq 1.99$ . It means that ( $H_a$ ) was accepted and the ( $H_0$ ) was rejected. It can be concluded that group investigation is able to develop students' reading comprehension in recount text at eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Kota Serang.



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### INTRODUCTION

Language is important for every human need. To meet their needs, they must communicate with others. Using language, people can express feelings, ideas, explanations, thoughts, etc. Language is not only used for everyday conversation but is also used in education, research, and science

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both orally and in writing. Reading is one of the basic skills in learning English which plays an important role in understanding the author's ideas contained in the text. By reading, people can find a lot of information from various sources. For example, when people read the newspaper, the goal is to look for general information and they only want to find the latest news that happened on that day without reading the whole so that we do not get the information contained in the newspaper. Therefore, reading is an important part of students because their success depends on their ability to read. If they have good reading skills, they have a better chance to succeed in their studies.

On the other hand, a teacher must be able to guide students to have the desire to read English texts. The teacher must choose a fresh and interesting way to give in the teaching and learning process. One of the first steps that teachers must do is to provide interesting teaching techniques, not only using the game method, there are several ways for teachers to improve their learning activeness. In this study, researchers were interested in providing solutions to help students improve their mastery in reading comprehension. This research was conducted by applying cooperative learning models in the teaching and learning process through the Group Investigation Technique. Working together in groups especially group investigations will train students to collaborate their own opinions with their friends. In addition, students have the opportunity to practice and improve their ideas, and here students also have the opportunity to express their thoughts so that each group is fair and there is no social jealousy with each other. Therefore, the model of cooperative learning and teaching using the Group Investigation Technique is very appropriate to improve students' mastery in teaching reading comprehension.

According to Harmer (2007), reading is useful for language acquisition in which it provides the students more or less understanding what they read, the more they read, the better they get at it. It means that reading is an activity to understand what the text contains. Therefore, the students need to read more, so that they can get knowledge from their reading. Reading is not only a skill to read the text correctly but also to understand it. Based on the researchers' interviews with the English teacher at eighth of SMP Negeri 17 Kota Serang, the researchers found that there were many students who still found difficulties to read and to understand a passage in English. The students were difficult to find the point or the main idea of the texts. The students in the school do not find any difficulties when reading a text in the source language, but it happens to the students when they read texts in the target language.

Dealing with the problems mentioned above, the researchers believe that Group Investigation Technique is able to develop the students' reading comprehension skills. Group Investigation Technique is one of cooperative learning methods which focus on students' participation and activity. Group Investigation Method is one teaching strategy to form and dynamics of the democratic process with the process of academic inquiry. Group Investigation Technique is appropriate to be applied in solving the students' problems when learning English skills, especially reading comprehension skills because the students work on a task in group of two or more, after that they are encouraged and motivated to help one another to learn (rather than being in competition with one another), so that they are dependent upon the efforts of one another to achieve success, and they are held accountable for that learning both as a group and as individuals.

### **Reading Comprehension Skills**

Reading becomes one of the skills which is needed in the learning process. According to Brown (2004), reading is the process of negotiating meaning in which the reader brings to the text about a set of schemata for understanding it and makes the product of interaction. In addition, reading is an interaction process to understand the contents of the text. As defined by Nunan (2003), reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. Everyone needs reading to refresh their knowledge in many sectors.

Therefore, it is one of the receptive skills that become the goal of most foreign language programs. It shows that reading is an important part of the teaching of knowledge. Similarly, Grabe and Stoller (2002) stated that reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately. Meanwhile, Harmer (2007) stated that reading is useful for language acquisition which provides the students more or less understanding what they read, the more they read, the better they get at it. It means that students need to read more, so that they get knowledge from their reading.

Reading purpose is to increase knowledge about what the readers do not know and also can get information and comprehension from what they have read. According to Grabe and Stoller (2002), there several purposes of reading, they are reading to search for simple information, reading to skim quickly, reading to learn from texts, reading to integrate information, reading to write (or search for information needed for writing), reading to critique texts, and reading for general comprehension.

