

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Reading as one of the four language skills is an essential skill for students and taught formally from elementary school up to the university level. It also has a great position in Learning English in the class, shown by the quantity of test that faced by the students in the National Examination in Indonesia which has included 15 listening and 35 reading questions based on Association of National Education Standard (BSNP).

Reading is a foundation skill for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment. Student must be able to read and understand text in all formats (e.g. picture, video, print). Nowadays there are many ways to get the information that students need by reading, such as from newspaper, magazine, novel, articles, journal and also other kind of reading book.

Though reading is supposed to be the most important skill, students often find difficulty to understand the new text without having prior knowledge because they are lack of vocabulary knowledge and they lack of a direct tool to help them in comprehending the text. Therefore, teacher should stimulate them to predict and infer what the text is about. The students need to know many words to get the information on the text. The teacher needs a strategy to make the students comprehend and catch the idea of the text easily. In this

case, pictures can be used as a media to help the students awake their prior knowledge.

Picture is one of visual aids. It is one of the media that can help the students develop their knowledge about the topic of the text. Harmer (2007:179) affirms that pictures are useful for getting students to predict what is coming next in a lesson. When the students read certain text, they will easily get information when they understand the pictures. As a result, teacher should provide some pictures to facilitate the students in understanding the content of a text. Furthermore, proper pictures have to be considered because familiar and simple pictures are needed by the student.

For example, if the teacher teaches the students who live or stay in the village environment, it is better to show the text with the picture is set with animals or plants. It will help them in activating their prior knowledge. Meanwhile, if the students are from upside belong, at least the teacher shows the picture about building, market, station, or other kind of things, places or anything that they have seen and been before.

Predicting by using picture is a strategy which has a high possibility in helping students' reading achievement. Through this strategy, students find clues or connecting points. All of our prior knowledge of places and situations enable us to predict when we read and thus to comprehend and enjoy what we read. Predicting brings potential meaning to text and reducing ambiguity (Moreillon, 2007:76). The predicting strategy activates students' prior knowledge and starts engagement with key concepts. It activates prior

knowledge and shows students that they were smart enough to figure things out in reading.

But, the problem is how students could be able to recognize the information from the picture that is showed in reading text. Every student has their opinion to judge it, but they have to get the right point of information that would they find from the picture in reading text. Because usually, if they find some pictures in reading text, they just see at first glance, without realizing and recognizing what is the picture conveying. The students see the pictures in reading text as an entertainment for them. Actually they could get the information if they pay their attention toward the pictures in reading text. Therefore, they did not give full attention and enthusiasm in the process of reading.

According to English syllabus of curriculum, one of the genres learned in Junior High School is descriptive text. Its purpose is to describe person, things and place by using vivid details. Descriptive text appeals to the senses, so it tells how something looks, feels, smells, tastes and/or sounds. A good description is like a “word picture” so the reader can imagine the object, place or person clearly in their mind.

Based on the researchers’ observation and interviewing the teacher in SMP Negeri 3 Percut Sei Tuan on grade VIII. The teacher told that her students have difficulty in understanding the content of a new text, as recently they learned descriptive. This situation is proven by the students’ scores of reading. Most of students get the score below the Minimal Completeness Criteria

(KKM) of SMPN 3 Percut Sei Tuan. The KKM of reading applied for grade VIII by school is 70.

But when teacher used pictures as the tools in teaching reading descriptive texts, the students paid more attention to the pictures and when the teacher asked them to predict what will happen in the text, they have various answers. This situation motivates them to read and figure out the content of the text. The pictures also help the students in understanding new vocabulary in the text.

Hence, based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting this research related to reading text which has pictures inside. The researcher will find out whether the students pay more attention to the pictures, whether they get the information easily from the pictures and understanding the content of the text.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem of the study is formulated as the following: How is students' competence in predicting information through pictures on reading text at junior high school?

C. The Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to analyze the students' competence in predicting information through pictures in reading text at junior high school.

D. The Scope of the Study

Based on the background above, this study will be limited to the analysis of students' competence in predicting information through pictures in reading descriptive text particularly in describing object. The level of students being studied is Grade VIII of Junior High School.

E. The Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be useful for:

1. Theoretically, for English teachers to know how far the abilities of the students in predicting information through picture in reading text and the way to solve their problem; for the researchers to use this study as reference for next research.
2. Practically, for the students to help their problem and their weakness in their studying of predicting information through pictures in reading text.