

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides background of the study, research questions, research purposes, scope of the research, and significance of the research. Additionally, clarification of related terms and paper organization are also presented.

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is an activity that cannot be separated in daily life because it often helps people to get much important information from internet, book, newspaper, magazine and so on. Similarly, in the academic context especially in learning English language, reading also plays an important role because through reading, students can enlarge their knowledge and their vocabularies (Othman, 2012; Storckad, 2011). Moreover, reading is a useful media to facilitate students in learning language such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and the way of constructing sentences, paragraphs, and texts (Harmer, 2001). Then, it can be said that the reading skill has been a prominent part in supporting people life and has been concerned for teachers and experts to enhance the students' reading skill at school especially for EFL students.

To make EFL students at school master the reading skill is quite challenging. Most students still face difficulties in reading particularly in comprehending what is written in the text (McNamara, 2009; Harvey 2008). This condition is shown by some students who tend to find more problems in understanding how the words come together in each sentence and in recognizing the relationships between the sentences and the meaning of the text as a whole (Tovani 2000; Blank, 2006; McNamara, 2009). Whereas, in a reading process, without being able to construct meaning in the text or students just read the word, they will become a fake reader or "a slave to the

actual printed word" (Young, 1989, p. 760, cited in Prado & Plourado, 2011, "Review related literature, para.1).

In Indonesian students particularly those sitting in the first grade of senior high school, are required, as stated in the curriculum, to be able to comprehend as a minimum one among of text types, for example the narrative text. However, most of them are still considered struggling to understand a narrative text (Nancy and Ronald, 2010; Aryati, 2012; Arianty, 2013). They get difficulties in understanding the story because they rarely use their background knowledge to use the structures of narrative text, which has been learnt before in junior high school. In comprehending process knowing the structure of narrative text is necessary to identify information such as characters, places, and problems within story (Nancy and Ronald, 2010). Hence, they usually find the meaning through word by word translation (conventional way) because some of them do not know the other ways (Arianty, 2013). In short, they lack reading strategies; it is mostly led by teachers teaching reading in conventional way without promoting the effective reading strategies and motivating students by interesting activities (Aryati, 2012). Consequently, students often fail in constructing meanings convey in the sentences and the story as a whole. So when students try to comprehend a narrative text, they increasingly feel difficult to understand it.

In this case furthermore, some studies regard giving students the effective reading strategies as helpful alternative for students to resolve their problems in comprehending text (Harvey, 2008; McNamara, 2009; Brown, 2000; Prado & Plourado, 2011). Through the effective reading strategies provided by teachers, students will employ activities that can help them to achieve comprehension in reading a narrative text effectively and strategically such as connect their prior knowledge and experiences with the story, identify and use text structure information (Erten & Muge, n.d). Additionally, the inclusion of a Reading Strategies Strand in English Language Arts College Board Standards for College Success (2006 in

McNamara, 2009) states that reading strategies are essential tools, “not only for successful comprehension, but also for overcoming reading problems and becoming a better reader and comprehender” (p.34). In conclusion, students in the first grade of senior high school require the effective strategies to enhance their reading comprehension of narrative texts.

One of effective reading strategies in order to improve student’s reading comprehension is metacognitive strategy, which is proposed by Cubucku (2008), Salataci & Akyel (2002), and Carrell, (1998). The strategy is described as “higher order executive skills that consist of planning for monitoring or evaluating the success of mental activity” (Chamot et. al., 1990 cited in Yusuf, 2010, p.22). As Salataci & Akyel (2002) agree this strategy gives students opportunity to monitor or regulate cognitive process in this study refers to the progress of understanding when reading a text. Students’ thought, perception and experiences are also prepared to directly interact with text (Locus, 2003 cited in Othman, 2012; Carrell, 1998) so students will understand the text better. In relation to advantages of metacognitive strategy above the strategy is likely to be appropriate to resolve students’ problems in comprehending narrative texts because of lack of reading strategies. Since the strategies can build up students’ knowledge of awareness and control towards the use of some strategies to improve their own reading comprehension (Zhang, 2013).

Furthermore, the research about metacognitive strategy for teaching reading has been conducted by several researchers with successful results. Othman (2012) in his study has investigated pre-university students in Brunei Darussalam who faced difficulties in understanding a factual and a narrative text to use metacognitive strategy. And the result has shown that metacognitive strategy was improving students’ reading comprehension including students with high and low proficiency reading achievement. While, Zhang (2013) has evidenced that Chinese University students, who used frequently metacognitive strategy in reading some text types

including narrative text such as making marks, checking, seeking help, and writing a summary, using some thinking strategies could increase their reading performance more effectively and strategically. In a similar note, metacognitive strategy also have improved students' reading comprehension at Ma'an secondary school for girls, who faced difficulties in comprehending Arabic text, at three levels of comprehension; literal, analytic, and evaluative (Al-Alwan, 2012).

Nevertheless, in Indonesia only few studies are related to the implementation metacognitive strategy in improving students' reading comprehension in English text especially narrative text. Thus, this study, expected to fill the gap of the research of teaching reading through metacognitive strategy, aims to explore on contribution of metacognitive strategy in improving students' reading comprehension of narrative texts in the first grade of senior high school as the focus of this study. Besides, this study also tried to discover students' responses towards metacognitive strategy to improve their reading comprehension of narrative texts through an action research.