Reading to search for simple information is a common reading ability, though some researches see it as a relatively independent cognitive process. In reading to search, typically scan the text for a specific word or a specific piece of information, or a few representative phrases. Reading to learn typically occurs in academic and professional contexts in which a person needs to learn a considerable amount of information for a text. Meanwhile, reading to integrate information requires additional decisions about the relative importance of complementary, mutually supporting or conflicting information and the likely restructuring of a rhetorical frame to accommodate information from multiple sources. Furthermore, according to Brown (2004), reading can be divided into four kinds, the first is perceptive reading in which it involves attending to the components of larger stretches of discourse, such as letters, word, punctuation and other grapheme symbols. The second one is selective reading. This category is largely an artifact of assessment formats. In this kind of reading, certain reading recognition of lexical, grammatical or discourse features of language within a very stretch language, as well as certain typical tasks are used. They are pictures of cued task, matching, true and false, and multiple choices. Third is interactive reading which focuses on identifying relevant lexical, symbols, grammatical and discourse. Occasionally, it is short length in text that has an objective on retaining information. There are types of genres in interactive reading, for example anecdotes, short narrative, descriptive, memos, announcement, directions, etc. The fourth is extensive reading which requires an understanding from the longer passage. These kinds of passages refer to the text that are more than one page including professional articles, essays, short stories and books.

Meanwhile, reading comprehension refers to reading with understanding. According to Grabe and Stoller (2002), reading comprehension is an extraordinary feat of balancing and coordinating many abilities in a very complex and rapid set of routines that makes comprehension a seemingly effortless and enjoyable activity for fluent readers. In addition, Johnson (2008) argues that comprehension is a process of making sense of a text in the most effective way. It is an active process in the construction of meaning and extracting the required information from text as effectively as possible. Snow (2002) added that reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Reading comprehension has focused on specific factors (e.g., vocabulary knowledge) without specifying either that the effect of that factor reflects a relationship among reader, text, and activity or that the factor may change from pre-reading to reading to post-reading. Klingner, et al. (2007) also states that reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from a text through cognitive cooperation including word knowledge and fluency. Thus, it can be said that reading comprehension means the ability in interpreting, extracting, and constructing the words and/or sentences to emphasize both the importance of understanding the meaning and the relationship between ideas conveyed in a text as a determination of reading comprehension.

### **Recount Text**

According to Anderson (1998), a recount is a piece of text that retells past events, usually in the order in which they occurred. Its purpose is to provide the audience with a description of what occurred and when it occurred. The examples of recount texts include eye witness accounts, newspaper reports, letters, conversations, television interviews and speeches. There are some components of recount text, they are as follows:

a. Generic Structure

According to Anderson (1998), there are some generic structures of recount text, those are as follows:

1. Title (optional)

It is usually about a summary of the text and/or information on specific participants. It is possible not to give title in our recount text.

2. Part 1: Orientation

It provides the background information. It answers the questions, such as Who? When? Why? and What experience?

3. Part 2: List of events

It presents events that people do, tells the event chronologically, and uses conjunction or connectors, like first, second, then, next, finally, etc. They show the sequence of events.

4. Part 3: Re-orientation

It shows concluding comments as well as expresses the writer's personal opinion regarding the events described.

b. Language Features

The language features used in recount text are as follows:

1. Using chronological connections: then, first

2. Using linking verbs: was, were, saw, heard

3. Using action verbs: looked, went

4. Using simple past tense: walked, talked

5. The passive voice may be used, such as the bottle was filled with ink

6. Using personal pronouns: I, we

Furthermore, recount is used to relate experience or retell events for the purpose of informing, entertaining or reflecting. Recount can be personal, factual or imaginative. Derewianka (2004) listed out three major types of recount text, they are (1) Personal Recount; it describes an event where the writer or the author is doing the action by himself. It includes in the story, funny events which are written in the diary, (2) Factual Recount; it describes the facts of events, such research report, the magazine, and so forth, and (3) Imaginative Recount in which it describes the unreal story or fiction. Therefore, the imaginative recount is usually written in the first person and does not need to include personal reaction.

