

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language has a very important role in human activities, it used to communicate with other people to expressing feelings, purposes, ideas, even in spoken or written way. In the study of a language, there are four skills that should be well mastered by those who are interested in learning it, this applies also when someone studies English. Learning English is becoming more and more important nowadays. This era of globalization is an era full of challenges and competitions where the proficiency in spoken and written English is strongly. With this competence, it enables to one communicate with other people from different countries in many activities, because communication is an essential needed for socialization.

One of the most important languages that is used in a global setting is English. In relation to the importance of English, in Indonesia, English has been taught from the Elementary School level up to the University and even now, it has been taught in the Kindergarten level. Furthermore, English is a compulsory subject. Learning English in Senior High School is based on the Educational Unit Level Curriculum. It focuses on learning the text so that the students can express their ideas in spoken as well as written ways. In learning English as a foreign

Based on the writer's observation at SMA Negeri 1 Bahorok, through interview with the English teacher, the students of first and second grade still get difficulty to read. There are some reasons that are raise to the case, such as the lack of students' interest to read, the lack of students' knowledge about kinds of

text and their generic structure and also most of them still have insufficient skills in reading. The lack of reading comprehension of the students' can be caused by some reason below.

The first reason is, the lack of interest and concentration in reading. When the students lose their interest and concentration in reading, this is very difficult to the students to reach high reading achievement.

The second reason is, failure to understand words and sentences in a text. If the students could not understand words or sentences in texts which they read, they got difficulties to comprehend the texts. The last reason is, insufficient knowledge background of the students about the topic of the text. When the students did not have sufficient background knowledge about the topic of the text which they read, they got difficulties to comprehend the text. Based on the explanation above, it seems clear that there are many problems in English reading teaching learning process. It is English teachers' task to solve the problems. There are many ways to solve the problems. One of them is the use of appropriate reading strategies in teaching reading. An appropriate reading strategy can facilitate the reading process and give the students a clear sense of what they are reading. It also can improve the reading comprehension of the students.

In this paper, Writer would like to use Inquiry as his technique to improve students' reading comprehension, because there a lot of advantages by using this technique, based on some researchers "Inquiry is the dynamic process of being open to wonder and puzzlements and coming to know and understand the world" (Galileo Educational Network, 2004).

Inquiry-based learning is a process where students are involved in their learning, formulate questions, investigate widely and then build new understandings, meanings and knowledge. That knowledge is new to the students and may be used to answer a question, to develop a solution or to support a position or point of view. The knowledge is usually presented to others and may result in some sort of action. Research suggests that using inquiry-based learning with students can help them become more creative, more positive and more independent (Kühne, 1995). This is true for all students, including those with special needs who require individual attention during the process.

Other academic research shows that inquiry-based learning improves student achievement (GLEF, 2001). Some of the research on this effect comes from studies of effective school library programs that are centres of inquiry-based learning. A school library program that is properly equipped and staffed can make a difference in terms of measurable gains in student achievement. School library factors alone can account for improvements of 2% to 9% in student achievement (Lance, 2001).

The model for inquiry-based learning presented in this document is one that can be used in all programs of study and in all grades, since inquiry-based learning is embedded in all Alberta curricula. Although different terminology and process emphases are used in the different curricula, this document emphasizes common aspects or elements and supports an integrated, cross-disciplinary approach to inquiry. Using an inquiry model helps students to internalize a process for inquiry that is transferable to everyday life situations. Thinking about inquiry as a

puzzle can help students to relate inquiry-based learning to their lives outside school.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem will be formulated as follow: “Is Inquiry technique significantly able to improve the students’ reading comprehension achievement?”

C. The Objective of Study

The objective of the study is to investigate whether or not the applying of Inquiry technique can improve the students’ reading comprehension achievement.

D. The Scope of the Study

There are many methods that can be applied to improve students’ reading comprehension such as: Team Games Tournament (TGT), Questioning strategy, Know Want Learn (KWL), Survey, Question, Read, Recite and Review (SQ3R), Direct Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA), Inquiry. In this research, the writer focuses on Inquiry technique because there are many benefit that students will get by doing Inquiry activity, such as, Inquiry can help to the develop critical reading skill, encourage the students to be active readers and activate the students prior knowledge.

E. The Significance of the Study

The Findings of the study are expected to be useful and relevant both theoretically and practically.

Theoretically the findings are expected to:

- 1) The horizons on theories of language learning,
- 2) apply theories on the second language learning, and
- 3) be the reference for those who want to conduct a further research in English teaching learning process.

Practically the findings are relevant and useful for:

- 1) English teachers to provide the information in their attempt to decide the using of Inquiry technique in teaching reading comprehension,
- 2) to improve students' ability in reading comprehension and to motivate them to be active in reading.