CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher describes some points of the research which consists of the research background, research questions, research purposes, the significances of the research, rationale, research methodology, data collection and data analysis.

A. Research Background

The aim of this research is to investigate the problems that students face when identifying main ideas in English texts. Identifying main ideas in English texts is challenging task because identifying main ideas need good ability in reading, when students have good ability in reading, good background knowledge, good vocabularies, the students can be able to identify appropriate main ideas.

When students could identify the main idea, there are many positive effects that will students get. According to Crismore (1989) and Murcia (2001) cited in Merrikhi (2013, p. 68) knowing the main idea has many positive effects. First, readers can be more easily to understand texts because main idea provides the readers with a chance to participate in the reading process as an effective role player. Second, knowing main idea can guide readers through a text and help them to organize content and enhance general ideas as they read. Third, the main idea can increase the role of readers in reading comprehension process. The last positive effects are based on the researcher assume when students could identify main idea,

indirectly they are collecting new vocabularies also the structure of a sentence especially when they write implicit main ideas, they have to arrange a sentence because the main idea is not stated in the text.

However, many students get stuck when identifying main ideas, even though the students have read the texts more than once. This phenomenon commonly happened to Indonesian students, most of them face problems when identifying main ideas in English texts. Actually, as students themselves is the basic factor that influences the difficulties to find main ideas because they have to understand the English texts itself, sometimes they lack vocabularies, also commonly students have different view through main ideas with their teachers and so do with the teachers.

The background of the research is that the existing of main ideas are difficult for students. It was found when taught English course to senior high school students. The students did not want to read text, if they read the text to identify the main idea, it took a long time, and finally, they had confused what the main idea is. Based on that problems, this research intended to investigate what actually their problems to identify the main idea, because the main idea is the most important element to support students' reading comprehension.

Several researches have discussed in main idea scope, the first previous study entitles Reading Strategy; Tackling Reading through Topic and Main Ideas by Bharathi Naidu (2013). This research focuses to apply reading strategy to identify topic and main ideas. The second previous study has studied by Merrikhi (2013) which concerns about Effect Knowing the Main Idea of a text through

Answering Multiple Choice Questions which Look for Details of Text. The third study conducted by Hanbie (2013) entitle The Ability of Students' Reading in Finding Main Idea. The fourth study have discussed by Wilawan (2012) with entitle Fostering Main Idea Comprehension among EFL Learners through Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies. The fifth study, entitle Improving the Students Reading Skill to Find Out the Main Ideas through Keyword by Limpo (2012). The last previous study was conducted by Ramsay & Sperling (2011) entitled Exploring Main Idea Generation via Electronic Note-Taking. Furthermore, this paper attempts to find what are actually the problems that students to identify main ideas in English texts, knowing the students' problems are extremely important, because when the students' problems in identifying main ideas are identified, it has influence to apply the appropriate strategy to teach main ideas term.

Based on these explanation above, the researcher decides to carry out a research entitled **"Investigating Students' Problems of Finding Main Ideas in English Texts"** (A Case Study in the 3rd Grade Students at MAN 2 Ciamis).

B. Research Questions

Based on the research problems above, this paper highlights to answer the two research questions below:

1. How does students' ability to identify main ideas in English text?

2. What are the problems that students face to identify main ideas in English texts?

C. Research Purposes

There are two main objectives of this research:

1. To know students' ability to identify main ideas in English texts?

2. To find out the problems that students face to identify main ideas?

D. Significances of The Research

This research is expected to provide the theoretical significance and practical significance. Theoretically, this research can improves researcher's knowledge about the term in main ideas. Also this research designed to serve as an additional reference for teachers and lecturers to investigate students' problems in finding main ideas.

Practically, the results of this research are expected to give some important contributions to those related. First, the researcher expected the research could help the English teachers know the problems of their students to find main ideas, then when they teach in the class, they can apply some strategies based on the problems that analyze in this research. Then misperception of deciding main ideas could be overcome between the students and the teachers. Second, this research also expected could help students of English Education Department who will be next teachers to know some problems that students face to identify main ideas.

