

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of the Study

English is one of the international languages that is widely used in the world. It plays a very important role in establishing the relationship among nations in politic, economic, culture, art, science, technology and etc. Therefore, the ability to communicate in English should be well-mastered in order to enable one to compete in this globalization era. Besides, the development of science and technology is more informed by scientists in English. Thus, it is a truism that many countries choose English as a foreign language and in some countries as a second language and take it as one of the subject matters in the curriculum.

In Indonesia, English is regarded as a foreign language and can also be considered as a second language in some situations which has to be learned and mastered by students. In fact, English is considered as one of the prerequisites to accomplish their study. In order to compete in the job market and job promotion and to continue the study to a higher level, English is also demanded. It proves that English is very important to be mastered. If someone has good English skills in addition to his specialization or expertise, the chances to compete become greater compared to one who is not able to communicate well in English.

In fact, the English instruction as a foreign language in Indonesia has not been achieved as what is expected. Many scholars complained about the teaching of English that has failed to enable the students to use English as a means of

communication contextually. Although the English instruction has been one of the subject matters in Indonesian national curriculum of secondary schools and universities for a long time, the achievement of the English instruction has not been satisfying. Students are not able to speak English, understand the English structure, express ideas, comprehend the reading texts, answer the reading comprehension questions, retell the content of the text using their own words and relate the content of the text to the students' real situation. In other words, the English instruction in each level has not been successful in developing the English proficiency of the students.

Realizing the fact, the English instruction has to be aimed to enable the students to use both written and spoken English in order to communicate fluently with other people. The students are expected to have the language skills to be their life skills. Therefore, the English instruction at school has to be designed in such a way by the teacher so that the learning process is fun and enjoyable and the objectives of the learning can be achieved. Teachers have to be able to make the appropriate learning design for each different basic competence that has to be mastered by the students. Thus, students are expected to enjoy the learning process and think that English is very important for their lives.

The focus of the English instruction is discourse competence (Department of National Education, 2004). The discourse competence is directed to the ability to interpret and arrange or produce oral and written texts based on the socio cultural context and situation. Students will be able to master that competence if supported by other competencies: action competence (listening and speaking involving speech acts

and use of conversation gambits; reading and writing involving rhetorical development), linguistic competence, socio cultural competence, and strategic competence. Therefore, the Competency Based Curriculum (Department of National Education, 2004) mandates the use of various text types (genre) such as descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure and report and functional text such as timetables, maps, invitations, advertisements, announcements, notices and messages to build students' communicative competence. The inclusion of such text types will not only provide a more realistic and reliable means of assessment but also will help to motivate students by demonstrating how the target language is used in real life situation. Consequently, it becomes more important that the actual presentation of the materials should be as authentic as possible since English literacy level is functional that is the ability to use the English language to fulfill daily activities such as reading newspapers to get information and reading manuals to be able to operate household appliances.

An instruction that focuses on teaching text types is called text-based instruction (TBI) (Department of National Education, 2006:3). TBI is part of the current communicative language teaching approach and TBI emphasizes on the product of the learning. The English instruction develops the four language skills as the life skills that have to be mastered by the students. One of the aspects is reading skill. The students are expected not only to read the text with correct intonation and pronunciation but also to get the message or the meaning in the text. Besides, they are expected to answer the questions related to the text, retell the content of the text using their own words and relate the text to their real lives.

Students are expected to have the basic competence in reading that is the ability to comprehend the three language functions namely interpersonal, ideational and textual as found in any written text. Unfortunately, the students' ability to use them is still far from being satisfactory. The English language teaching in the secondary school is not very successful in developing the English proficiency of the students on the grounds that most secondary graduates are not yet able to communicate fluently in English.

Based on the writer's observation, the English instruction especially reading instruction is not interesting for the students. The learning process and the learning achievement of English is not as what is expected. It has not been effective yet to make the students skillful in using English for communication. Even the students seem not to show real interest in learning reading comprehension. This problem has often been at the center of debate among teachers and scholars. There are many reasons why students are not interested in learning reading comprehension. One of them is that the teachers are not able to design the reading comprehension instruction which is interesting and challenging for the students. It is related to the quality and the professionalism of the teachers in making the instructional design, applying it in the classroom well, evaluating the achievement of the applied design of learning, and making the result of the evaluation as the input for the teachers in order to make the design of learning better in the future. Many teachers are not able to design the creative, innovative, and effective as well as interesting instructional model.

