

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the introduction of the research. In this chapter, there is a background that underlies the reason of choosing this topic, followed by identification of the problems and delimitation of the study. The next part is research questions followed by the objectives of the study. The researcher aims to find out the description of strategies applied by the students during the reading process. The part of significance of the research presents the benefits of the study for students, teachers and other researchers. The last is organization of the chapters which describes the content of each chapter.

### **Background of the Study**

The most important ability for students to gain knowledge is reading. This is because most science is usually written in English (Zoghi et al., 2010). The development of science requires people to deepen their knowledge to be able to create a society which are not left behind by increasingly advanced circumstances. This also happens to students, where they need to study as much as possible that will make them able to compete with other people in the future. Therefore, the ability to read in English is very important.

To be able to read well, the students need suitable strategies, and the strategy must be in accordance with the circumstances of the students. One of the functions of the reading strategies is to shorten the reading period for students. Reading strategies is the broad term used to describe the planned and explicit

actions that help readers translate print to meaning. Meniado (2016) said that “The awareness of having a reading strategy is very important to help students understand a reading process” (p. 119). Reading strategies here are a guide to help students in the process of reading the English text they read, so that they are able to read and understand the text easily and be able to accelerate to add insight into what they read.

At schools, students learn English as a compulsory subject. In their English teaching materials, there are reading texts that they have to understand. The reading texts are usually followed by questions. The students are required to read the texts and master the content of reading. They have to understand what they are reading. This also means students are required to be more responsible for what they have done during reading. By reading, they are able to be able to think more broadly.

However, in the process of reading, especially in their reading academic texts (the texts from coursebook, student worksheets or photocopied text sheets), the students often find difficulties. When the students know the suitable strategies in reading, they will understand the text more easily. According to Yang (2006), “Reading strategies are able to help readers to achieve success from reading failure, that is the readers are able to solve their problems due to lack of language knowledge in understanding textual information” (p. 315). Therefore, the students need to know various reading strategies.

Many people are aware that in reading, especially in reading academic texts, learners have goals that must be achieved but probably not all know that this goal can only be reached if the learners use reading strategies. As stated by Poole (2010) "Learners must use reading strategies in order to plan their reading activity and improve their reading comprehension" (p. 55). Reading strategies are important because they can help learners read and give them a clear sense of direction about what they are actually digesting when reading (Aziz et al., 2011). Similarly, they believed that students have used their own reading strategy without them knowing it. Each student has a different strategy that suits them especially when they have different reading material. However, most of the students who are doing reading activity do not know what reading strategies they are using because they might not know the kinds of reading strategies.

Based on the informal observations made by the researcher at one of the private high school in Yogyakarta, the researcher found several interesting things to study, namely about reading comprehension in English subject. English lessons at these schools are taught by teachers who are experts in their fields. The English teachers delivered these lessons with various methods. However, the researcher found that some students could not understand the contents of the readings or texts they read. They felt difficult in understanding them, which then would affect the teaching and learning process in class. This requires the students prepare strategies that are suitable for them to make them easier to follow the English lessons, especially in reading section. When the teacher instructed the students to read the English text and explained it in front of the class, they seemed anxious

about doing these activities. Several students admitted they were afraid of not being able to understand the reading text. There is possibility that the students are not able to understand the reading text because the strategies they used are not appropriate to help them and make them easier to understand the text they read.

As students' reading strategies may affect the students' understanding on the reading, which later may affect their' broad knowledge, it is important for the teachers to know their students' strategies in reading English text. Hence, based on the background, the researcher was interested in investigating what reading strategies are used by the students at this high school, and which strategy that is mostly used.

### **Identification of the Problem**

The first problem is according to the researcher's previous experience, many students in one private high school in Yogyakarta have problems reading English texts because they do not have specific strategies needed for efficient reading. When students read texts that are not in their native language, many students stated that reading is a very tiring, unpleasant, and unsuccessful activity, no matter how much they try.

The second problem is most EFL learners have difficulty in reading academic texts or materials. Therefore, most EFL learners do not like to read in English especially when reading academic materials. Simply, students just cannot understand what they are reading (Nuttal, 1982, as cited in Chen, K. T. C., & Chen, S. C. L., 2015, p. 157). They may find it difficult to identify

their reading strategies, to begin with. They also have problems to decide what strategies they belong with. They do not know what strategies suit them since their knowledge of reading strategies is low.

### **Delimitation of the Problem**

This research study was only carried out within the scope of the Junior High School students. The setting of this research study is in one of private high schools in Yogyakarta. This research focuses on investigating the strategies of reading used by Junior High School students in the term reading academic materials. The purpose of this study is also to discover the most frequently strategies based on the students' experience.

The reading strategies studied previously have been divided into three categories namely Global Reading Strategies, Problem Solving Strategies, and Support Reading Strategies by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). This research was conducted to analyze which of those three categories that the learners used the most while reading academic materials. In addition, this research also focuses on investigating the most frequently strategies used by Junior High School students.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the research background above, the researcher formulates the research questions as follows:

1. What are the strategies used by Junior High School students when reading academic texts?

2. What are the most frequently reading strategies used by Junior High School students when reading academic texts?

### **Objectives of the Research**

Based on the research questions, the objectives of the research are:

1. To show what reading strategies used by Junior High School students when reading academic texts.
2. To show the most frequently reading strategies used by Junior High School students when reading academic texts.

### **Significance of the Research**

This research aims to give positive benefits for some parties such as the students, teachers, and other researchers.

### ***Students***

This study provides the information of the statistical description of the strategies used by the students. By knowing various reading strategies, the students can try different new strategies. In addition, they can strengthen their reading strategies that they have already used, especially the most convenient ones. Moreover, by knowing the preferences on reading strategies, students are expected to have a recommendation on what strategy they will use.

### ***Teachers***

From this study, the teachers get an insight towards the strategies that most of the students use in their school, so the teachers might encourage their students to use the strategies that are probably still rarely used but considered effective to be applied in the reading process. The teachers also can strengthen their students' convenient strategies.

### ***Next Researchers***

This study might be helpful for other researchers as a reference to conduct more research about strategies used during the reading process. This research might help next researchers who are conducting a research with the same variables. Other researchers can consider this research as a comparison in previous studies of students' perceptions of the reading strategies used, especially the most commonly used.

### **Organization of the Chapters**

This research is arranged into five chapters. Chapter one is introduction which discusses the background of the study, identification of the problems and delimitation of the problem. The research questions are followed by the objectives of the research. The significance of the study and the organization of the chapters are also provided in this chapters. Chapter two provides the literature related to the topic. They are definition of reading, reading academic texts, reading strategies in academic texts, and the last is review of related studies.

Next is chapter three deals with research methodology which describes the approach which is quantitative and survey as the design of the research. It also presents the research setting and participants, data collection method, research instrument and data collection procedure. The last part in chapter three is data analysis. Meanwhile, chapter four presents the findings and discussion. Chapter five provides the conclusion and recommendation.