### **Group Investigation Technique**

This technique is one of cooperative learning methods which focuses on student's participation and activity (Killen, 1998). In Group Investigation, the students take an active part in planning what they will study and how they form cooperative groups related to common interests in a topic. All group members help to plan how to research their topic. Then, they divide the work among themselves and each group member carries out his or her part of the investigation. Finally, the group synthesizes and summarizes its work and presents these findings to the class. This type demands the students' ability of communication or the skills of the group. It means that this technique exercises the students to grow up their brain skill.

Furthermore, the procedures of Group Investigation Technique consist of six steps. First is Top Selection, i.e. the students choose specific subtopics within a general problem area, usually described by the teacher. Students are placed into small 2 until to 6 people task oriented groups. Group composition is academically and ethnically heterogeneous. Second is Planning

Assignments, i.e. the students in each group and the teacher plans specific learning procedures, tasks and goals consistent with the subtopics of the problem selected in step 1. Third is Implementation, i.e. each group gathers information, reviews the subtopic, analyzes or evaluates it, and reaches some conclusions. Kinds of sources of information can be obtained both inside and outside the school. Fourth is Analysis and Synthesis, i.e. the students analyze and evaluate information obtained during step 3 and must prepare a summary activity. It may be in the form of a report, a briefing, etc. for the entire class. Fifth is Presentation of Final Project, i.e. each group in the class gives an interesting presentation of the topics studied in order to get classmates involved in one another's work and to achieve a broad perspective on the topic. Group presentations are coordinated by the teacher. And the sixth is Evaluation, i.e. in case the groups followed different aspects of the same topic, the students and the teacher evaluate each group's contribution to the work of the class as a whole. Evaluation can include either individual or group assessment or both.

Thus, there are some advantages of Group Investigation Technique, i.e. according to Slavin (2010), Group Investigation Technique provides opportunities for more intensive investigation of a study or problem. The technique can be used in schools by employing a variety of the class arrangements, groupings, and schedules. This Group Investigation Technique also provides opportunities to develop respects for other students whose work helps the group progress in reaching its goals.

## **METHODS**

This research applied quantitative approach dealing with true experimental research. According to Ary, et al. (2010), quantitative research is an approach that uses objective measurement to gather numeric data that are used to answer questions or test predetermined hypotheses. It means the data of quantitative research were gained from the numeric data and analyzed by using statistical computation. Quantitative research may further be classified as true experimental. Moreover, true experimental is design of quantitative research which has an experimental group and a control group where in this true experimental research, both pretest and post-test including a certain treatment were conducted. This design was used to find out whether teaching using group investigation technique is able to develop the students' reading in recount text. The selected participants of this research were the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 17 Kota Serang which consisted of 32 students from Class VIII E as experimental group and 32 students from Class VIII C as control group.

### **Research Instruments**

The instrument would be an objective reading test of recount text used for the tryout, pre-test, and post-test. Pre-test or initial reflection was intended to assess the pre-existing reading comprehension of the subjects which was administered in the first meeting before the researcher conducted the research by applying Group Investigation Technique in the classroom. The post-test was administered at the end of sessions. The function of administering post-test was to evaluate the influence of using Group Investigation Technique in teaching reading comprehension. Those tests were in the form of multiple choices that consisted of four options (A, B, C, and D). The multiple choice test was used since its marking is rapid, simple and most importantly reliable, not subjective or influenced by the marker's judgment.

Since the data were in the form of students' reading comprehension, the data were collected by using two reading tests: pre-test and post-test. Each student has to answer the reading comprehension test of the recount text in each test. The students' scores were analyzed to find out the students' ability before and after having the treatments. Pre-test was given in order to find out how far the students' reading comprehension was before being given the treatment. It was to see the basic quality students' reading comprehension before receiving the treatment. Meanwhile, the

post-test was given to measure students' progress on reading ability after they received the treatment. The procedure of doing post-test was similar to the pre-test.

### **Data Analysis**

For analyzing the data, the researchers used normality of the test, homogeneity of the test and t-test.

