

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is one great habit that can truly change the life forever. Reading can entertain and enrich people with knowledge – the only thing that does not decay with time. Reading used as a means of communication, sharing information and ideas. Like all languages, it is a complex interaction between the text and reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which is culturally and socially situated.

Reading is used as the foundation of all knowledge and the foundation for a proper education. Good reading can be helpful to obtain the current information as it is necessary. Then, reading as one of four language skills has big roles in learning and teaching at school. It is supported by Brown (2000:185) who states that reading is arguable and the most essential skill for success in all educational contexts and remains a skill paramount importance as one creates assessment of language ability. Students need to be able to learn from their reading. The successful reading performance is a strong predictor of students' academic performance. By giving the students reading instruction, it means that giving the students a prospective future to explore the knowledge.

The goal of reading is to help the students understand the text or to gain what they intended purposes from the text more easily. Moreover, the students will enjoy their reading. People have probably heard the education community emphasizing the importance of reading comprehension, but they may not realize how important

reading actually is. Although strong reading skills can help the students well in language arts and reading class, that is only the beginning.

The students have to use reading skills in every single subject they ever study and in almost every aspect of life. For example, the students need to comprehend challenging science textbooks as well as directions and word problems on texts. The students who struggle with reading comprehension may fall so far behind in school that they have limited opportunities as an adult, as reading is not as simple as what most people think. Many times when people asked, what they have already comprehended from their readings, they cannot explain it precisely.

Reading comprehension is characterized as an active process of comprehending. Since information, knowledge, science and technology can be obtained from the internet, books, articles, and other reading materials in order to improving the students' reading skill. Reading comprehension are influenced by reading material, child's own personality, attitudes, interest, motivation, cognitive style, self-efficacy, habit, environment and another factors.

In the 2006 Educational Unit Level Curriculum (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan : KTSP) of Senior High School, reading is regarded as the backbone of other language skills. It is clearly stated that through reading students can develop other language skills such as writing and speaking. The students of Senior High School are expected to be able to comprehend the short functional text and simple essay such as in report, narrative, and analytical exposition in their daily lives context and the students can also grasp information and improve their knowledge.

The explanation above tells us that reading is a necessary skill that any student needs. However, reading is not simple as what most people think. It is not easy to have the ability of drawing meaning from the printed page and interpret the

information appropriately. Consequently, students will need to read the text two or three times to comprehend the text well.

In such case, students still fail in comprehending the reading text. The phenomenon can be seen from the data that is obtained from SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Husni Thamrin Medan at X grade level. The result shows that the students' achievement in reading skill of competence standard is still low. It is described in the following table (see Table 1).

Table 1. Reading Comprehension Score of X Grade Level Students of Yayasan Perguruan Husni Thamrin Senior High School Medan

No.	Academic Year	Students' Score	
		Lowest Score	Highest Score
1	2009	62	90
2	2010	60	92
3	2011	64	96

From the Table 1, it can be assumed that the students score in reading comprehension is still low. From 2009 to 2011, the score of reading comprehension is 64 in 2011 academic year. This situation was caused by many factors. It can be from by the students' internal and external factors. The students' internal factors such as: age, intelligence, ability, cognitive style, interest, attitude, motivation, self-efficacy and other factors. The external factors include teachers, environment, materials, strategy and other factors.

From the phenomenon above, the teachers should have some strategies in improving the students' skill in English. The application of the strategy that used by the teacher must give further chance for the students. Teachers need to improve the quality of teaching process in the classroom. The teaching-learning process will be interesting if the students are active in responding the teacher's stimuli and it can be done by offering some strategies that force them to participate in then classroom.

McNamara (2007:6) defines reading comprehension strategy as a cognitive or behavioral action that is enacted under particular contextual conditions, with the goal of improving some aspect of comprehension. It means that the successful readers know when and how to use deliberate strategy to repair comprehension.

