

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Reading is one of the important skills in language learning besides speaking, listening and writing. As Brown (2004) states that reading, arguably the most essential for successes in all educational context, remains a skill of paramount importance as we create assessment of general language ability. Moreover, reading is included in teaching English as the priority because there is a competence standard in reading that students are expected to be able to comprehend the meaning of written text in any kind of texts, such as; Descriptive, Recount, Narrative, Procedure, and Report.

Reading is performed through a text in a purpose to convey new information to the readers. Nunan (2003 : 68) states that reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. The readers need to know the main idea or the central information of a text. According to Birch & Rumelhart in Lems (2010 : 33), reading is an interactive process that takes place between the text and the readers' processing strategies and background knowledge.

Reading has many contributions in enhancing and enriching students' knowledge. By reading, the students are able to gain the information and improve their knowledge. Not only that, reading also helps to develop creative and critical thinking skill. The goal of learning reading is to enable the students in understanding the text meaning. Grabe and Stoller (2002: 9), stated that reading is

a way to draw information from a text and to form interpretation of that information. So, reading is very important in studying and learning process.

The main goal of reading is comprehension. According to Irwin in Klingner (2007:2-7) comprehension is an active process to which the reader brings his or her individual attitudes, interest, and expectation. It means that comprehension is the reader's ability in getting the message or information that is given in the text. Otto et. al. (1966:151) defines reading comprehension as interaction between thought and language. It shows that reading comprehension is the ability of readers in getting the information or message from a text based on their prior knowledge.

All the information mentioned above shows that reading comprehension is so important to be mastered by students. However, attention to this matter has not been adequately paid to most teachers of English for instance still use conventional method in teaching reading. The conventional method is regularly done by asking the students to translate words contained in the passage. This is one of the reasons why students' achievement in reading comprehension is low. So, teachers need to develop and upgrade their knowledge and ability in teaching reading. One factors that affects the achievement of students' reading comprehension is the technique, strategy, or method applied by the teachers. Teachers can use different kinds of media and methods to make the teaching process become more interesting. It is a must for the teacher to choose an appropriate method in teaching reading to help the students develop their reading skill so that the objectives of teaching reading are achieved.

Related to the problems above, the writer had seen the score of students' reading comprehension achievement in SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan. Here is the score of SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan in reading comprehension achievement by using conventional method.

Table 1.1. The mean of students' reading comprehension achievement

Semester	Mean of the students reading achievement
The first semester in 2013/2014 of academic year	68.53
The second semester in 2014/2015 of academic year	66.07
The first semester in 2013/2014 of academic year	66.95
The second semester in 2014/2015 of academic year	67.97

(Source: SMA Negeri 1 Percut Sei Tuan, 2013-2015)

Considering to the condition above, the writer was interested in using V diagram technique to teach reading comprehension and to help the students comprehend the text easily. V diagram is an instructional problem solving technique in the shape of V that helps one to observe the interplay between what is known and what needs to be known or understood (Gowin and Alvarez, 2005:35). The V diagram has a theoretical/conceptual (thinking) left side and a methodological (doing) right side. Both sides actively interact with each other through the use of the focus or research question(s) that directly relate to events and/or objects at the point of the V to be observed.

It helps the students to understand the structure of knowledge and processes of knowledge construction. It is a technique that requires the mind to draw upon past experiences and world knowledge in order to think new thought about our existing knowledge with a given problem or situation. Because when the

readers process the text, they integrate the new information from the text into their pre-existing knowledge.

B. The Problem of the Study

Considering the realities of expectation in the background of the study, the problem of this research was formulated as: *“Does the use of V diagram technique significantly affect the students’ reading comprehension achievement?”*

C. The Objective of the Study

In line with the problem, the objective of this study was to investigate the effect of using V diagram technique on the students reading comprehension.

D. The Scope of the Study

This study dealt with reading descriptive text by applying V diagram technique. The researcher used descriptive text because descriptive text is a text which is commonly used by students in senior high school and they must know well about descriptive text. As the level comprehension, the researcher used literal comprehension and inferential comprehension level.

E. The Significances of the Study

The finding was expected to be useful for the development of theory and practice. Theoretically, the findings were expected to give positive contribution for teaching in overcoming problem in reading through value finding in the area

of teaching reading. Moreover, the students could also apply this finding to other subjects. Even they probably also apply this technique when reading any books in order to gather the comprehension from their reading. It means that it is very useful not only for English but also for other subjects in which the key of enhancing and enriching the knowledge is reading.

Practically, the findings of the study were expected to be useful for:

1. The teachers, in that they can use this method in teaching learning process to increase students' comprehension in reading,
2. The students, in that it will help them in improving their ability in comprehending reading text,
3. The writer, for adding her knowledge about this technique in teaching reading, and
4. The other researchers, where they can refer to the research findings when doing a similar research.