

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

The role of reading is very important in learning English. Through reading, we can get and expand our knowledge and get more information. Therefore, we need a lot of practice to support our reading activity. According to Leu (1987: 9), reading is a developmental, interactive, and global process involving learned skill.

Kustaryo (1988:11-12) states that reading with comprehension means understanding what has been read. It depends not only on comprehension skills but also on experiences and prior knowledge. Comprehension involves understanding the vocabulary, seeing the relationship among words and concepts, organizing ideas, recognizing the author's purpose, making judgements, and evaluating.

Based on English syllabus of the eighth grade, the students learned reading, especially to read the functional text and short essay clearly in the form of recount text by expression, stress, and intonation that related to the surrounding area. There were only two kinds of text that were learned by the students, and they were recount text and narrative text.

Based on the pre-observation result and interview with the English teacher and students. There were problems of teacher and students that found in pre-observation. The teacher's problems were still low in conditioning the students into the group of learning reading and giving

appreciation for the students in teaching and learning process. The students' problems were still low in comprehending English reading of recount texts, especially to understand the characteristics text and the vocabularies and comprehend the main idea of texts.

There were three factors causing the student's competence low in reading recount text. *First*, the students had a lack of vocabulary, difficulty of understanding some words that they did not know the meaning of the text, and they seldom bring the dictionary. *Second*, the students had not felt fun in learning of English reading. *Third*, the students had less bravery to deliver their ideas or opinions to others about the text.

Based on the problems above, the teacher gave a positive response and new technique in reading learning concretely and objectively which could be used to improve student's reading competence of recount text in the class. To overcome these problems, the researcher and the teacher considered cooperative learning technique of CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) as an appropriate technique to improve student's competence in reading recount text.

According to Robert E. Slavin (2005: 200), CIRC is a comprehensive program for teaching reading, writing, and language art in the upper elementary and middle grades. uses a single text that in learning reading by using CIRC technique of the students are taught in reading groups and then return to mix ability team to work on a series of cognitively engaging

activities, such as reading to one another (reading partner), making predictions about the text, summarizing text/stories, and vocabularies.

According to Fitzgerald and Spiegel (1983), the main purpose of CIRC is to help the students in learning their competence and comprehend by using cooperative teams which can be made application widely. The students work in group to identify five essential features of each text. They were the characteristic, background of event, problem, and the last solution.

According to Stevens, Madden, Slavin, and Farnish (1987), CIRC consists of three principal elements: direct instruction in reading comprehension, treasure hunt activities, and integrated language arts and writing. Treasure hunts are worksheets that include comprehension of questions, prediction of guidelines, new vocabularies to be learned, story retell, and story related writing suggestions. In all of these activities students work in heterogeneous learning teams of four. All activities follow a series of steps which involve teacher's presentation, team practice, independent practice, peer pre-assessment, additional practice, and testing.

According to Eni Maesaroh (2010), the use of CIRC in teaching and learning reading is appropriate technique to solve the students' problem of reading recount text. The students are more active and confidence to share their ideas or opinions and make the students to be democratizes. But, this technique spends much time and the teacher is difficult to manage the material, which is issued or given.

The researcher and the teacher used Classroom Action Research (CAR). Wijaya Kusumah and Dedi Dwitagama (2010: 9) say that CAR is a research done by teacher in his/her class by doing of planning, implementing, and reflecting of action collaboratively and participatively with the purpose of repairing of the performance as a teacher, so that the result of students' learning can increase well.

The researcher was interested in making a research from those problems. The researcher chosen CIRC technique to solve these problems, because the researcher thought that CIRC could be enjoyable for the students in learning of English reading and students could learn reading in group (asking and giving opinion). Thus, she carried out this research entitled "An effort to improve the students' competence in reading recount text by using CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) technique at the eighth grade year of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Purwokerto in the academic year 2011/2012."

B. The Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The reasons in choosing the topic were caused by the fact that some of the students at the eighth grade year of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Purwokerto had some problems of reading in the academic year 2011/2012.

1. Reading is one of the main problems that is faced by everyone who learns English as a foreign language especially for junior high school students, especially reading recount text. Recount text was one of difficult texts for the students.

2. Based on pre-observation result, the researcher found that many students still feel difficulty to comprehend an English reading, especially recount text. Therefore, the researcher tried to solve this problem by improving students' competence in reading recount text by using CIRC technique.
3. The researcher assumed that CIRC technique could help the students to improve their competence in reading recount text. It could motivate the students to be more active in classroom activity when the English reading lesson was done.

C. The Problem of Research

Based on the background of the research, the problem of the research was stated by the following question:

“Can CIRC technique improve students' competence in reading recount text at the eighth grade year of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Purwokerto in the academic year 2011/2012?”

D. The Aim of Research

The aim of this research was to improve the students' competence in reading recount text by using CIRC technique at the eighth grade year of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Purwokerto in the academic year 2011/2012.

E. The Clarification of Terms

To understand the topic more easily, essential terms of this research classified as following terms.

1. Improve

According to Kellerman (1976: 483), “improve or improving” is to bring, to make more desirable and an excellent condition. This improving is to make someone or something better than before. According to Hornby (1995: 598), “improve” is to become or make something or process of becoming or making something better. In this case, the meaning of improving is to make the students’ quality and achievement better in their language learning, especially in comprehending reading well.

2. Student

Oemar Hamalik (2001: 99-100) states that students are one of the most important components in teaching process. Without the students, there is no the teaching process because the students need the teaching and learning process.

3. Reading Skill

Manser (1980: 378) states, “skill is ability to do something well”. Therefore, reading skill means ability to look and understand the meaning of writting or printing the material of the texts.

4. CIRC Technique

“CIRC is a comprehensive program for teaching reading, writing, and art language in the upper elementary and middle grades. It uses a single text that in learning reading by using CIRC technique of the students are taught in reading groups and then return to mix ability team to work on a series of cognitively engaging activities, such as reading to one another (reading partner), making predictions about the text, summarizing text/stories, and vocabulary. Students work in teams to master the main idea and other comprehension skills (Slavin, 1995: 7).

F. The Contribution of Research

The topic had important material in the teaching and learning achievement in English, so the researcher had deep hope that his research could have meaningful contribution towards the improvement of English reading competence for students.

The followings were some specific contributions of this research. *First*, the research would be very useful for students to improve their reading competence of recount text by using CIRC technique that encouraged the sense of cooperation to achieve good mastery in English reading. *Second*, this research was expected to be a starting point for the teachers to create various teaching and learning activities that encouraged the cooperative atmosphere among English learners, especially reading class. *Third*, for the students, reading was something crucial and

indispensable since the success of their study depended on greater part on their ability to read. By using CIRC technique, the students could learn reading class easily, especially reading of recount text. It was realized that reading skill or reading activity would open knowledge and widely gave more understanding, vocabularies and information from the text.

