

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Reading is one of the skills in language proficiency which is taught formally in Indonesia from elementary school up to the university level. Many researchers note that reading is the most important language skill for academic achievements beside speaking, listening, and writing. Brown (2004:185) stated that reading is arguably the most essential skill for success in all educational contexts. Moreover, in the era of globalization, students need to intensify their reading activities in order to get as much shared information as possible. By doing that, the students will be able to cover the news and knowledge all over the world to support their lives.

Reading comprehension has also been included in National Exam (Ujian Nasional). It means that reading needs to be mastered by the students to pass the National Examination. In fact, many students failed in National Examination. They can not comprehend the text well because the text is very long and there are many difficult words. Finally, the students got bored and the result was not good.

Based on the writer's observation in SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Indonesia Membangun Medan, by interviewing some students and the teacher, it is concluded that the students still had insufficient skills in reading and got many difficulties in comprehending a text. The lack of students' reading comprehension can be caused by some reasons. First, the learning process is conducted in teacher-

centered , which means the teacher only explains the material without involving the students actively.

The second reason is the teacher used only conventional technique in teaching. The teacher did not develop their teaching ability by using variety of strategies or techniques and oriented to the students' textbook only to teach reading in the class. The teacher only asked the students to read the textbook and to answer the provided questions related to the text. The activity does not provide the students to discuss and share ideas with their friends in group during the learning process.

This condition also happened while the students are reading descriptive texts. Knapp and Watkins (2005:97) state that descriptive text enables the categorisation or classification of an almost infinite range of experiences, observations and interactions into a system that orders them for immediate and future reference, and allows us to know them either objectively or subjectively, depending on the learning area or intent of the writer. This genre is learned in senior high school because it is very important for the students to be able to describe things, person or places in details. By using the conventional technique in teaching descriptive text, the teacher did not develop the students logical thinking about the generic structures of descriptive text, because during the learning process the teacher only asked the students to read, find the meaning of difficult words in their dictionaries and answer the questions of the text.

There are many strategies or techniques in teaching reading comprehension that can be used to overcome the problem. Numbered Heads

Together Technique is one of the techniques that can be applied to overcome the problems.

Numbered Heads Together Technique is proposed by Spencer Kagan. Kagan (2009:101) stated that in Numbered Heads Together, each student must write their best answer on their own and shows it to their teammates before they put their heads together to tutor and coach each other. This strategy is beneficial for reviewing and integrating subject matter. Students with special needs such as need more time to understand the text, often get benefit when this strategy is applied, because there will be other students which are ready to help them understand the answer and find the solution. In other side, the students will feel free to to give their ideas, feelings and thought without any authorities from others. This activity will stimulate the students to be more active and get motivation to read better specially in reading descriptive text.

In conducting Numbered Heads Together technique, the teacher divides the students in to a group of 4-6 students. Then, the teacher gives the texts that the students have to read. After a direct instruction of the material has been given, of course, the group supports each member and provides opportunities for practice, rehearsal, and discussion of content material before they are called to present or answer the questions. This is a good technique that can motivate the students and promote higher-level of thinking.

The strength of of Numbered Heads Together Technique was proven by Nuruddin et al. (2013) who conducted a research in reading comprehension by using this technique. The research found that this technique has positive effects to

the students. The students who were taught by using Number Heads Together Technique got higher scores than students who were taught by using QAR and Conventional Technique. The same result of applying Numbered Heads Together Technique is also found by Satria et al. (2013) in their research which found that the use of Numbered Heads Together Technique improved the students' achievement in reading comprehension. Another research was conducted by Evi Ramini (2013) who found that the students' achievement in writing was improved after being taught by using Numbered Heads Together Technique.

Based on the explanation above, it is important to study about “ The Effect of Numbered Heads Together Technique on Students' Achievement in Reading Descriptive Text ”.

B. The Problem of the Study

In relation to the background of the study, the problem of the study is formulated as follows : “ Does Numbered Heads Together Technique affect the students' achievement in reading descriptive text? ”

C. The Scope of the Study

There are many genres of text that can be used in this research. However, the scope of the study is limited on the descriptive text. Thus, the study will investigate the effect of Numbered Heads Together Technique on students' achievement in reading descriptive text.

D. The Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to find out the effect of Numbered Heads Together Technique on students' achievement in reading descriptive text.

E. The Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be useful :

Theoretically for :

1. Other researchers to use the data as reference for further research related to the use of Numbered Heads Together Technique.

Practically for :

1. English teachers to use Numbered Heads Together Technique to improve the students achievement in reading descriptive text.
2. Students to improve their ability in reading descriptive text by applying Numbered Heads Together Technique.