E. Research Framework

Main idea is the core of material, the particular point of the author who is trying to convey (Smith & Morris, 2007, p. 118). Henry (2005, p. 330) says

that a main idea is the author's controlling point. In addition Jolly (1974) cited in Hare and Milligan (1984, p. 189) the ability to identify the main idea in a text is a key of reading comprehension. In other words, when students can find main idea in an English text, it can help them easy to comprehend the text, also they will know the authors' purposes. Based on the theories above, the researcher concludes that main idea generally is a central point that author made about a topic.

Then there are two kinds of main ideas, explicit main idea and implicit main idea. Explicit main idea stated in text at a specific location (e.g. the first, second or last sentence). Dealing with this, Henry (2005, p. 330) said that explicit main idea is a main idea that stated in a topic sentence. While, implicit main idea does not stated in text, but the readers have to be able to find information which appropriate with the theme of the text. According to Henry (2005, p. 331) says that implicit main idea is a main idea that is not stated directly but is strongly suggested by the supporting details in the passage.

Main ideas itself usually presented in a complete sentence. According to Langan and Jenkins (1989, pp. 14 - 37) claims that there are the locations of main ideas:

       I.   Beginning of The Paragraph

      II.   Within a Paragraph

     III.   End of The Paragraph

     IV.   Beginning and End of the Paragraph

To find a main idea, there is a skill that have to achieve by students and also teachers, it is called main idea comprehension. According to Afflerbach (1990), Pressly (1998) and Grabe (2009) noted in Wilawan (2012, p. 46) said that comprehending main ideas is a complex activity which concerns a variey of reading components and knowlegde sources. Then the basic way for students to have main ideas comprehension are based on their reading strategies that teachers teach and students use.
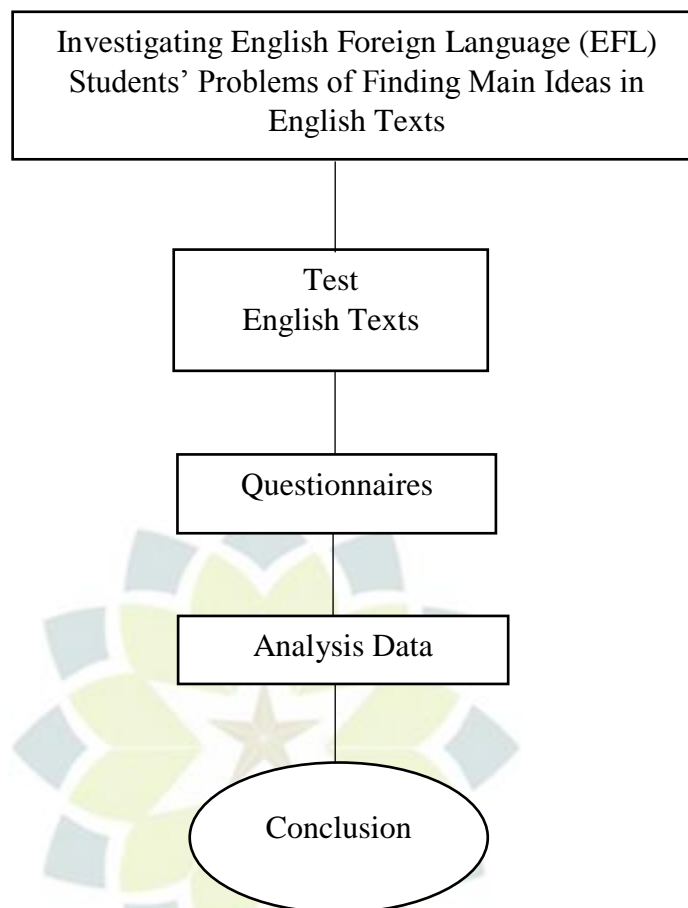
Reading strategies are basically divided into two categories, there are cognitive and metacognitive strategies (Wilawan, 2012, p. 46). According to O'Malley and Chamot (1987) cited in Khezrlou (2012, p. 52) mentions that cognitive strategies are the learners interacts with the material to be learned used mentally and physically. It means that cognitive strategies requires students to comprehend the text with vocabulary, grammatical pattern, and relation word to other word, then the students know the purpose of the text. Meanwhile, metacognitive strategies are the strategies which function to monitor or regulate cognitive strategies (Wilawan, 2012, p. 47). In addition, Oxford and Burry (1995) cited in Khezrlou (2012, p. 52) metacognitive strategies involve paying attention, consciously searching for practice opportunities, planning for language tasks, self-evaluating and monitoring errors.

