CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into nine parts: the background of the study, the reasons for choosing the topic, the research question, the objective of the study, the hypothesis of the study, the limitation of the study, the significance of the study, the definition of key terms, and the organization of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

Kridalaksana (1993) says that language is a symbol system of sounds of an arbitrary language that enables people to cooperate, interact, and identify. With language, people can communicate and interact with each other. They cooperate with each other, and they can identify something by using language. According to Wibowo (2001), language is a system of symbols that is meaningful and articulates sounds that are arbitrary and common, which is used as a means of communication by a group of people to express their feelings and thoughts. Therefore, language is a symbol which is enable people to refer to object. Language is meaningful and can be understood by people. Moreover, everybody express their feelings with language, and they share with each other about what they thoughts.

English is one of languages which serve as an important tool of global communication. It is because most people around the world communicate by using English. In Indonesia, English has become a foreign language, it is also

taught in the national curriculum that every school has to follow. It is learned by the students from elementary school until university. English has four skills to be mastered such as: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Studying English should cover these four skills, so that the students are able to use English in communication.

Reading is one of skills which should be developed in the classroom. Hung and Tzeng (2007) argue that reading is the quickly and modestly way to increase people's educational level. Reading is like a window to the world, by reading people can know many things about the world as well as broaden their insight and knowledge. According to Grabe and Stoller (2002) reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and to interpret the information accurately. Reading can be defined as a process in which a person receives and interprets a message from printed materials. Reading is a process of how information is processed from the text into meaning, starting with the information from the text, and ending with what the readers concluded. Briefly, reading is a process of constructing the author's ideas and information.

According to Lipson and Wixson (2003: 23), "Reading comprehension is the ability to use previously acquired information to construct meaning for a given text". Construct meaning means that determined content of the text. Moreover, Prapphal (2003, cited in Setiasih, 2015: 3) has summarized, "Reading comprehension can be facilitated by teaching readers about structure of expository texts and by teaching strategies for identifying and utilizing the structure during the reading process".

In senior high school, students should read some texts to understand it, because reading is included in core competence, as reflected in syllabus and the curriculum. However, they do not know how to comprehend the texts. In other hand, the students are not interested in reading text, and they thought that reading an English text is boring and stressful. Besides that, Zuhra (2015:430) found that the students of senior high school still find difficulties in reading comprehension. Many students make lots of mistake in English reading comprehension questions. Most of the students failed to answer the question correctly because of weakness in understanding the reading.

One of the text types students have to learn in senior high school is biography text, as reflected in syllabus and the curriculum. As stated by Iwai (2007) the learners find difficulties in understanding in expository text, like biography text, it is because the text has specific text structures, contain technical vocabulary, and require readers to have background knowledge. This causes the learners to feel that it is difficult to comprehend.

Furthermore, the students need a strategy to help them in comprehending texts. Nowadays, many teaching methods and techniques are offered to facilitate teachers in developing their students' ability in reading. One of those techniques known to improve students' reading ability is chunking. According to Stevens (1981) in chunking who the readers taught with chunking the scored better than those who were taught without chunking. The students can chunk the text depending on the text, such as genre, length, structure, and type; determine how a text should be chunked such as: paragraphs, stanza, scene, section, chapter, page,

line, sentence segments, etc. Chunking is an example of a strategy that helps student's breakdown longer text into smaller. Dividing content into smaller parts helps students identify key words and ideas, develops students ability to paraphrase, and makes it easier for students to organize and synthesize information. Based on the explanation above, the researcher considers that chunking can be a useful technique for students for improving their reading comprehension.

Thus, considering the backgrounds above, the researcher would like to conducted a study entitled "The Effectiveness of Using Chunking Technique to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension in Biography Texts to the Eleventh Grade Students of SMK Negeri 2 Demak in the Academic Year of 2017/2018".

1.2. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

There were some reasons for choosing the topic as follows:

1. Based on the researcher's experience during her teaching practice, the researcher found that the eleventh graders of SMK Negeri 2 Demak still faced difficulties in reading comprehension.

2. According to previous studies, using chunking can help the students to aid reading comprehension, determining the main idea, and comprehending text.

3. Biography texts are chosen because students can learn from the experiences of the characters in the biography text. The biography text also can be an encouragement and motivation for students. In addition, biography texts are regarded as difficult to comprehend based on Iwai (2007).

1.3. Research Question

There was one question of this research:

Is chunking technique effective to improve students' reading comprehension in biography texts to the eleventh grade students of SMK Negeri 2 Demak in the academic year of 2017/2018?

1.4. Objective of the Study

Based on the research question above, the objective of study was to investigate whether chunking technique was effective to improve students' reading comprehension in biography texts to the eleventh grade students of SMK Negeri 2 Demak in the academic year of 2017/2018.

1.5. Hypotheses of the Study

Airasian (2000) states that hypothesis is a researcher's tentative prediction of the result findings. The hypotheses of this study were:

H0 : There was no significant difference in the mean score between the students who were taught by using chunking and the students who were taught without using chunking technique.

H1 : There was a significant difference in the mean score between the students who were taught by using chunking and the students who were taught without using chunking technique.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

This research was limited in improving students' reading comprehension in biography texts for eleventh grade students of SMK Negeri 2 Demak. Chunking is one of the effective reading strategies for students to challenge and make them feel comfortable in reading (Anshel, 1985; Giddings, 1986). The researcher only focused in biography texts because the students can learn and get motivation or inspiration from someone's biography. Furthermore, the researcher only focuses on the 4 goals which refer to generic structure of biography texts.

1.7. Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes that this study can give benefits for some aspects, such as:

1. Pedagogical Significance

   a. This study is expected to show the applicability of chunking technique in teaching reading comprehension.

   b. This study is expected to improve students' reading comprehension in biography texts.

2. Practical Significance

   a. This study is expected to be a role model for an alternative teaching technique for English teachers in teaching reading.

1.8. Definition of the Key Terms

a. Chunking

Casteel (1988) defines chunking as the grouping of word in a sentence into short meaning full phrases. The students can chunk the text depending on the text, such as genre, length, structure, and type; determine how a text should be chunked such as: paragraphs, stanza, scene, section, chapter, page, line, sentence segments, etc.

b. Reading Comprehension

According to Lipson and Wixson (2003: 23), "Reading comprehension is the ability to use previously acquired information to construct meaning for a given text".

c. Biography Texts

Based on Keraf (1997) that biography is a text which tells about detailed life of a person and her experiences. It tells such as childhood, family, education, career, relationships and death. The biography also tells about feelings events occurred in the life of a person. Biography described in detail the life of someone from childhood to old age, even to death.

1.9. Outline of the Study

This study consists of five chapters as follows:

Chapter I presents the introduction; this chapter is divided into nine parts: background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, research question,

objectives of the study, hypothesis of the study, limitation of the study, significance of the study, definition of key terms, and outline of the study.

Chapter II is review of the related literature; in this chapter the researcher discusses and outlines some theories related to research including reading, reading comprehension, biography, chunking, and review of the previous studies.

Chapter III discusses research method, including the research design, subject of the study, variable of the study, instrument of the study, validity and reliability, technique of data collection, procedure of the study, and technique of data analysis.

Chapter IV discusses the Description of the School, Subjects of the Study, Instrument Validity and Reliability, Homogeneity, Pre-Test, Treatment, Post-Test, T-Test Analysis and the Discussion of the Research Findings.

Chapter V discusses conclusion of the research and suggestions for the English teacher, the students, and for the future researchers.