

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### A. The Background of the Study

Learning is an activity of mental / psychic that takes place in an active interaction with the environment, which produces a number of changes in the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values. Change is relatively constant and traces (Winkel, 2007: 59). Learning is action and complex students' behavior. Thus, learning is an activity that can result in changes in behavior, potential or actual. Learning English has many skills that students should be able to comprehend, such as reading, speaking, writing and listening.

Reading is one of the most important skills in language learning beside speaking, listening and writing. Reading is an essential skill for all students at all levels. The students are required to be able to read. More over reading has formed part of the syllabus in teaching English because there is a competence standard in reading that students are expected to be able to comprehend the meaning both interpersonal and transactional.

In teaching and learning process, reading has a big part. By reading, students are expected to get the knowledge and to understand the context from that has been explained in the text. Nowadays, the fact is the students do not know the essential of reading itself. They just read the text such as from textbooks, newspapers, magazines without getting the meaning.

Many students think that reading is the easiest skill from speaking, writing and listening, but in the real society that reading is not as easy as what they think.

There are some difficulties which are faced by the students when they want to get information through reading.

Students feel that it is not easy to have the ability to draw the meaning and interpret the information from the text. After reading a text, most of students have some difficulties in searching the meaning of the text; the students do not know what the topic is. They could not grasp the idea(s) and answer the questions based on the text(s).

In fact, the students' difficulties in reading comprehension are affected by many factors, such as lack of vocabulary, the concept of the words, unfamiliar syntactical grammar, etc. Beside that, the students feel monotonous and uninteresting when they get teaching and learning process from their teacher. The teacher just asked the students reading the text repeat, identifying the difficult words, translating the words and look up the dictionary if they don't know the meaning. Those problems are also found by the writer in his teaching practice in SMA Negeri 1 Tanjung Beringin, Serdang Bedagai and such things make the students feel difficult to comprehend the text well. In the other cases, the heterogenous of the students' cognition in the class was making the problem of the teacher. The different of students' critical thinking made the teacher had a big problem. The teacher should make the average of their knowledge about the material that they want to read at that time.

In relation to the experience, 37% of fourth graders struggle with reading problems so severely that it is impossible to successfully understand and complete normal fourth grade assignments. Further, 3 out of 4 of that group read so poorly

they have little chance at educational progress and ultimate educational attainment. (*National Assessment of Educational Progress report.*)

This condition becomes the reason by the writer why he would like to conduct a research by using strategy that is CIRC which will have the students increasing their achievement in reading comprehension. CIRC stands for Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition.

Cooperative learning is comprehensive program for teaching reading and writing in the upper elementary and middle grades (Madden, Slavin, & Stevens, 1986). Daily lessons provide students with an opportunity to practice comprehension and reading skills in pairs and small groups. Pairs of students read to each other; predict how stories will end, summarize stories; write responses to questions posed by the teacher; and practice spelling, decoding, and vocabulary. In all of these activities, students work in heterogeneous learning teams. All activities follow regular cycle what involves teacher presentation, team practice, independent practice, peer pre assessment, additional practice, and testing.

In this case, cooperative learning has big contribution in cooperative integrated reading and composition strategic, because the students are taught to work together with their friends. Working together to achieve goals has always been a popular and an effective way to succeed in face our lives. Furthermore, it is very utilizes in the classroom and it will help the students in the learning process.

In cooperative integrated reading and composition, the teacher presented the strategies (reading groups and teams) to whole class using modeling and role playing. It is hoped that the students developed their proficiency in applying the strategies and show minimizes of the student's heterogeneous ability, where the

students have the same ability in their learning. The goals of cooperative integrated reading and composition were to improve reading comprehension by minimizing the heterogeneous of student's ability in order to make the teacher easy to teach in teaching learning process.

By recognizing the view above, cooperative learning (cooperative integrated reading and composition) technique was suitable to be used in improving students' reading comprehension.

### **B. The Problem of the Study**

Based on the background of the study, the problem was formulated as follows: "Is students' achievement in reading comprehension improved if it was taught by using cooperative learning (cooperative integrated reading and composition) technique?"

### **C. The Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on improving students' reading comprehension in the level of: literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, and critical comprehension, creative comprehension. The strategy that was used to improve students' reading comprehension was cooperative learning that was cooperative integrated reading and composition (CIRC) technique.

### **D. The Objective of the Study**

This study intends to find out the improvement of students' achievement in reading comprehension by using cooperative learning (cooperative integrated reading and composition).

### **E. The Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study were expected to have theoretically and practically. The theoretically findings was to improve the theories of Cooperative Learning which is Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) technique.

The practically findings were expected of the study useful for:

- 1) the teacher as a one of the ways in teaching reading to improve the student's ability by minimizing heterogeneous student in reading comprehension.
- 2) the students about how to understand a text through cooperative learning (cooperative integrated reading and composition) technique.
- 3) those who are interested in this study information are also provided.