

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Language is a way to communicate ideas comprehensibly from one person to another in such a way that the other will be able to act exactly accordingly. Clark & Clark (1977:3) say that the fundamental function of language is for communication. It means that language is used by the speaker or writer to express ideas, feelings, and desires, and to get information from other people. There are various languages that people can produce to communicate with others, English is one of them. English is very important, because it is the most used language around the world for social activities, science, economic, and international relationship. Therefore, studying English is very important since mastering English can enrich and improve one's knowledge.

English as a foreign language consists of four basic skills that should be achieved by the students who learn English namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In this case, the learners are required to comprehend (listening and reading) the language and produce (speaking and writing) the language. Among the four language skills taught in schools, reading is one of important skill to be taught to the students because through reading they will get information, knowledge, and science. Grabe & Stoller(2002:9) elaborate that reading is a way to draw information from printed page and interpret this information appropriately. From the quotation, reading means to find out the message of the writer put into a text as efficient as possible.

Further, Educational unit-Oriented Curriculum (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*; KTSP) 2006, of Junior high school (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama*; SMP) level states that there are four skills that should be achieved in learning process namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading is one of four skills that must be mastered. It is stated that the students are intended to comprehend the meaning of the functional and short essay text in report, descriptive, narrative and recount text in the context of daily life.

In fact, reading is a problem for students. A research on international reading achievement revealed that the students' skill particularly in reading achievement is still far from satisfactory. PIRLS (Progress in Reading Literacy Study) that held by IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) in 2011 shows that Indonesian students' reading achievement is on the lower level. Indonesian students are ranked 42 of 45 nations. This case indicates that Indonesian students have low ability in reading skills. It is strengthened by the writer's observation in teaching practice (PPLT 2012) in junior high school.

The writer's observation during teaching practice (*Praktek Pengalaman Lapangan Terpadu*; PPLT) 2012 in State junior high School 3 of Kisaran (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 3 Kisaran*; SMP Negeri 3 Kisaran) shows that most of students are not able to understand what they have read. They only read the material without knowing what they have read. Therefore, reading activities in the classroom will not be useful for them if they don't know and understand the information that they have read. From the interview with 35 students as samples,

20 students said that they got difficulties in identifying the implicit and explicit information of the text. Besides, many students have low motivation in reading class. The students' lack of understanding on reading lesson is mainly caused by an inappropriate teaching technique used. The teacher only uses one technique namely conventional method which is lecturing. In the reading class, the teacher presents a subject in the text book and asks students to read silently or loudly, and then students have to answer the questions that follow. Consequently, the reading lesson becomes monotonous and boring, students lack motivation to read, even if they read, they show negative attitudes. As a result, the students are not able to get good scores in reading.

Reading cannot be separated from comprehension. Therefore, it appears a lot of problems dealing with reading comprehension. Many English learners find it is difficult to understand the English text. Very often, they get stuck because of some problems, such as unfamiliar words, their inability in understanding the context, being reluctant, and so forth. Reading is not an easy skill to master. It is a complex process that requires specialized skill of the reader (Dechant, 1977: 21). Besides, it is also comprehension process as well as writing. According to Nunan (1998: 33), reading needs identification and also interpretation processes which require the reader's knowledge about the language structure used in the text and his knowledge about a given topic. It is the complexity that makes some students less interested in this kind of activity. They find it is difficult to understand what is on the reading passage since they do not know the technique which can help them to read more effectively and efficiently.

To solve this problem, learning reading by using Advance Organizer Strategy can be an alternative way in teaching learning process. Advance organizer is a concept developed and systematically studied by David Ausubel in 1968.

The advance organizer is teaching strategy available to teachers to aid students in the processing, understanding, and remembering of newly presented materials. It is designed to strengthen students' cognitive structures as stated by Ausubel as quoted by Joyce, Weil & Calhoun (2009:281). The Advance organizer strategy has some advantages for students. The advantages of Advance Organizer are the students can explain, integrate, and interrelate with the material in the learning task with the previously learned material. Students can distinguish the new material from previously learned material and in teaching reading which is related to daily situation. Therefore, it will be useful for students to recognize the material into familiar structure.

All the explanation above inspires the writer to discover the effect of applying Advance Organizer Strategy on the students' reading comprehension achievement.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem is formulated as follows:

“Is the students' reading comprehension achievement taught by applying Advance Organizer Strategy higher than taught by conventional method?”

C. The Objective of the Study

In relation to the research problem, this study will attempt to find out the effect of Advance Organizer strategy in teaching reading on the students' reading comprehension.

D. The Scope of the Study

In this research, the focus of the investigation is limited to the effect of Advance Organizer strategy on the students' reading comprehension. There are four levels of reading comprehension; they are literal comprehension, interpretative comprehension, critical comprehension, and creative comprehension. In this study the level of reading comprehension is limited to two levels, namely literal and interpretative comprehension. The kinds of the text will be focused on report text.

E. The significance of the Study

The findings of this research are expected to answer the proposed problem and it is intended to give many benefits in:

1. Practical perspectives

a) For the students

To assist the students to build reading competency. Thus, they are able to comprehend the content of the text.

b) For the teachers

To provide the English teacher to plan and conduct a better and interesting teaching learning process, especially in teaching reading.

2. Theoretical perspective

a) The result of this research can be a useful input to English teaching-learning process, especially for teaching reading.

b) The result of this research can be used as reference for those who want to conduct a research in English teaching-learning process, especially in teaching report text.