

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Reading is one of the four main skills in language learning and one of the hardest skills for a foreign language learner. When people learn to read, they have the key that open the door to all the knowledge of the world. Anderson states that reading comprehension is a process that involves meaningful construction of author's message by the use of prior knowledge, especially knowledge of language.¹ It means that reading comprehension as a process of negotiating and understanding between the reader and the text content. Students have to know the language well to read efficiently and identify what the main point of the text is.

Students often find difficulty to understand the new text without having background knowledge. 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 background knowledge.

¹Anderson, *Applying Current Approach to The Teaching of reading*, P. 90

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. Many studies found that to help the students understand the meaning of words, it is better to use pictures as one of the visual aids. When the students read certain text, they will easily get the information when they understand the pictures. As a result, teacher should provide some pictures to facilitate the students in understanding the content of text. Furthermore, proper pictures have to be considered because familiar and simple pictures are needed by the students.

There are many types of pictures that can be used as a media in English teaching and learning process. One of them is individual picture. Individual picture is a single picture of object, activity, or people. The reason is because an individual picture can describe things on the text by single picture clearly. Because of that reason, individual picture is suitable for teaching animal descriptive text. It avoids students confused because of the crowded picture.

Teacher should have effective reading strategy for the students to gain better reading comprehension. According to Anderson, to make students become active and get involved in reading activities, it is needed to teach them the various reading strategies because reading with various strategies creates students to be creative and critical readers.² Richard states in his book that reading strategy can be defined as plans for solving problems encountered in

² Anderson, Neil J. *Practical English Language Teaching Reading* (New York: McGraw-Hill companies, 2008)

constructing meaning.³ It means that the strategy is a tool to achieve the reading goal. In other words, the goal of teaching reading strategies is to create students to become strategic reader. Predicting by using picture is a strategy which has a high possibility in helping the students' reading achievement.

Prediction is a pre-reading activity. According to Smith, prediction is the prior elimination of unlikely alternatives.⁴ It is the core of reading. 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. Prediction brings potential meaning to text and reducing ambiguity. The predicting strategy activates students' background knowledge and starts engagement with key concepts. It activates background knowledge and shows students that they were smart enough to figure things out in reading.

Students can be able to brainstorm how the information fits in with their previous knowledge. They learn to make connections between their own prior knowledge and the ideas in a text. It is helpful for students to see that sometimes their predictions were off and they have to stop and think and might be revise their predictions. Predicting and revising also assist students in thinking while they read, they paid attention to see weather they right in their predictions or not. Giving the students time to revise their prediction support them to reread an important component of completely comprehension.

³ Richards, at al. *Methodology in language Teaching* (Cambridge University Press, 2002)

⁴ Smith, F. *Understanding reading* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1994)

The researcher concerned on Descriptive text in teaching reading 8th grade students of junior high school. According to Oshima and Hogue, descriptive text is writing about how something (or someone) looks and uses space order.⁵ Descriptive writing appeal to the senses, so it tells how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and or sounds. A good description is like a “word picture”. The reader can imagine the object, place, or person in his or her mind. A writer of a good description is like an artist who paints a picture that can be “seen” clearly in the mind of the reader.

In this case, the researcher had chosen SMP Wachid Hasyim 4 Surabaya Jl. Bubutan Kawatan Gg VI to conduct the research. It was because the researcher had experience teaching those students when she done pre-observation. They found that the students have low ability in understanding reading descriptive text. English teacher in this school has some problems in teaching English, especially in teaching reading. In reading, the teacher found students’ difficulty on understanding to the content of the text, especially for the students who were lack on vocabulary.

Many studies have shown that good readers have good vocabulary. Students could not understand the text when they did not know the meaning of the words. In order to understand the text, students need to know the meaning of individual words. Another rationale was because of the students’ interest of

⁵ Oshima and Hogue, *Introduction Academic Writing Second Edition* (London: Wesley Longman,1997) P.50

pictures. Therefore the researcher found the proper strategy which dealing with pictures. It is expected that the students will enjoy and interest more to learn. In additional, the population of this research was the whole students of this school, while the sample was the 8th grade students, Class A and B. The reason of choosing the 8th grade students was preliminary research by interviewing the teacher. The English teacher told about the students' difficulties in learning English reading, it was proven by the students' scores of reading.

There were many studies that related with the researcher's study, such as research which was done by Khoirul Bariyah entitled "The Effect of Using Situational Picture on the Ability of Writing Descriptive Text of Eleventh Grade Students of SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Gresik" and research entitled "Using Pictures stories in Teaching Simple Past Tense to the 9th grade students of SMP Tlasih" that was done by St. Nur Afifah Ain. Both of them were using picture as media in teaching. Yet, there are many differences between those studies and the researcher's study such as the focus of skill, strategy, and the types of picture.

In this study, the researcher tried teaching with pictures and predicting strategy of reading. The purpose of this research was to know how the significant impact of using pictures to the students' ability in predicting information of descriptive text. Therefore the researcher interested in taking this topic entitled **"The Use of Individual Picture to Improve Students' Ability in**

Predicting Information on Reading Descriptive Text by the 8th Grade Students of SMP Wachid Hasyim 4 Surabaya”.

B. Statement of Research Question

Based on the background above, the writer can formulate the problem statement below:

1. Can the use of “individual picture” helps students’ prediction in understanding information on reading descriptive text by the 8th grade students of SMP Wachid Hasyim 4 Surabaya?
2. What are the students’ responses among the students who are taught using “individual pictures” and those who are not in predicting information on reading descriptive text by the 8th grade students of SMP Wachid Hasyim 4 Surabaya?

C. Objective

By writing this thesis, the writer intended to solve the problems of discussion stated as follows:

1. To measure the students’ understanding on reading descriptive text by using individual picture at 8th grade students of SMP Wachid Hasyim 4 Surabaya is.
2. To reveal students’ responses among the students who are taught using pictures and those who are not in predicting information on reading text by the 8th grade students of SMP Wachid Hasyim 4 Surabaya are.

D. Scope and Limitation

This research was conducted with the scope to measure students' improvement in reading ability of descriptive text through Individual Picture. The researcher wanted to know the effectiveness of the use of Individual Picture to improve students' ability in predicting information on reading Descriptive Text by the 8th grade students of SMP Wachid Hasyim 4 Surabaya. Furthermore, this research also limited to investigate class A and B of 8th grade students of SMP Wachid Hasyim 4 Surabaya.

E. Significance of the Study

Theoretically, the researcher is going to contribute her/his result of the study to the English teachers. It is expected to make them easier in developing students' reading skill.

Furthermore, practically this study expected to give positive contribution for:

1. The teachers:

They get more references about strategy in teaching reading.

2. The next researchers:

They have knowledge about the use of pictures to improve students' ability in teaching or learning English, especially on reading.

F. Definition of Key Terms

The following are given to make the readers have the same perception for some terms used in this study to avoid misunderstanding. The terms are to be defined as follows:

1. Predicting information: predicting information is guessing some information by using prior knowledge to connect between the background knowledge and the idea of the text.
2. Individual Picture: individual picture is a picture in which the item to be taught is found alone or is highlight in some fashion containing person or an object⁶. It can be person, animal, place, etc.
3. Students' response: how students react to the use of *Individual Picture* in teaching reading of descriptive text
4. Descriptive Text: Descriptive text is a text which describes something, someone or place in detail.⁷
5. Help: make students easy to predict

⁶ Mary, Finocchiaro, *Teaching English as Foreign language*, (New York: Harpa and Row Publisher, 1969), P. 194

⁷ Hyland, Ken, *Teaching and Researching Writing*. P. 73