

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes about the background of the study, the reasons for choosing the topic, the research question, the objective of the study, the hypothesis, the limitation of the study, the significance of the study, the definitions of key terms, and the outline of the study.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are basic skills to learn English properly. Those skills are categorized into productive and receptive skills. Brown (2004: 118) defines that the productive skills of speaking and writing allow us to hear the process as it is performed. Receptive skills, then, are clearly the more enigmatic of the two modes of performance (listening and reading). Those skills are needed most especially for those who learn English as foreign language, since English is not their main language.

We can identify the result of speaking and writing directly after students are done with their speaking or writing test. In contrast, listening and reading results can not be shown directly after they proceed it. That is why receptive skills was ever be claimed as passive skills. In fact, sometimes when students' understanding of text are measured (giving test) by a teacher, students have to make it in a written form to answer some given questions or even they should speak up to explain if the test was an oral test. And it will be making an assumption like "when their speaking

or writing are incorrect, their reading are incorrect too”. It showed a lot how reading related to other skills. Moreover, reading failure that happens to students who has never learned English regularly in early educational process will affect their ability to succeed any educational environments; elementary, secondary and post-secondary. Since the society always grows and people are always expected to improve better as proposed by Agramonte and Belfiore (2002: 181). Therefore, reading is an important skill that must be taught properly in the process of learning English.

In the process of reading, writers usually transfer their thoughts to the readers while readers will try to get the thoughts that writers sent. With a limited knowledge, misunderstanding could happen anytime in this case. Therefore, making students better in reading will affect them much to the way they extract the content which lead them to have better motivation in classroom activity as Sitwat and Zyngier (2012: 261) claim that motivation guides learners’ interest into important learning activities. At last, this could help teachers to build a good environment. The better students extract the information, the better the environment will be.

Meanwhile, it is not something easy for non-native English speakers to learn about English. Especially to those who started English from basic. They will have such difficulties from extracting content, vocabularies, translating etc. According to Agramonte and Belfiore ((2002: 181) cited in Roller (2000: 626–39)), reading covers all learning processes, and reading play a role as an input in learning, once the input is poor, it will affect the output too. It means that there will be nothing

good happening to students who have such difficulties and this should be helped little by little in order to make them better in learning English. Moreover, once students find out such difficulty in English, they tend to have less motivation which will make them inactive in the classroom or even in the teaching learning process. The more students are not participating in learning, the more ineffective the class will be.

In Indonesia, some teachers usually teach English material in fun ways. This is because English has to be fun so that students will never have such "English is hard" assumption in their mind. Generally, Indonesian students have troubles on translating, extracting content, or when they understand in Bahasa Indonesia but can not tell in English due to lack of the memorized terms, even in telling generic structure of a text. To help students in solving their problems in learning English, teachers need to find a good method, strategy or technique to make it easier for students to learn. Especially something that can help them better in reading whether it is from how they identify the text genre, text structure or even the content.

In English, there are so many genre of texts. And each text are mostly structured by a generic structure. By identifying those genre well, it could help students to catagorize any text they find in English. But for young Indonesian student, as written before, they tend to have limited vocabulary so they will have difficulty on identifying and remembering new terms. Hirsch (2006: 2) asserts that the basic knowledge of vocabularies and content understanding is very important to successful reading comprehension. Therefore, students should have better knowledge about how the texts are structured. By memorizing and identifying

generic structure well, it will help much students in their reading process. Moreover, it will help them much to understand the content of English text.

There are so many ways to easily help student's learning, especially in memorizing. Mnemonics is one of those ways. According to Yates ((1996: 1) cited in Soemer & Schwan (2012: 2)), mnemonics are not new, it were well known techniques since Greek age. It was used to help some orators to manage their speech. Therefore, this technique can be used to help students to make such oral presentation in class after reading and comprehending a text. In Indonesia, mnemonics technique is usually called as *jembatan keledai*. *Jembatan keledai* is a used term to describe asses/donkey that is represented as "inexperienced person" who tend to have same pattern of problem on learning and the bridge is a technique that help that donkey to pass. Once they know how to build a bridge, solving problems at next level will be easy for them.

The researcher hopes that this technique could help much to improve student's reading comprehension in recount text. Since this technique take briefly all partial points into easiest form to memorize.

## **1.2 Reasons for Choosing the Topic**

There are many reasons why "The Use of Acrostic Mnemonics To Improve Student's Reading Comprehension in Recount Text" is chosen as the topic of this study. First, reading is an essential part of language skill. By reading, students could get much important information to develop other skills. Moreover,

reading could help students much on how they extract information in context which will lead them to understand text better on any level.

