CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Research

Reading is a process to get the meaning of the text by using the reader’s understanding. Through reading, the students can get experience that will increase their knowledge. Nunan (1991: 70) states that reading is a dynamic process in the text elements interact with the reader’s knowledge of experimental content of the text. It is supported by Mackay (1997: 19) in Simanjuntak (1998: 15) states that reading is an active process to understand printed language with interaction between thought and language by using the reader’s knowledge.

From definition mentioned previously, reading is an important skill that should be mastered by the students. By mastering reading skill, the students would have good reading comprehension. Nowadays, comprehending the text is the problem that the students face in reading. The problem caused by the characteristics of reading which has very complex learning, these are decoding knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, discourse knowledge, and syntactic knowledge (Leu, 1987: 30).

Based on pre-observation done on the 16th of November 2012, the researcher noted major problem faced by VIII G grade students’ of SMP Negeri 2 Adipala in reading classes. The students felt difficult to comprehend the text and answer some questions from the text. There were many factors causing the students low in reading comprehension, namely: (1) lack of
vocabulary, (2) poor grammatical, (3) and teacher talking time (TTT) was high.

Based on the problems described previously, the English teacher and the researcher try to solve this problem by using jigsaw technique to improve student’s reading comprehension. Slavin (2005: 237) argues that jigsaw is one of the cooperative learning strategies where the students work in teams in which each team consists of 4 until 5 students and each student become expert. Each expert receives different sub topic material. Through jigsaw technique, the students can be more interested in joining teaching learning process.

Further, there are several advantages of using jigsaw technique, in which (1) students have opportunities to teach themselves, instead of having material presented them, (2) they have a chances to contribute meaningfully to discussion, something that is difficult to achieve in large group discussion, (3) they are able to develop an expertise and has something important to contribute (Mengduo&Xiaoling, 2010: 4).

On the other hand, jigsaw also has disadvantages, such as; (1) it takes much time to organize the group. The teacher should make groups that combine the students who have different intelligences, (2) the class situation become noisy, so the teacher needs to control the students (Mengduo&Xiaoling, 2010: 4).

Finally, the used of jigsaw technique in reading activities was expected to give several contributions in terms of curriculum and pedagogy. First, jigsaw technique was expected to give contribution in educational
environment, particularly in syllabus and lesson plans. The learning materials in the syllabus would be easier to deliver by using jigsaw technique, because the students work in group and it could make students easier to understand the learning material. Second, in the terms of pedagogy, the teacher was able to understand theory and practice of jigsaw technique. Hopefully, jigsaw technique would make students more interested to join the teaching and learning process. The students would be autonomous learners, because they work in group and the teacher’s role was a facilitator during teaching learning process. In addition, this technique could stimulate students to improve the knowledge as well as create interpersonal and team skill.

B. The Reasons for Choosing the Topic

There were several reasons to choose this topic, namely: (1) the students have limited vocabulary, (2) they have low reading comprehension, and (3) teachers do not have variations of teaching techniques in reading classes. Therefore, jigsaw is selected to improve students’ reading comprehension.

C. Problem of the Research

Based on the background of the research, the problem of the research was as follows:

“Is jigsaw technique able to improve students’ reading comprehension?”

D. Aim of the Research
The aim of this research was “to improve students’ reading comprehension through jigsaw technique”.