

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

English is very important and related to various aspects of life of human beings. English has become a global language. Realizing that many reference materials are written in English

and how important this language is, reading becomes one of the most important skills to be acquired during a language course. Grabe and Stoller (2002: 1) explain that without reading, the opportunities for improving one's life are limited.

In teaching reading the teacher should realize that the goal of reading process is comprehension. Westwood (2008: 31) defines that reading comprehension is an active thinking process through which a reader intentionally constructs meaning to form a deeper understanding of concepts and information presented in a text. In fact reading is not as easy as people think. Teaching reading nowadays is directly faced to some problems. When students read, they do not have the ability of drawing meaning from the text and interpret the information appropriately. Many students faced to some problems to comprehend reading text. Without comprehension, reading would be empty and meaningless.

Nowadays, in teaching reading the teacher usually orients to the students' vocabulary and pronunciation. This activity does not give any opportunity to comprehend a text or it cannot give contribution to make the students read text effectively. In addition, reading has many kinds of text such as narrative,

descriptive, recount, report, and procedure. In this research, the writer chooses descriptive text which is purposed to describe thing, person, or place. Based on the writer's experience in Teaching Practice (PPL), the writer found that the students' scores in reading descriptive text were very low because during teaching reading, most of students were just asked to read the reading text, translate it into Indonesian and discuss the content and finally they were asked to answer some questions based on the text. Most of them had difficulties in searching the meaning of the text. And when the writer gave them a picture and asked them to explain that, the students failed in reading because they faced some difficulties, such as lack structure and lack of vocabulary.

Based on the writer's observation in SMAN 1 Percut Sei Tuan, by interviewing the teacher and some students, it is concluded that the students still had insufficient skill in reading and got many difficulties in comprehending a descriptive text. Students are not able to convey the ideas clearly and fluently. They do not have any idea at all when confronted on one topic to be described because they lack of vocabulary and poor structure. Besides, after looking at the students' English scores for the mid semester in academic year 2014/2015 of grade X, the writer found that there was only 35% (14 students) who scored 75 point from the total number of students (40 students). The Minimum Criteria Mastery (KKM) is 75.

These problems are caused by the teacher's technique which is used in teaching process unattract the students' interest and liveliness in the learning process. Most of teachers of English still use conventional technique in teaching

reading. The conventional technique is regularly done by giving questions to the students and which the answers are contained in the passage. Consequently, the students are not interested and bored in reading. These problems should be solved by the teacher because it will give negative impact on the students' ability and motivation to achieve the reading target. Sadoski (2004: 26) concludes that if the students have a motivation in reading, they will be interested to read and to respond effectively.

Thus, the teacher should consider an effective technique as a solution to improve the students' achievement in reading. The solution is by using cooperative learning. Cooperative learning refers to a variety of teaching techniques in which students work in small groups to help another learn academic content. The writer focuses on Numbered Head Together (NHT) Technique to solve the problem above. There is a previous researcher who conducted research using this technique. Nathasa (2012) applied NHT on teaching writing descriptive text. She says that this technique significantly improves the students' achievement in writing descriptive text. Teaching writing descriptive text and teaching reading descriptive text have different skills in teaching learning process. Sheri (2012) defines that receptive skills include understanding when you listen and when you read, you receive the language and decode the meaning to understand the message. Productive skills are speaking and writing. You use the language that you have acquired and produce a message through speech or written text that you want others to understand. That is why the researcher wants to apply this technique in teaching reading descriptive text to find out whether Numbered

Heads Together Technique also significantly affects students' achievement in reading descriptive text.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the research problem is formulated as follows: *“Does Numbered Head Together technique significantly affect students' achievement in reading descriptive text ?”*

C. The Objective of the study

In relation to the research problem, the objective of the research is to investigate the effect of NHT Technique on the students' achievement in reading descriptive text.

D. The Scope of the study

The Scope of this study is limited on investigating the tenth grade students of SMAN I Percut Sei Tuan in second semester. This study focused on students' achievement in reading descriptive text by applying Numbered Heads Together Technnique.

E. The Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to be useful

Theoretically for :

1. The readers who are interested in conducting further study related to the improvement in reading descriptive text through Numbered Heads Together .

Pratically for :

2. The teachers to be creative in applying various techniques so that the students are interested in reading descriptive text.
3. Students to overcome the problem in reading and to improve their ability in reading descriptive text after they apply Numbered Heads Together



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