

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes some points to be discussed. The first point discusses background of the research. It describes the objectives of teaching English, the problem in class, and the cause of the problem. The second section is the problem statement. The third section is the objectives of the research. And the last section discusses the benefit of the research.

A. Background of the Study

Like the other language skills, writing has important roles in the context of English teaching as a foreign language in Indonesia. Alderson (2000: 12) states that reading is commonly viewed as consisting of decoding and comprehension activities of written verbal stimuli. Abbot, et al., in Wallace (2001:21) insisted that reading is an activity involving both readers' contact with the text and creating a similar text as that of the original. It involves not only the mechanical aspect of reading (letters, words, and sentences), but also the cognitive aspect of reading (meaning-making).

Considering its merits, reading as a means of communication is demanded. It is learner's need which cannot be neglected in the era of high competition. It means that students should be equipped with reading skills necessary for their future. They should be trained to read in English in order to be skillful readers. Many people argue that reading is a difficult skill to teach and to learn. It requires

mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgmental elements. The existence of basic mechanical devices skills such as familiar structure of instruction text, vocabulary development of reading does not ensure effective reading, because student must also possess other competencies to become effective readers. The students need such competencies to generate ideas and thoughts appropriate to the topic.

Concerning the complexity of reading, some activities to improve students reading skill are implemented to improve the learners' ability. At the beginning level student copy the words read by the teacher or match the words with pictures. Gradually, they try to answer the questions and then develop their ideas in paragraphs. This task is carried out after they have already mastered some competencies.

According to Competence Standard (Depdiknas: 2006: 23), the students of SMP must be able to understand the meanings of short functional written text and short simple essay in the forms of procedure, descriptive, report and recount, to communicate in formal and non formal situations in both social and academic context. The basic competence of the nine grade is that the students must be able to understand the explicit and implicit meanings of simple short functional written text and short simple essay in the form of report, to communicate in both social and/or in academic context.

After joining the teaching and learning process on reading report text, the students must be able to understand good report text. To understand good report text, the students must be able to; (1) find ideas, (2) convey message, (3) write

originally on their own, (4) express ideas coherently, (5) organize ideas (unity) (6) use vocabulary in context, (7) use correct grammar; and (8) use correct punctuation and spelling (mechanics).

To make students able to create good report text, the teaching and learning process must be conducive. The indicators of students' attitudes are (1) Students are eager to start the class, (2) Students preferred are enthusiastic in doing English activity, (3) all students are active and participating to do group work, (4) the students are joining each activity from the beginning to the end of the class and (5) Most students are brave to express their ideas to other student or other people.

To reach best results in teaching and learning process, teachers must be able to make good lesson plan, choose and develop suitable technique with the basic competence, motivate students, implement the lesson plan, evaluate and follow up the program. The teachers' role in creating the learning atmosphere in which students are active and able to express creative ideas is crucial. The class is full of students' activities and enjoyable. The students are learning effectively in the class. Besides that, using multimedia or internet media is necessary now in order to facilitate students to search information and express their ideas so that students' reading skill can improve.

The learning problems occur in SMP MTA Gemolong, especially in teaching and learning English in grade nine. The result of students' learning achievement is not satisfying. It can be proved from the students' test results that many of them did not pass the passing grade 65 (minimum mastery criteria 65). The researcher found out the students' score after pretest that last on Tuesday,

November 29th 2011. The average score of the second semester test of 9F grade is 51,94 which the lowest score is 30 and the highest score is 75. The students who pass the SKBM are only 5 students. The students are stated successful in reading ability if they get at least 65 or exceed 65, there are only 5 students. They said that it was very difficult to understand the text. Meanwhile, the passing grade of examination state by the government in *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional Republik Indonesia Nomer 34 Tahun 2007*. Chapter 15, Section(1), is as follows:

Peserta UN dinyatakan lulus jika memenuhi standar kelulusan UN sebagai berikut : a) Memiliki nilai rata-rata minimal 5,25 untuk seluruh mata pelajaran yang diujikan, dengan tidak ada nilai di bawah 4,25; atau b) Memiliki nilai minimal 4,00 pada salah satu mata pelajaran dan nilai mata pelajaran lainnya minimal 6,00.

In addition, based on the interview, the researcher knows that students' mastery of reading is low. Most students still feel afraid, and have the assumption that English is difficult. In this case, a proper strategy is needed. Teachers have very important role to raise the students' skill of reading. Their way of teaching technique and their way in preparing material will give much contribution for their students to study.