There is a great evidence of the importance of reading strategy. The implication is that teaching reading strategy to struggling readers may be a key toward helping them to improve comprehension. As a teacher, we may need to improve the quality of teaching process in the classroom. The teaching-learning process will be interesting if the students are active in responding the teacher's stimuli. It can be done by offering some strategies that force them to participate in the classroom. In this study, the researcher applies two strategies that have been done successfully by some linguist experts to be applied to improve students' reading comprehension, they are: REAP Strategy and Collaborative Strategic Reading.

The first strategy is Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) strategy. CSR as one strategy to that have function to make the students understand how to comprehend the text. CSR strategy consists of a set of strategy designed to enhance students' understanding of text. Collaborative Strategic Reading applies four basic strategies to assist their comprehension: making predictions prior to reading (preview strategy), monitoring reading and learning to enhance vocabulary development (click and clunk strategy), identifying main ideas (get-the-gist strategy), and summarizing key ideas. The purpose of this strategy is to teach students to focus on the main ideas that emerged from the text and to assist with comprehension.

The second strategy is REAP Strategy. REAP stands for Read, Encode, Annotate, and Ponder. REAP is a strategy that readers use to help them read and understand a text. This allows the student to follow stages of reading. The REAP chart

allows students to visually organize the information as they follow the stages of reading. The students can see the strategy in action. They will internalize the stages of reading. The teachers should use this strategy because REAP supports increased comprehension. Because the students revisit the text for each of the stages of REAP, students will internalize the content of reading. They have to think about putting the main idea in their own words.

In the process of teaching and learning, it is not enough by applying some strategies, to improve the quality of teaching process in the classroom it is very important to include the students' internal factors, such as cognitive style. Every student has different cognitive style to comprehend the text. It suggests that the teachers might help the students' cognitive style as the manner by which individuals perceive information in the environment and the patterns of thought that they use to develop a knowledge base about the world around them.

In this study, there is an interest to conduct a research on both strategy and students' cognitive style in order to develop students' achievement on reading comprehension. Finally the researcher will find the best strategy between them that can be well-applied in improving students' achievement on reading comprehension.

1.2 Research Problems

This research is aimed at answering the following research problems.

1. Is the students' achievement on reading comprehension taught by using CSR Strategy higher than that of taught by using REAP Strategy?
2. Is students' achievement on reading comprehension for reflective cognitive style higher than that of impulsive cognitive style?
3. Is there any interaction between teaching strategy and cognitive styles in students' achievement on reading comprehension?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

In carrying out the research, it is necessary to state the objectives of the study clearly. So, the objectives of this study are:

- 1) if the students' achievement on reading comprehension taught by using CSR Strategy is higher than that of taught by using REAP Strategy,
- 2) if students' reading comprehension achievement of reflective cognitive style is higher than students' reading comprehension achievement of impulsive cognitive style, and
- 3) if there is interaction between teaching strategy and cognitive styles on students' achievement on reading comprehension.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

In this study, the researcher concentrates on two reading strategies, they are: CSR Strategy and REAP Strategy. Dealing with these strategies, reading comprehension is influenced by many factors. One of the factors is cognitive style in on reading comprehension. Cognitive style consists of two types: reflective and impulsive cognitive style. By knowing the cognitive style of the students, this study is

expected to give clearer description on the effect of teaching strategies and cognitive styles in students' achievement on reading comprehension.

1.5 The Significances of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be useful theoretically and practically. Theoretically the findings are expected:

- 1) to be the input for the teachers and educational institutions,
- 2) to enrich the researcher's knowledge who are interested in research especially related to English teaching strategy in Senior High School,
- 3) to give a lot of contribution to improve the teachers' capability in teaching, the educational institutions and other researchers who want to apply the teaching strategies.

Practically, the findings are expected:

- 1) to inform the teachers to decide which strategy is more effective to develop and improve the students' reading comprehension,
- 2) to provide a solution to the problems that faced by the students in comprehending a text during the reading process,
- 3) to improve the students' ability on reading comprehension to the higher level of reading comprehension skill.