

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Understanding the meaning of certain language especially English that is not our own language is more difficult. People should understand one word to another word until they can find the meaning of one sentence and get the correct insight of that sentence. However, learning certain language by using several methods, techniques, and strategies is more helpful to reach the comprehension of language itself. Richards and Rodgers (2007) states that English is the language of globalization, international communication, commerce and trade, the media and pop culture, different motivation for learning it come in to play.

In Indonesia, English is one of the formal subjects that is included in the curriculum. It has been taught from the primary up to university level. The Department of National Education has made English as a compulsory subject and positioned it as the first foreign language to be taught in school based on the curriculum. In order to be able to communicate in English, students are expected to master the four English skills, they are the mastery of the receptive skills (reading and listening) and the mastery of the productive skills (speaking and writing).

One of the skills in English subject is reading that also has an own passion to make the students really more learn about English. Reading is very important for study purposes, careers, or simply for pleasure. By reading, much information

and pleasure may be obtained. According to Harris (1980: 53) reading is a form of communication. Information and ideas are exchanged between writer and reader in the act of communicating. The form of written text which read by the reader can be a communication way to deliver the ideas of the writer about some particular information. This information will be a new knowledge or as an entertainment which is needed for the reader.

Reading as a communication through the text includes knowledge, news, and story. In education, by reading a passage or story the student will get more knowledge and information. The knowledge or information that they get from reading can be used for communicating or sharing their idea with other students through giving opinion or idea. The interaction among students during reading section will set up the class more active and alive.

Based on the observation in SMA N 15 Medan, the researcher found that many students had difficulties in reading comprehension. They did not give much attention and enthusiasm on reading test, because they do not have an appropriate direct means in getting in touch with the ideas. The researcher thinks that it will be better to give variation in teaching reading comprehension by using strategy.

Semantic mapping strategy involves drawing a diagram of the relationships between words according to their use in a particular text and it is best introduced as a collaborative effort between the teacher and the class (Chall 2012). Semantic mapping strategy is such kind of strategy to correlate the relationship between words in particular text to enhance the teacher and students comprehend by drawing or sketch of the information that they get from the text

(Stahl and Vancil, 1986). Besides, semantic mapping strategy has been used in a variety of ways, it has been used as a mean of improving the teaching of study skills (Hanf, 1971; Heimlich and Pittleman, 1986). Semantic mapping strategy can be used to improve the teaching of study skills means that it affects the variation of teaching strategy which include the way in delivering the materials and the media of materials.

Several studies have investigated the effect of semantic mapping strategy for teaching reading comprehension. Muhtar (2010) stated in his thesis entitled “Improving Students’ Reading Comprehension through Semantic Mapping Strategy” that the students who are taught by semantic mapping strategy have better reading comprehension than those who are taught using direct instruction. It means that the use of semantic mapping strategy can affect the students’ reading comprehension optimally.

The finding of Elamathi (2011) stated in his thesis entitled “The Effects of Using Semantic Map in Reading Comprehension of Descriptive Text”, that the implementation of semantic mapping in teaching descriptive text has shown an improvement. It means that semantic mapping is an appropriate strategy to improve students’ reading comprehension.

It supported by Suci (2013) in her thesis entitled “The Effectiveness of Using Semantic Mapping Strategy in Teaching Reading Comprehension of Narrative Text at The Eight Grade Students of SMP Negeri 6 Semarang” she states that the students’ score after learning reading comprehension of narrative text through semantic mapping strategy was higher than the students’ score who

learn without semantic mapping strategy. It shows that the implementation of the semantic mapping strategy in teaching reading comprehension has applied well.

Based on the background above and supported by the previously researches the researcher is very interested in conducting **The Effect of Semantic Mapping Strategy on The Students' Reading Comprehension.**

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the research problem of this study is formulated as the following: Does the application of Semantic Mapping Strategy significantly affect the students' reading comprehension achievement?

C. The Objective of the Study

In relation to the problem, the objective of the study is to investigate whether Semantic Mapping Strategy significantly affects the students' reading comprehension.

D. The Scope of the Study

Based on the background of the study, this study will be limited to the effectiveness of using Semantic Mapping Strategy in teaching reading on students grade X at SMAN 15 Medan. This research will be limited to the Narrative Text.

E. The Significance of the Study

As this study concerns with the use of semantic mapping strategy to affect the student in reading, the findings of this study are expected to be useful as:

1. Theoretically

The findings of the research will give theoretical contribution to the truth of the theory of schemata theory from which the schematic relation is developed, and the scemathic relation underlies the semantic mapping sttategy.

2. Practically

To improve the students' reading comprehension and widen their horizon about the function of semantic mapping strategy in their reading comprehension, to improve the quality of students' reading comprehension, and to use this study as reference for next researches.