#### **1. Normality of Distribution Test**

Normality of distribution of test is to find out pre-test and post-test in two groups that normality was distributed or not. According to Hatch and Lazaraton (1991), normal distribution means that most of the scores cluster around the midpoint of the distribution, and the number of scores gradually decreases on either side of the midpoint.

#### **2. Homogeneity Test**

The homogeneity test was used to check whether or not the post-test score of the experimental and control group have the same variance. The homogeneity test is calculated by using f count as follows:

$$F_{count} = \frac{BV}{SV}$$

Notes:

- $F_{count}$ : f value variant
- BV: The biggest variant
- SV: The smallest variant

The criteria are as follows:

- If  $f_{count} \geq f_{table}$ : it indicates that the test is homogenous.
- If  $f_{count} \leq f_{table}$ : it indicates that the test is not homogenous.

#### **3. Hypothesis (Test of Significance Value)**

The hypothesis presents the researcher's expectation about the relationship between variables within the question (Ary, et. al., 2010). To prove a hypothesis, the data were obtained from the experimental group and the control group that were calculated by using t-test formula:

$$T_{xy} = \frac{M_x - M_y}{\sqrt{\left\{ \frac{\sum x^2 + \sum y^2}{N_x + N_y - 2} \right\} + \left\{ \frac{1}{N_x} + \frac{1}{N_y} \right\}}}$$

Notes:

- $T_{xy}$ : t-test
- $M_x$ : Mean of deviation of experiment class
- $M_y$ : Mean of deviation of control class
- $\sum X^2$ : Sum of the squared deviation score of experiment class
- $\sum Y^2$ : Sum of the squared deviation score of control class
- $N_x$ : The number of students of experiment class
- $N_y$ : The number of students of control class
- 1: Constant number

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result of Pre-Test**

The pre-test of experimental class and control class was conducted on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2019. The pre-test consisted of 20 items and the form of pretest was multiple choices After the researcher got the students' score of pre-test, the researcher found out the maximum score and minimum score in both of the classes. Based on the data analysis explained, the researcher found that before applying the treatment the researchers gave the pre-test for each class. From the pre-test, the researcher knew the students' achievement in reading skill on recount text. Based on the mean of the experimental and control class, the students' achievement of the pre-test showed that the

experimental class was higher than the control class. The students' reading skill of Class VIII E as experimental class was higher than Class VIII C as control class. The comparison of both of these groups could be seen in the table below:

Table 4.3 The Mean Table of Pre-Test in Experimental and Control Group

Data	VIII E (Experimental Class)	VIII C (Control Class)
N	32	32
Min	45	40
Max	65	65
Mean	56.37	55.12

### Result of Post-Test

The post-test of experimental class and control class was conducted on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019. The pre-test consisted of 20 items test and the form of pretest was multiple choices. After the researchers got the students' score of the post-test, the researcher found out the maximum score and minimum score in both classes. Based on the mean of the experimental and control class, the students' achievement of the pre-test showed that the experimental class was higher than the control class. The students' reading skill of Class VIII E as experimental class was higher than Class VIII C as control class. The comparison of both of these groups could be seen in the table below:

Table 4.3 The Mean Table of Post-Test in Experimental and Control Group

Data	VIII E (Experimental Class)	VIII C (Control Class)
N	32	32
Min	50	45
Max	85	80
Mean	67.31	64.18

### The Result of Hypothesis Testing

The researchers used the t-test formula to test the hypothesis of this research. There are two hypotheses assumed in this research, i.e. 1) The Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_a$ ): Group Investigation Technique is able to develop students' reading comprehension skill in recount text at eighth grade students in SMPN 17 Kota Serang and 2) The Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): Group Investigation Technique is not able to develop students' reading comprehension skill in recount text at eighth grade students in SMPN 17 Kota Serang.

To prove the hypothesis of this research, statistic calculation of t-test formula with the degree of significance 5% was used. To find out the result of hypothesis test, the value of  $t_{count}$  compared with  $t_{table}$  degree freedom. The researcher used the formula of  $t_{table}$ . Based on the result above, it was found that  $t_{count} \geq t_{table}$  or  $49.12 \geq 1.99$ . It means that the alternative hypothesis was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected. It can be concluded that there was any development and significant difference between the result after teaching reading skill on recount text by using group investigation and without using group investigation at eighth grade students in SMPN 17 Kota Serang. Group investigation is able to develop students' reading skill on recount text at eighth grade students in SMPN 17 Kota Serang.