Second, students who have English as not their main language tend to get confused to find a suitable technique to help them better on learning English especially in reading and comprehending it. Third, mnemonics have been used for a long time to improve memory potential of human being. It is usually used for memorizing in order to help people to have better memory. Since this technique has not been used in this school, researcher would like to know how Acrostic mnemonics can improve students' reading comprehension in recount text. Therefore, the result of reading tests will reflect students' improvement in understanding the information of a text. Moreover, the researcher would like to discuss factors which can improve students' ability in comprehending a text. Later, it can be used to develop better technique which can be applied in teaching English text.

### **1.3 Research Question**

Based on the background above, the formulation of research question is stated as follows: Is the use of Acrostic Mnemonics effective to improve students' reading comprehension in recount text of the eighth graders at SMP N 4 Sukatani in the academic year 2016/2017?

#### **1.4 Objective of the Study**

Based on the research question above, the objective of the study is stated as follows: To investigate whether the use of Acrostic Mnemonics is effective to improve students' reading comprehension in recount text of the eighth graders at SMP N 4 Sukatani in the academic year 2016/2017.

#### **1.5 Hypothesis**

In this study, the researcher used two hypotheses.

Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant difference in students' reading comprehension between students who are taught by using acrostic mnemonic and those who are taught without using acrostic mnemonic in the eighth graders of SMP N Sukatani in the academic year of 2016/2017.

Alternative hypothesis (Ha): There is significant difference in students' reading comprehension between students who are taught by using acrostic mnemonic and those who are taught without using acrostic mnemonic in the eighth graders of SMP N Sukatani in the academic year of 2016/2017.

#### **1.6 Limitation of the Study**

By using acrostic mnemonics, the researcher tried to apply it to 8<sup>th</sup> grade of SMP N 4 Sukatani in the academic year 2016/2017. The researcher hoped that this technique would really help much on improving student's

comprehension in recount text, especially for junior high school who started it from basic.

### **1.7 Significances of the Study**

By conducting the research about acrostic mnemonic technique, the researcher expects that the research has some significances. They are as follows:

#### **(1) Pedagogically**

Hopefully, the result of the study can be used by teachers to create a student-centered environment since teachers know the result of this technique and student knew how to use it. Therefore, a student-centered environment of learning can be made properly. Moreover, it can be such an inspiration to teachers for using mnemonic to help students in their learning process and it could be modified better to make more fun teaching variation in classroom.

#### **(2) Practically**

The results of the study are hoped to give benefits for teachers, the students, and the future researchers.

For teachers, they will know how effective this technique to help students' mastery of reading skill and comprehension, and also as a reflection in order to increase and develop their method in teaching reading.

For students, it will make them recognize the technique better and they can use it anytime they needed it. So they could enjoy the way to learn English as they identify better.

For future researchers, they can use the result of this study as a reference to their study that related to this topic.

### **1.8 Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding, the researcher will define the technical term that is used in this study as follows:

#### **(1) Mnemonic**

According to Congos (2006: 1), mnemonics are memory devices that help learners recall larger pieces of information, especially in the form of lists like characteristics, steps, stages, parts, phases, etc.

There are 9 many types of mnemonic. They are: Music/song , Name (Acronym, Acrostic), Expression/Word, Model, Ode/Rhyme, Note Organization, Image, Connection, and Spelling Mnemonics.

#### **(2) Acrostic Mnemonics**

Bakken and Simpson (2011: 80) define acrostic mnemonics are a sentence that is created to facilitate person to remember letters. These letters became a clue to the main information. It is designed to be familiar or easy so all user could be interested to memorize it.



### **1.9 Outline of the Study**

To make readers easier to understand this study, the the researcher makes an outline about how the parts are structured. In this proposal writing, there are 3 chapters as the outline of the study. They are as below:

Chapter I covers introduction: The background of study, the reason for choosing the topic, the research question, the objective of the study, the hypothesis, the limitation of the study, the significance of the study, the definition of the key terms and the outline of the study are things that is explained in this chapter.

Chapter II is about review of related litelature. This chapter has general concept of reading, teaching reading for junior high school in Indonesia, mnemonic, and the review of previous studies.

Chapter III covers the research method. This chapter explains the research design, the subject of the study, the variables, the research instrument, the try out, the validity of the test, the reliability of the test, the research procedure, the scoring technique, and the procedure of data analysis.

Chapter VI is about the school profile, the subject of the study, the validity and the reliability of research instrument, the pre-test analysis, the treatment, the t-test analysis in the post-test, and the discussion of the research findings.

Chapter V covers conclusion and suggestions from the research.