1.2 Research Questions

This research was conducted based on the questions below:

1. To what extent does the implementation of metacognitive strategy help students in the first grade of senior high school to improve their reading comprehension of narrative texts?
2. What are the students' responses towards the implementation of metacognitive strategy in improving their reading comprehension of narrative texts?

1.3 Research Purposes

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The purposes of this research were answered based on the research questions above, stated as follow:

1. to explore to what extent the implementation of metacognitive strategy helps students in the first grade of senior high school to improve their reading comprehension of narrative texts.
2. to find out students' responses towards the implementation of metacognitive strategy in improving their reading comprehension of narrative texts.

1.4 Scope of the Research

The research only focuses on exploring the contribution of the implementation of metacognitive strategy in improving students' reading comprehension, which is taken from classroom observation. Moreover, this research also concerns on finding out students' responses toward the implementation of the strategy in reading process, which is taken from questionnaire and interview. Therefore, the limitations are made such as; text that is used in teaching reading is only narrative texts and the participants is one class, consists of 45 students in the first grade of senior high school. Students' reading comprehension achievement is described through comprehension level proposed by Barret's taxonomy of reading comprehension.

1.5 The Significance of the Research

There are some contributions that the study may offer. The results of this research are expected to develop the theoretical, practical, and professional benefits in English learning. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the theories and methods in teaching practice of reading through metacognitive strategy while, practically, this research provides some information for the readers who are interested in teaching reading. In addition, for the students who get involved in this study, this approach is expected to develop the students' reading comprehension of narrative

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texts. Then, this research is expected to be a reference for the English teachers to develop an innovative teaching method that is used in the classroom.

Furthermore, professionally, this research is hoped to be a good references for other researchers who are interested in continuing the research on teaching reading through metacognitive strategy deeper.

1.6 The Clarification of Related Terms

There are several terms that are clarified in this study to avoid misunderstanding and to keep the study on the right way, namely:

a. Reading comprehension

Reading is the process of recognizing written or printed words and understanding their meaning, comprehension is the ability to understand something (Macmillan, an English dictionary, 2002). Thus, reading comprehension is defined as the ability to understand the process of recognizing written or printed words and their meaning.

Moreover, according to Harris and Hodges (1995, cited in Torgesen, 2006), reading comprehension is defined as the process of “construction of the meaning of a written text through a reciprocal interchange of ideas between the reader and the message in a particular text, reader and the message in a particular text”. In this study, reading comprehension refers to students’ ability to understand narrative texts including literal comprehension, reorganization comprehension, inferential comprehension, evaluation comprehension and appreciation comprehension. To check students’ reading comprehension of narrative texts, this study utilizes reading test which its questions cover those five level comprehensions.

b. Metacognitive Strategy

Metacognitive strategy is one or more than one detailed plan for achieving success in higher beyond of process is one that connected with recognizing and understanding things in this study refers to text (Macmillan, an English dictionary, 2002; Cambridge, a digital dictionary, 2008).

Furthermore, according to Salataci & Akyel (2002) metacognitive strategy is strategy that its goal is to monitor or regulate cognitive process including "checking the outcome of any attempt to solve a problem, planning one's next move, monitoring the effectiveness of any attempted action, testing, revising, and evaluating one's strategies for learning". Metacognitive strategy in this study is seen as the self-monitoring which requires students to monitor their own progress in understanding text: they have to realize one particular part or word or sentence they do not understand then they have to fix it by using some reading strategies in planning stages, monitoring stage and evaluating stage. This strategy is used to help students in understanding narrative texts.

c. Narrative text

Based on Cambridge, a digital dictionary (2008), narrative is the written words which consist of description of a series of events. While according to Abbot (2008, p.13) a narrative text is text that involves "the presentation of a story, an event or series of event". In this research, narrative text is one of text type that is still considered difficult to be understood by students in the first grade of senior high school. Then, by implementing metacognitive strategy when students read a narrative text, is expected to be able to help students to understand a narrative text better.

1.7 The Organization of the Paper

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This paper will be presented into five chapters, as follow:

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter elaborates background of the study, research questions, research purposes, scope of the research, and significance of the research, clarification of related terms and paper organization.

Chapter II: Theoretical Background

This chapter discusses several theories that are relevant to this study. In detail, this chapter explains about reading, reading comprehension and reading strategy. In addition, the definition of metacognitive strategy, components of metacognitive strategy, teaching metacognitive strategy, the strengths and weaknesses of metacognitive strategy, definition of narrative text, findings on related studies will be elaborated in this chapter.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter describes the methodology that is used to conduct this research. It consists of research design, site and participant, data collection techniques, data analysis, and data analysis procedure.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion

This chapter provides the findings of the research and then elaborates the findings by using several supporting theories and the previous studies in discussion part.

Chapter V: Conclusion

This chapter concludes the overall findings of this study and gives some suggestions in dealing with the same problem that appears in this study.

1.8 Concluding Remark

This chapter has already provided the overview of the background of the study, research questions, research purposes, scope of the research, and significance of

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research. Additionally, clarification of related terms and paper organization also has been presented. The next chapter will introduce some the theoretical background of this study such as definition of reading, reading comprehension and reading strategy. In addition, the definition of metacognitive strategy, components of metacognitive strategy, teaching metacognitive strategy, the strengths and weaknesses of metacognitive strategy, definition of narrative text, findings on related studies also will be presented in this chapter.