Actually, students' errors to identify main ideas do not always have feedback for themselves only. Maybe there are a lot of factors that influence the students have problems to find main ideas. For instance, in the result of the research by Elashhab (2013, p. 126) says that a number of studies have been

looked specifically at background knowledge as complex cause of finding main idea. In this research researcher expected to find out the problems and also know the solutions of the problems. So, this research expected to help the researcher, the teachers and the students.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that problems to find main ideas need to be investigated in order to confusion and misunderstanding can be solved by the teachers and the researcher. The right ways or the effective way to find main ideas could be applied based on the problems that find in this research.

To analyse the problems, the researcher gives some of English texts (descriptive, narrative and article or news item) to be analysed by students as the participants of this research. After that, the students apply their result to the researcher. Then the researcher checks the result, how percentage the right answers and the wrong answers. In the end, the researcher finds out the problems in students' finding main ideas and students' responses toward their work and then makes the conclusion. Those processes of students' problems of finding main ideas are well described at figure below:

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Investigating English Foreign Language (EFL) │
│ Students' Problems of Finding Main Ideas in  │
│           English Texts               │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
              │
┌─────────────────────┐
│        Test          │
│   English Texts      │
└─────────────────────┘
              │
┌─────────────────────┐
│   Questionnaires     │
└─────────────────────┘
              │
┌─────────────────────┐
│    Analysis Data     │
└─────────────────────┘
              │
        (  Conclusion  )
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Figure 1.1 : The Process of Analysis of Students Problems of Finding Main Ideas.

F. Research Methodology

1. Research Location

The research conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2 Ciamis. It is located on Jl. Yos Sudarso No. 53, Ciamis, Kecamatan Ciamis, Kabupaten Ciamis, West Java.

This school has Excellent Class in each grades. The Excellent Class means that the students have good intelligent quotient, skill, and knowledge through English subject. This is the reason why the research conducted in this school, the research used purposive sampling, thus, this school fulfil the characteristic of purposive sampling of the research.

2. Research Design

The research design that used in this research is case study research design, because this research analyses a single case based on the theories has mentioned before and investigate the problems of the case. Dealing with Yin (2009, p. 3) said that case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

3. Research Subjects

The subjects of this research are students of MAN 2 Ciamis at the third grade students. This research involved the third grade students of MAN 2 Ciamis because they have learnt several English texts and to identify main ideas since they in the first grade. Also, corresponding with one of the purpose of this research, it is to find out the students problems of finding main ideas in English texts. It should be known because they would face the National Examination in English Subject.

The researcher hopes this research can gives some information about the students' problems to identify main ideas in English texts. According to Patton (1990:169) cited in Creswell (2012, p. 206) that the standard used in choosing participants or research subjects and sites is whether they are ''information rich''.

4. Research Sampling

In order to be able to manage the data, the sampling for this case study research used purposive sampling. Ishak & Bakar (2014, p. 32) state that purposive sampling is useful for case study in three situations: (1) when a researcher wants to select unique cases that are especially informative, (2) when a researcher would like to select members of a difficult-to-reach, specialized population, and (3) when a researcher wants to identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation. This case study research is suitable with the third situation.

The research sampling of this research was The Excellent Class XII MIA-1, because in Excellent Class, they were teaching more materials than other class in every subject, included English Subject. Dealing with Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009, p. 21) say that purposive sampling strategies can be determined by typical case sampling, it means researcher decide on the characteristics of "typical" individuals and select the sample to fit the characteristics of typical cases in selecting people for focus groups.

G. Data Collecting Techniques

This research gathered data used data triangulation, because the techniques that used by multiple data source; observation, test, and questionnaires. Those techniques that used are described as follows:

1) Observation

This research used observation as the first steps to collect the data, because this research aims to know the reality problems that students face toward identify main ideas in English texts. Dealing with Kothari (2004) observation is research method specially in studies relating to behavioural sciences. This research did the observation once when students did test and answered questionnaires. In addition Creswell (2012) notes that observation is the process of gathering open-ended, firsthand information by observing people and places at a research site (p. 213).

Furthermore, the types of survey that used in this research was participant observation, because the researcher involved directly participating in activity, the researcher gave instruction, recorded the activity, and guided the students in the test. Dealing with (Creswell, 2012, p. 214) participant observation is an observational role adopted by researchers when they take part in activities in the setting they observe.