The researcher, as the teacher of SMP, observes the lack of students' skill in reading comprehension. They tend to neglect English because they think that English only a secondary subject. The interview result supports the idea of the difficulty of learning reading conducted by the researcher. One of the student said:

“Nilai tes semester kami kemarin kurang bagus karena soalnya sulit, kesulitan kami ada pada mengartikan ke bahasa Indonesia. Tidak bisa mengartikan soalnya dan jawaban pilihan gandanya.”

Not different from him, another student answered,

“Ah, belajar membaca bahasa Inggris sulit, Bu. Pakai bahasa lokal saja, menjelaskannya yang biasa saja, pakai bahasa kita sendiri lebih jelas dan mudah dimengerti. Kenapa mesti membaca bacaan berbahasa asing, sulit memahaminya, nanti malah keliru. Malahan pusing. Jadi males. Saya jadi kurang semangat, Bu.”

Another student said,

“Kesulitan pasti ada Bu. Pertama, mengucapkan kosa katanya saja sulit apalagi harus mengartikan kalimatnya dulu. Banyak kata-kata yang saya tidak tahu artinya. Trus waktu saya coba untuk memahaminya, saya kesulitan.”

The researcher found why many students got minimum score in the test of reading, since the reading text is referring to curriculum. The student said is also as the sample of all the students that they couldn't find the meaning of English text that it caused his result in doing test item of reading was not satisfy. The students faced a reality in comprehending English text that getting difficultness because the lack of words mastering. They made the testimony that the lack of words mastering makes some students less understanding the text.

Based on the teacher's observation towards students' learning attitudes, the students' motivation and interest in joining English class is still low. The class situation is still not ideal. The indicators of students' attitudes are (1) It took long time to start the writing class (2) Students preferred talking to each other to doing English activity. When they were asked to do the task, they preferred talking their own business to doing task, (3) when they were asked to work in group there was

not learning community in the group. Only the clever did the task. When the teacher asked them to complete sentences using the words taken from the text in group, they did nothing. (4) They did something which did not have relationship with the teaching learning process. Some students drew unnecessary things when they were asked to do writing task. (5). Most students were shy to express their ideas to other student or other people.

To overcome the unsatisfactory condition stated above the researcher used one of the teaching techniques in teaching report text . It is questioning technique in the form of YES — NO and WH question. “Question and answer format is one of the controlled reading types that encourages students a little more freedom in structuring sentences. They are given series of question, the answer are the student’s guidance in constructing paragraph (Raimes, 1983). Questions are useful to stimulate thinking and to shape their ideas. By using questions based on the topic the students will answer the questions and use the answer to develop their paragraph more easily.

Besides that, the appearance of the reading materials should be able to attract the students’ interest. English teacher were claimed to be able to create innovative strategy that enables the teaching and learning activity become exciting. According to Rockler (1988), “innovative teaching strategies are needed to increase the problem solving capacity of students”.

Related to the innovations of the teaching process, the researcher applied the appropriate method in order to make the students achieve adequate competence in

reading. Teacher's professionalism deals with an ability of the teacher to guide, motivate, and facilitate students to develop their reading comprehension. So, by applying appropriate method it hope that the students' reading comprehension will increase.

There are a lot of approaches that can be used by teachers to improve reading comprehension of their students. One of approaches that can be applied to develop students' reading comprehension is inquiry-based teaching. This approach can be adopted in all levels of education. Inquiry-based teaching involves engaging students in the research process in which instructor supports and coaches as a level appropriate to their starting skills. It also enables students to have a significant voice in decisions about the content and context of their work and nurtures collaboration among students.

It implies that inquiry-based teaching is learner-centered instruction which leads to the self-finding of subject being studied. Teacher only works for supporting and coaching the learning process. Researcher only provides instructions that lead to the self-finding of the students. In this method students are demanded to be active, creative, and innovative toward the studied subject. Related to the studying at higher institution or advanced level, inquiry based teaching is very appropriate. This is so for such reason. In this level of education, students are expected to learn by themselves. They have to be independent students, so that the process of learning becomes effective. Benson (2001) states that autonomy is a requirement in the effective learning process. Through inquiry

based teaching students are led to be autonomous learners in which they have to take control of their own learning. In simple words, it can be said that inquiry based teaching provides opportunities for university students to be autonomous learners. Inquiry-based teaching is applicable to be used in teaching students. second, it can be used to teach specific skill of English, reading as an example.