Due to this phenomenon, the teachers have to improve the quality of the learning process. The teachers have to be able to arouse the students' motivation and attention in learning reading comprehension. This is related to the teachers' skill to select the appropriate method, create interesting interactive model and create the atmosphere of learning that can motivate the students to be involved actively in the learning process as well as create the fun of learning English. Besides, the teachers should train the students to read English reading text as much as possible and to do some activities related to the reading comprehension so that they can comprehend English reading text well. In order to achieve this, teachers have to train the students' ability in reading comprehension in accordance with the demand of the curriculum.

In the process of reading instruction, English language teachers usually teach students how to read, know the meaning of some words, and answer the comprehension questions that usually follow the English reading texts. They are irrespective of whether the students completely understand the reading text or not. The teachers do not try to select and devise the interesting and factual texts that are related to the students' real situation. They also do not devise reading related activities and ask practical questions.

According to Steinberg (1982:205), reading should be made as an enjoyable activity for children. This can be done by providing the instruction in the form of interesting games and activities. As a consequence, not only will children learn to read, but also they will want to read. Children who are interested in reading intellectually stimulated, and who enjoy what they are doing will learn willingly and

will show positive efforts. Therefore, English language teacher has to be able to select and devise reading-related activities such as information transfer as well as ask practical questions that can stimulate the students' thought and encourage the students to ask questions about the text since asking questions is one of the most effective means of stimulating thinking and learning (Hollingworth & Hoover, 1991:83).

The reading instruction that applies information transfer and connection questions technique is assumed can motivate the students in learning reading comprehension effectively. Both techniques can be applied in the reading instruction in order to make students fully understand any reading text they read. In this case, students relate their personal experience and previous knowledge with the ideas in the text. Furthermore, they will think deeply about what they read. Besides, they can arouse the students' attention and interest in learning reading comprehension. Therefore, the writer assumes that information transfer and connection questions technique can be an alternative that can improve the quality of the process and the achievement of the reading instruction. Both information transfer and connection questions techniques are expected to develop the students' general ability in reading comprehension so that they are proficient enough in their attempt to comprehend the text they read. Through this analysis, the writer is interested in making them the object of her study.

## **1.2 The Problems of the Study**

With reference to the background of the study that has been mentioned earlier, the writer formulates the problems in the form of questions as follows:

1. Is there any significant difference on the students' reading comprehension achievement taught by using information transfer technique compared with connection questions technique
2. Which of these techniques is the most effective one in improving students' reading comprehension achievement?

## **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Find out the different effect of information transfer and connection questions techniques on students' reading comprehension achievement.
2. Find out which of these techniques is the most effective one.

## **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

Competence factor is very important to be shown by a teacher in the instructional processes. It is expected that the better the teacher's competence in teaching, the higher the student's achievement will be. One of the teacher's competencies that can be implemented in the professional work is the competency in designing the instruction by applying the relevant teaching method and technique based on the teaching objective. A technique is a way or media used by a teacher in

order to direct students' activities to the instructional objectives to be achieved. Whereas a method is a way of approaching the class. A teacher, as a resource person in the instructional process, has responsibilities regarding the syllabus. Guided by syllabus a teacher makes a final decision about classroom management. This competency is obviously affected by the teacher's educational background. If a teacher of readings has good educational background and is well experienced, one is surely better in teaching than the one who does not. Furthermore, a teacher needs to fully understand what methods he will be able to use to help his students to develop them. Teachers have to apply techniques of teaching reading which cover the activities that will focus the students' attention on the text.

Considering the fact that reading comprehension is affected by many factors, the writer will focus her study on information transfer and connection questions techniques as the techniques of teaching reading comprehension since both techniques are believed not only to make the reading instructional interesting and enjoyable, but also to improve the student's achievement in reading comprehension.

### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

Reading and comprehending are two things which seem to be difficult to teach. This is due to the fact that students do not have the habit of reading. To be able to direct students' attention to read is not an easy task for teachers. But it is realized that reading comprehension is needed by students when they learn any subject.



The findings of this study are expected to be useful for:

1. English language teachers to improve the quality of the instructional process and the students' achievement, especially reading comprehension instruction.
2. English language teachers to plan English instruction well and make the appropriate instructional design for each different basic competence that has to be mastered by the students so that they can minimize the difficulties faced by the students in learning reading comprehension.
3. Students or readers to improve their ability in comprehending a text.
4. Other researchers as a reference or comparison to conduct similar research.



