I. INTRODUCTION

In order to introduce this research, this chapter discusses the background, formulation of problems, objectives of the research, uses, scopes, and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Problems

One of the important aspects for students in learning is reading because of its valuable benefit in developing knowledge. Reading is also the most important skill for EFL learners especially in academic context because reading can lead them to academic success, there is a strong relation between reading and academic success. In other words, students who are poor in reading are considered to be failed in their school.

According to Mahfoodh (2007:1) having good reading proficiency means that the reader has abilities to understand written statements or any type of written texts accurately and efficiently. Naturally, reading skill is very complex as it involves determining main idea, identifying specific information, reference, inference, and vocabulary. Whereas, in the guidelines of school-based curriculum (KTSP), it states that one of the objectives of teaching and learning process in reading skill
for Junior High School is that the students are able to construct meaning from the text.

In addition, Wiryodijoyo (1989) states that the national examination in English subject is a large emphasis on reading aspect, and this situation will assures students who cannot read or comprehend the text and answer the question in the examination to face tremendous difficulties and overwhelm the students.

There were several factors that hampered the students’ achievement in reading comprehension. Based on my experienced when conducting PPL at SMPN Satu Atap Satu Bengkunat, the students may not have such motivation to read because the text was not interesting and sometime the text was too long. The students were also unfamiliar with the word used in the text or they were lack of vocabularies. But the main factor that caused students uninterested in reading was the technique of teaching reading that was used to teach them was not appropriate to their need. Sometimes teacher assumed that the students’ reading comprehension developed naturally without any teaching technique. But in fact, it had significant influence to the students’ achievement.

According to Brown (2001:48), technique is an umbrella term for the specification and interrelation of theory and practice. Furthermore, he states that virtually all language teaching technique make the oversimplified that what teachers do in the classroom can be conventionalized into a set procedures or the techniques in teaching have an influence to the students’ learning result. The factors are as
follow: first, the characteristic of reading. It caused by characteristics of reading which is very complex. Second, the lack of vocabulary, in this case mastering English vocabulary will play a role with regard to reading. For example, sometimes when the students face the English reading materials, they do not understand anything about the context or the passage they read. They know nothing what to do since they do not understand about English vocabulary.

Based on the explanation of the previous paragraph above, the researcher tried to find the technique that can be used to improve students’ reading comprehension. There are many techniques that can be used to teach reading comprehension, but the focus was on improving students abilities in finding the main idea, construct meaning and making question. The technique which was appropriate for the research’s goal is RAPQ (Read the text, Ask the information (main idea) of the text, Put the idea into the readers’ own word and make answer Question).

RAPQ is reading technique presented by Schumaker J.B, Denton P. & Deshler D.D (1984). This technique can help students stay focus on the main idea of what they read. This technique divided into four parts; R: Reading (reading a paragraph), A: Asking (asking about the information/ main idea), P: Putting (putting the main idea into students’ own word by paraphrasing), Q: Questioning (making question based on the main idea of each paragraph). After reading the text, students are asked to mention main ideas, then, paraphrase the ideas into their own language and the last they are asked to make question based on the main idea of each paragraph.
The technique was expected to improve the students’ reading comprehension achievement, the researcher decided to implement another way to improve the students reading comprehension. It’s assumed that implementing RAPQ in teaching reading also improved the students reading comprehension. By this technique, the students were asked to be more active, so they were not feel bored in the class. Then, they easily made question from the text and made a paragraph by their own words. The researcher also believed that this technique could improved the aspects of reading comprehension. Therefore, this research was focused on the following research problems.

1.2 Formulation of Research Problems

In reference to the background above, the following problems are formulated that are:

1. Is there any significant difference of students’ reading comprehension achievement before and after being taught by using RAPQ technique?
2. What aspects of reading comprehension are most and least improved after being taught through RAPQ technique?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

1. To find out whether there is a significant difference of students’ reading comprehension achievement before and after being taught by using RAPQ technique.
2. To find out the the aspects of reading comprehension which are most and least improved by RAPQ technique.
1.4 Uses of the Research

The uses of this research are:

1. Theoretically, this research can be used as the reference for those who want to conduct a research by using RAPQ technique and the result of this research is expected to verify the theories related to RAPQ technique in teaching reading process.

2. Practically, the result of this research hopefully can be used a consideration for English teachers to apply RAPQ in teaching reading in their classroom.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research was conducted at SMP Kartika Jaya II-2 Bandar Lampung. The subject of the research of eight grade students in academic year 2014/2015 in the even semester in which the class consists of 30 its. These samples were chosen using random sampling. Hence, this research focused on the use of RAPQ technique in improving students’ reading comprehension achievement. The aspects of reading comprehension that were assessed to determine main idea, identify specific information, reference, inference, and vocabulary.

1.6 Definition of Terms

In this research, there are several definitions of terms that should be considered well as follows:

a) Reading Comprehension is the ability of understanding the text. It is not only about read the word but also how a reader constructs or derives the text meaning.
b) RAPQ (Read, Ask, Put, Question) technique is a reading technique to help students stay focused on the main idea of what they read and students are taught how to read a paragraph and make paraphrasing.

The introduction of the research such as: the background of the problems, formulation of problems, objectives, uses, scopes, and definition of terms that would be used in this study already discussed in this chapter.