Related to discovery learning, Hebrank (2000) points out that inquiry teaching involves conducting observation and measurement, hypothesizing, making interpretation, and building certain theory. It means that in asking or providing questions in inquiry-based teaching, teacher has to give opportunities for students to answer the questions through observation they will justify their answer. Teacher, then, is asked to verify the justification of the students.

Inquiry-based teaching is supposed appropriate to develop students' reading comprehension. Firstly, in inquiry, instructors or teachers act as coaches, guides, and facilitators who help learners at their "true" questions, they are motivated to learn and they develop a sense of ownership about the learning. Secondly, students take control of their own learning and to apply knowledge, which they learn with understanding. Thirdly, inquiry is instead an active process, where progress is assessed by how well students develop experimental and analytical skills. The use of inquiry in the classroom gives an opportunity for students to complete exercises on their own, and teachers should allow them to figure out thoughts, ideas, and concepts for themselves. With the inquiry method of instruction, students arrive at an understanding of concepts by themselves and the

responsibility for and learning rests with them. Inquiry-based education requires allowing students to discover information that is new to them as well as developing a good relationship between the teacher and the students.

Inquiry is learner centered but inquiry teaching requires considerable teacher involvement. It also requires that the teacher direct or guides the learning experience by asking questions, making comments or suggestion, and providing data when they are needed. This kind of teacher-directed learning is sometimes referred to as directed or guided inquiry. Regardless of the names applied to it, it is inquiry teaching. It is best used to teach students of any grade or ability level how to inquire as they are learning information, developing, conceptual, knowledge, or clarifying their own attitudes and values. And it may even be used to evaluate how well they can engage in inquiry (Beyer, 1971: 53-54).

Inquiry based teaching requires a high degree of interaction among the learners, the teacher, the materials, the content, and the environment. Perhaps the most crucial aspect of the inquiry method is that allows both student and teacher to become persistent askers, seekers, interrogators, and questioners. Questioning plays a crucial role in both the teaching and learning acts associated with the inquiry mode of learning. Questions lead to investigations as students attempt to understand the topic under study. One of inquiry models is inductive inquiry. Pictures are usually the easiest way to introduce the concept of inductive inquiry. For young children, the steps are by showing different pictures of the same scene

to the class and asking them to tell what they see in the pictures and describe patterns they observe.

Dealing with the problems above, to teach reading, researcher can find various material and procedure, which are appropriate to the students' belief. The students need a learner centered strategy, inquiry teaching requires considerable teacher involvement. Inquiry based teaching demands, first, that the teacher plan or design a learning experience that will facilitate student's inquiry. This includes creating a series of activities designed to put students through the various stages of inquiry as well as collecting or preparing appropriate learning materials and guides.

Teachers have to had the same belief as the students. They must strongly believe that what they give to their students will belong the students' need. Their teaching style and the material are appropriate with their students and will invite them to join. Therefore, they should employ an interesting teaching strategy for their students so they do not feel reluctant to join reading class. So that, the researcher proposes a new way in teaching reading by The *Inquiry-Based Teaching*. This approach will contribute students' skill so they can comprehend the text easily.

B. Problem Statement

Based on the background of the study, the writer identifies the problems as follows:

1. Is the inquiry based teaching able to improve the students reading comprehension of written text in SMP MTA Gemolong Sragen?
2. What are the strength and the weakness of using inquiry based teaching in teaching reading?

C. Objective of the study

Based on the problem statement above, the writer states the objectives of the study as follow:

1. General Objective

Generally, the study has an objective to improve the reading comprehension of the third grade students of SMP MTA Gemolong Sragen.

2. Specific Objective

Particularly, the objectives of the study is to examine about:

- a. Whether the use of Inquiry Based Teaching can improve reading comprehension of the third grade students of SMP MTA Gemolong Sragen.
- b. The strength and weakness of the use of inquiry based in teaching reading.

D. Benefit of the study

From the result of the study, it is expected that, the result of the study have:

1. Theoretical Benefit

- a. Providing information as an input in English teaching learning process especially on reading comprehension.
- b. Giving contribution as additional reference for those who want to conduct a research in English teaching learning process.

2. Practical Benefit

- a. For English Teachers, Inquiry Based Teaching give more benefits for teaching the language.
- b. For the students, the advantages of betterment of students' reading comprehension.
- c. For the headmaster, to support the effectiveness of teaching learning process.