

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Reading is one of the language skills that are taught in learning English, beside listening, speaking, and writing. Urquhart and Weir stated that “reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form via the medium of print”.¹ It means that reading activity is the processes where readers are expected to understand the information given through the written text.

Among the four language skills, reading is one of the most important skills that must be mastered by the students at school because by reading students are able to read texts in English either for their careers, for study purposes or simply for pleasure.²

In addition, reading requires students to think more, increase their vocabulary, give students a glimpse into other cultures and places, build their self esteem improves their creativity, build their expertise, decrease their mistakes, and then change the students life.³

In reading comprehension there are some exercises that are usually done by the teacher during the learning process which involve multiple choice items, true false statements, and vocabulary work to find out

¹ William Grabe. *Reading in a Second language*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 14

² Jeremy Harmer. *How to Teach English*. (England: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), 99

³<http://www.persistenceunlimited.com/2007/12/the-26-major-advantages-to-reading-more-books-and-why-3-in-4-people-are-being-shut-out-of-success/>. downloaded 1/05/2013

synonym or antonym words of the text. However, there are reasons from Davies and Tomitch why the tasks should not be used as the only kind of reading activity in the classroom:

1. They encourage passive reading behavior: to find the answer to a question, students have to locate the information in the text individually.
2. The tasks do not encourage students to read between the lines or question the veracity and source of the information contained in the text.
3. The tasks generally refer only to parts of the text, not to the text as a whole.⁴

So, the tasks are neither challenging nor fun, for the students' especially young learners.

From the problems above, alternative possibility to improve students' ability is using reciprocal questioning. The researcher expects that applying reciprocal questioning technique is appropriate to be one of problem solution. According to King, reciprocal questioning can create thoughts, which help to plan and monitor what is being learned by the student.⁵

Reciprocal questioning or ReQuest is one part of critical thinking technique. ReQuest technique helps students read more critically and

⁴ As cited in Correia, R, "*Encouraging Critical Reading in the EFL Classroom*"(PDF) English Teaching Forum (Brazil, 2006),16

⁵ A.King (1989). Effects of Self-Questioning Training on College Students Comprehension of Lectures. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 14, 366-381.

consider whether the text was meant to inform, influence, or merely entertain readers.⁶ In this process the students will share their opinions through discussing to determine and identify the questions of the text, and then analyze the answers of the questions that they made.

According to Tomitch:

In this technique, the students are asked to prepare in groups two questions they thought would be answered in the text. The students write their questions on slips of paper, which are collected and reproduced on the blackboard. The while reading activity required the students to read the text for the purpose of answering the questions they had raised. Then, the students identify and discussion the answers of the questions in the text.⁷

The researcher takes at SMA Islam Jepara. This school is considered as an appropriate subject of this research, because based on the preliminary study that was done by the researcher and information that was gotten by interviewing Mrs. Anis as the English teacher of tenth grade students about her class especially when the focus of the lesson is on reading skill. The researcher makes sure that reciprocal questioning is possible to be applied in this school and that it never have been taught in the tenth grade.

Based on the interview, the researcher found that there was a problem in the students' ability to comprehend reading texts. The teacher found that a lot of students who are still struggling to understand content of the text well. This happened especially when the text is in the form of

⁶⁶ As cited in Correia, R, "*Encouraging Critical Reading in the EFL Classroom*" ...,11

⁷⁷ As cited in Correia, R, "*Encouraging Critical Reading in the EFL Classroom*" ...,18

descriptive text. The students find it difficult to understand the generic structure of descriptive text and when they are asked to comprehend some descriptive texts, they cannot do the task well.

In teaching reading text in SMA Islam Jepara still uses KTSP curriculum. Descriptive text is one of the material that recommended by the government to teach in tenth grade in KTSP curriculum. In this research, the researcher focuses on descriptive text because based on the problem.

