

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **A. Literature Circle Activity**

Literature circles are also known as book clubs or reading groups (Daniels, 2002). This concept is simply defined as reading groups or clubs where students choose their own reading materials from different genres (e.g., books, articles, poems) and text types (e.g., narratives, procedures, discussions), form a small group, and meet regularly to share ideas, feelings, questions, connections, and judgments about books [other reading materials] they had read (as cited in Widodo, 2016, p. 348). The reason why these reading activities are called literature circle activities is that the order of seating is designed either as a full or half circle which allows all group members to see each other's faces when they come together (Karatay, 2017, p. 65). In addition, when readers face the text together and share their opinions, they serve to enhance each other's responses to the text.

Neamen & Strong add that literature circles, maximize the interaction of the students, develop the skill of cooperation, help the students to gain individual perspectives around a concept or idea, provide social consciousness and influence the students' motivation in a positive direction on the way to group success (2001, as cited in Aytan, 2018). Widodo (2016) determines the two major roles in the literature

circle-oriented reading instruction: host – presented the selected text – and guest – posed questions regarding content – that each group had to play. Another study by Daniels (2002) establishes four reading tasks are basic (compulsory) and the others are optional. The compulsory tasks are questioner, connector, literary luminary/passage master, and illustrator. And the other optional are summarizer, researcher, vocabulary enricher/word wizard, and travel tracer/scene setter.

In this literature circle process, the students choose a reading material determined either by the teacher or by themselves, which can be both fiction or literary texts and non-fiction or non-literary texts. Each member reads the book or the text to do the individual reading task they have been assigned and starts preparation to discuss the task with the members of the group. Each student does this reading activity individually and they can use written or marked notes that will guide them in their readings and discussions. After that, they participate in the discussion about the book and share their experiences with their classmates. Here, the teacher serves as a facilitator, not a group member or an instructor (Daniels, 2002).

## **B. Students' Classroom Interaction**

Interaction is an occasion when two or more people or things communicate with or react to each other. In addition, Brown (2001: 165) describes the term interaction as “the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal

effect on each other.” As Wells has expressed it: “Exchange is the basic unit of discourse.... Linguistics interaction is a collaborative activity” involving “the establishment of a triangular relationship between the sender, the receiver, and the context of situation” (1981, as cited in Rivers, 1987: 4). When someone communicates a message, there must be someone to receive it. That is where communication in the form of interaction takes place.

Interaction is so important in language learning situations. Rivers (1987) notes that “through interaction, students can increase their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material, or even the output of their fellow students in discussions, skits, joint problem-solving tasks, or dialogue journals. In interaction, students can use all they possess of the language – all they have learned or casually absorbed – in real-life exchanges where expressing their real meaning is important to them” (p. 4). To achieve that, students must have more portions in the communicative English classroom and they thus will have experience in creating messages from what they listen, since comprehension is a process of creation.

In the literature circle activity, the students can use student-student interaction to express their own ideas, initiate new topics, and develop their own opinions. Crucially, student-student interaction could not automatically promote students to participate in the classroom. The way to promote students’ opportunities is by conducting a group discussion so

that students have a responsibility for contributing to the outcomes of class discussions (Widodo, 2009). It means that students may have equal opportunities in doing interact. By emphasizing the collaborative and cooperative nature of group discussion, students interact to share learning with each other and discuss different understandings.

Moreover, one of the factors that can lead to differential outcomes in student interaction is the experienced learning relationships between students and their teachers. Based on Donnell & Gittinger (2015) and Pas et al. (2014) state that student-teacher interactions are vital to student development and teachers are recognized as the centerpiece or change agent (as cited in Johnson et al., 2016). In the literature circle activity, the teacher works as a facilitator to promote dialogic interaction between students that enhance students' development. For example, when the students see that the teacher listens carefully to their comments and builds on them, they feel that their ideas are worthwhile and add value to classroom discussion (Hashash et al., 2018). Consequently, students will be enthusiastic to be more interactive while learning takes place.

To find out the interactions in the learning process, Ur (1996) proposed an interaction pattern that includes ten levels of interaction as follows;

1. Group work: Students work in small groups on tasks that entail interaction: conveying information, for example, or

group decision-making. The teacher walks around listening, and intervenes little if at all.

2. Closed-ended teacher questioning (IRF): Only one 'right' response gets approved. Sometimes cynically called the 'Guess what the teacher wants you to say game.
3. Individual work: The teacher gives a task or set of tasks, and students work on them independently; the teacher walks around monitoring and assisting where necessary.
4. Choral responses: The teacher gives a model, which is repeated by the class in chorus; or gives a cue, which is responded to in chorus.
5. Collaboration: Students do the same sort of tasks as in 'Individual work,' but work together, usually in pairs, to try to achieve the best results they can. The teacher may or may not intervene. (Note that this is different from 'Group work,' where the task itself necessitates interaction).
6. Student initiates, teacher answers: For example, in a guessing game: the students think of questions and the teacher responds, but the teacher decides who asks.
7. Full-class interaction: The students debate a topic or do a language task as a class; the teacher may intervene occasionally, to stimulate participation or to monitor.

8. Teacher talk: This may involve silent student response, such as writing from dictation, but there is no initiative on the part of the student.
9. Self-access: Students choose their own learning tasks, and work autonomously.
10. Open-ended teacher questioning: There are several possible 'right' answers so that more students answer each cue.