2) Test

The second technique was Test. Test is an examination of a person's knowledge or ability (Oxford Dictionary).

The test used a text that should be analyzed to identify the main ideas by students. The texts that provided were narrative text, descriptive text, newscast text, recount text, and exposition text.

Furthermore, the first, students did the test to analyzed and identify main ideas from those text, then researcher analyzed the result of the test to know the students' ability to identify main ideas.

3) *Questionnaires*

According to MacDonald and Headlam (2009) notes that interview is one of the method of qualitative research (p. 35). Questionnaires was used in this research to get the data about students' problems of finding main ideas in English texts. In line with Mathers, Fox, & Hunn (1998) stated that questionnaires are a very convenient way of collecting useful comparable data from a large number of individuals (p. 19). The questionnaires were given after the students did the test.

Furthermore, the questionnaires that used in this research were open-ended questions, because the questions were answered based on the students own way. As Mathers, Fox, & Hunn (1998) explains that an open ended question is allowed the respondent to interpret the question in their own way.

H. Data Analysis

After collecting data, the next stages were analysis the data. According to Creswell (2012, p. 236) said that analysing qualitative data

requires understanding how to make sense of text and images so that you can form answers to your research questions. To analyse the data, the researcher choose by using Creswell (2012, p. 237) which describe as follows:

1. Collects Data

    The data collected by some instruments as describes above, there are questionnaires, tests and interviews.

2. Prepares Data Analysis

    The data that analysed firstly are from tests, because the information about students' ability to find main ideas which was gathered from the tests. Then researcher checked their answers, and the second that will be analysed from questionnaires.

3. Reads Through

    The researcher read all the data to obtain the overall problems that students face to find main ideas and match with their score that students achieved after organize or collects and prepares the data analysis.

4. Codes The Data

    After reading through all the data, the researcher begins with codes the data. In this step, the researcher carefully reads and finds out the detail information from the data collections.

5. Interpreting The Data

        The meaning of data rendered and obtained the interpretation of the analysis in this final step. The researcher makes the conclusion of the research based on the result. The processes were described below:
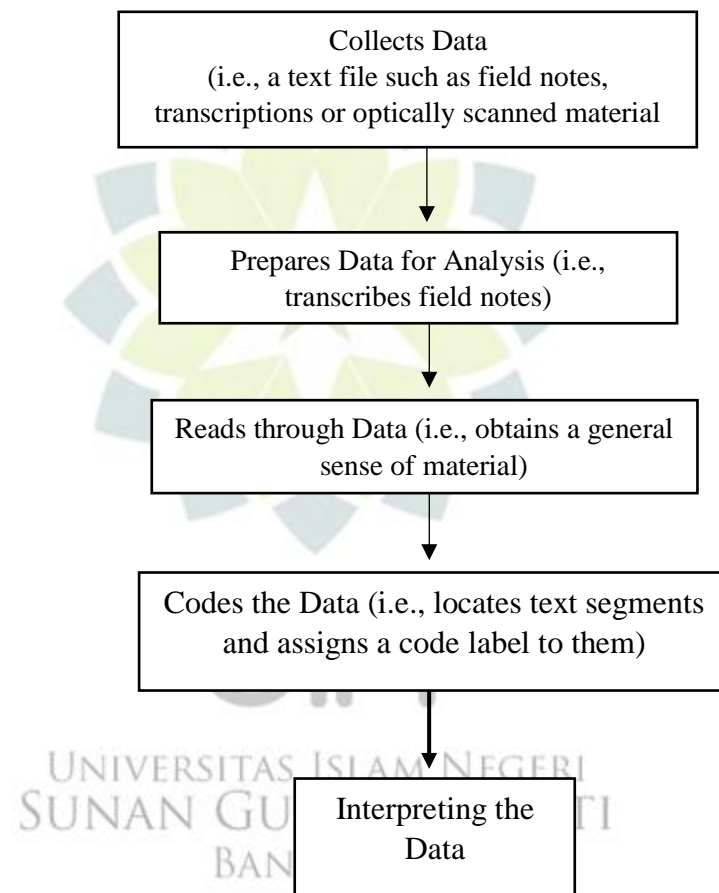
Figure 1.2 : Data Analysis Process by Creswell (2012, p. 237)