# CHAPTER I
# INTRODUCTION

## A. The Background of the Study

Most people around the world use English as a means of communication. They should know English well if they want to communicate each other. It is very important for people to learn English, because English is used in International communication. In Indonesia, English is considered as the first foreign language and taught formally from elementary school up to the University level. It is realized that studying English is not easy for Indonesian students because English and Indonesian are different in terms of spelling, sound and pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.

English like many other languages consists of four skills. They are listening, reading, speaking and writing. Reading is one of the most important skills. Grabe and Stoller (2002) said that reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately. The readers should know that the goal of reading is reading comprehension. According to Wong (2003) reading comprehension is conceptualized as in interactive process requiring the dynamic combination of the readers' background knowledge and information decoded from the text. The students will comprehend the text better when it familiar with them. Reading comprehension is very important to be mastered by the students, because in reading comprehension, the students are expected to get the main ideas and the detail information from the text well.

In fact, most of the students still find reading comprehension is difficult even though they have done it for many years. They do not know how to comprehend a text and get some information from the text. When the teacher told them to tell some information from their reading text, most of them did not have any ideas or opinions to clarify the information from reading text. Moreover when the teacher asked them to answer the question based on the text, they could not answer or even they just cut the sentences from the text which the words exist such in the question. It proved that they are not interested in learning reading comprehension and the process of teaching reading did not run well. This situation happened because the teaching method that is usually applied by the teacher was not effective to improve the comprehension the students. Usually, teacher teach reading comprehension by translating the reading text. Therefore, the student always open the dictionary when they want to understand the meaning of the text. This situation makes them get bored and monotonous in reading.

The researcher has done an interview and observation at SMA SANTO ANTONIUS BANGUN MULIA MEDAN. Based on the researcher's interview and observation in the school, the students' achievements in reading comprehension were still low. It can be seen from their score in the last semesters, first and second degree in SMA SANTO ANTONIUS BANGUN MULIA MEDAN are 65,71 (the second semester in 2010/2011 of academic year) and 67,81 (the first semester in 2011/2012 of academic years).

In order to solve the problem in reading comprehension it is necessary to find a suitable method. One method that can be applied to improve the reading comprehension of the students is Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD).

Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD) is a method that encourages students to help each other master the material. In the Student Team Achievement Divisions (STAD) method the students are given the time to discuss within a group after the subject matter supplied by the teacher. Not only working in a group but also the students will also work individually while the teacher gave the quiz. So there is the time for them to comprehend the text in by themselves. Shortly, Students Team Achievement Divisions (STAD) can improve the students reading comprehension.

In implementing Students Team Achievement Divisions (STAD) the students can overcome their problem. It gives the stimulus for the students to be motivated to learn so that they will be active. Using this method, the students are the center. They will be in the team that consists of various good students and weak students, every team consists of 4-5 students. They would study together   to get better achievement in the form of individual improvement scores after taking the individual quiz. Every member in a team may be responsible for their team progress so that they will get predicate super team that means they will have high achievement. Based on the explanation above, teaching reading should be emphasized in raising students motivation so that teaching learning process of reading results the better achievement. Based on the explanation above, the writer

would like to conduct a study about Improving Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension through Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD).

## B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem of the study is formulated as follows: **"Is Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension significantly improved by using Student Teams Achievement Divisions?"**

## C. The Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to investigate whether students' achievement in reading comprehension can be improved if they are taught by using Student Team Achievement Division (STAD) in learning process.

## D. The Scope of the Study

This study focused on improving students' reading comprehension through Students Team Achievement Division (STAD). The limitation of the study is only to investigate whether the application of Students Team Achievement Division is effective to improve students' reading comprehension in descriptive text.

## E. The Significances of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be very useful for:

1) English teacher as an alternative teaching method to improve their ability in teaching reading, especially reading descriptive text.

2) Students who want to improve their achievement on reading comprehension.

3) Readers who are interested in doing the related study.