### Research Discussion

Based on the research, in the experimental class, the researchers did a technique or other way to teach compared with the control class. The type of technique used is the group investigation technique, where the researchers divided the group into 4 or 5 students and the results of the assessment from the experimental class can be larger and the average value is high because students feel that the learning atmosphere is more exciting and different than before. The response from students when learning is average happy and active in asking questions.

Group Investigation is one of methods in which the students have to work in a group. In this technique, the students work in groups by explaining materials that are given. Thus, when a teacher puts the students in groups, he or she has to ensure that the students whose levels are different are put together. Each student in the group blends ideas and opinions. The students discuss and argue for understanding the staple of a subject and break up the problems in their group. By doing a Group Investigation method in a group, the teaching and learning process is more fun.

In addition, giving rewards is able to motivate the students to increase their achievement in studying English. In Group Investigation, the teacher has to give reward for the group who gets the most of words that have ever been read by members of group and prove that the students do the best for their group. And on the other hand, the activity offered in Group investigation is interesting. So that the students feel the new atmosphere in the classroom and they are interested in learning reading. Relating to the teaching of reading and referring to the frame of the theories mentioned before, the researcher assumes that Group Investigation technique is a suitable technique for teaching reading because it generally can motivate students in learning English particularly reading and gains a better achievement in English subject and specifically improves students' reading ability.

Sometimes, facing English text is not easy for students in the school to read materials and understand the word, clause, even the sentences in a foreign language. Moreover, the teacher taught the students conventionally. The teacher infrequently changed the method to deliver the material. The method sometimes made students bored and less motivated to learn English. In reading class, the students have no interesting passages in their textbook. In teaching reading, the teacher should apply the appropriate method that improves students' mastery to comprehend the textbook. Good method in teaching is one of the factors to improve the quality of the learning process. Group Investigation brings teaching learning to be an active process, where the students work in a group and take a collaborative role in explaining the parts of the material.

Moreover, by using this Group Investigation Technique, the participants will get the benefits where they will make investigations in the group and make inquiry about any problem and increase the level of participation as well. Besides, this technique is suitable for all age level students. The participants can enhance interaction level with each other and develop decision power. The other advantages of using group investigation are to develop logical thinking, to increase critical thinking level, to develop leadership skills and to enhance communicative skills of the students and the teacher.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

There was a positive influence that the experimental class who were taught by using group investigation in learning reading comprehension got better achievement. It was shown that the mean score of the post-test in the control class was 52.34 and the experimental class was 70.16. Then, the data were analyzed by using t-test to prove the significant difference from both groups. The data showed that  $t_{\text{value}} > t_{\text{table}}$  ( $1.6972 > 0.361$ ) which indicated that  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_a$  was accepted. So, it indicated that there was the influence of using group investigation technique toward students' reading comprehension on recount text at the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 17 Kota Serang.

Referring to the conclusion above, it is recommended that the students have to force themselves to read more the reading text in order to get more knowledge and make reading activity becomes a habit. It is expected to improve and develop ability in reading and understanding. The last is to make the students more enjoyable in the learning process and do not feel bored, especially in learning reading using recount text with group investigation technique.

Furthermore, the teachers have to be creative in order to make the teaching and learning process become more interesting, enjoyable, and effective for the students. The teacher should be a good



motivator for students in order to make the students being motivated to learn reading English in the classroom. The researchers recommend the English teacher to use interesting media in every teaching activity in order to improve their teaching English and encourage the students' motivation in the classroom, especially when they are learning reading.

Thus, for the researchers who want to use group investigation as media in teaching reading comprehension, they should prepare the instrument well, check the condition of school and the class and the instrument that the next researcher apply in the class, and make the appropriate lesson plan in order to create the teaching learning process is more enjoyable.

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