Previous studies in ReQuest have been conducted by some research in ReQuest. First was conducted by Afida, her research about using reciprocal questioning in SMK Saltiga and the result shows that there was significant improvement when the researcher used pretest and posttest.⁸

The second research was conducted by Nudzila, her research about using reciprocal teaching at SMA Negeri 13 Surabaya. The result of her research is the score of the exercises showed that their ability in understanding narrative text has improved.⁹

These researches wanted to know the improvement that occur when the teacher applied reciprocal questioning for the students. The

⁸ AniAfida, *Improving students' reading comprehension using reciprocal questioning technique (a classroom action research in SMK Diponegoro Salatiga in 2007/2008 academic year)*. Journal thesis (Surakarta - PascaSarjana– 2008) accessed on april 2nd 2013

⁹ Rizqy Amanatul Nudzila, *Using Reciprocal Teaching to Improve Reading Skill of Narrative Text of the Tenth Graders at SMA Negeri 13 Surabaya*, (Language and Arts Faculty UNESA 2010)

results showed that the use of reciprocal questioning can improve their reading ability.

In conclusion, based on all those explanation, the researcher want to conduct research entitled “*The Effectivness of Reciprocal Questioning (ReQuest) toward Students’ Ability Reading Descriptive Text: An Experimental Study of the Tenth Grade Students at SMA Islam Jepara*” because there seem to be some difficulties that are faced by students in understanding descriptive reading texts. Therefore, after observing the students’ difficulties, the researcher will try to identify and analyze those difficulties so that the result of this research can be used for both of the students and the teacher to improve the teaching and learning process.

B. Statement of Research Problem

Based on the background of the study, the study is directed to applying reciprocal questioning technique to improve students’ reading descriptive text to the tenth grade of SMA Islam Jepara. Therefore, the problem of the study can be formulated as follow:

Is the students’ ability in reading descriptive text improved by the use reciprocal questioning teaching technique?

C. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to know the improvement of students’ ability in reading descriptive text by using reciprocal questioning teaching technique in students’ reading score.

D. Scope and Limitation of the Study

Based on the focus of this study, the scope of this research is separated into two parts. The first part is focus on the implementation ReQuest of descriptive text in teaching reading and the second part is this research will take the tenth grade students at SMA Islam Jepara 2013/2014 academic year. Yet, this research is limited the students' reading achievement between students who were taught by ReQuest and who were taught by non- ReQuest.

E. Significance of the Study

By the end of the research, the researcher hopes that this research can give advantages to teachers, students, researchers and readers.

1. For the teachers, the result of the study will contribute to the new method of teaching reading using reciprocal questioning technique at SMA Islam Jepara.
2. For the students, the applying of reciprocal questioning technique can useful for the students to help them improve their ability in comprehending descriptive text.
3. For the researchers and readers, the result of the study is expected to be useful to enrich the insight and knowledge of the effect of reciprocal questioning method in tenth graders' achievement in comprehending descriptive text.

F. Definition of Key terms

1. The effectiveness: according to Sugiyono, the effectiveness means that effective to improve the students' ability through score.¹⁰ In this research effectiveness to improve students' reading ability through score, it means that the students who were taught reading descriptive text using ReQuest got higher score than who were not. The effectiveness of ReQuest improves the tenth grade students' reading descriptive text, it is determined from the result score of experimental group. If the posttest score of experimental group shows significant score improvement, so that ReQuest is effective to improve the students' reading ability.
2. Reciprocal Questioning: a technique to help improvement students' reading comprehension.¹¹ The students make questions and predict the content of the text. The questions provide students with a purpose for reading.
3. Descriptive text: the text that describes things, person, a place, pet, or plants especially.¹²

¹⁰ Sugiyono. *Statistika untuk Penelitian*. (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2010).

¹¹ M. L Tomitch, *Designing Reading Tasks to Foster Critical Thinking*, (Ilha do Desterr 38 2000), 83-90

¹² Rohmadi AF, *Be Smart to Face Final Exam*, (Jepara: Mongot's Design and art 2008), 12