

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses introduction of the research. It consist of the background of the problem, the researcher problems, the objectives of the research, the uses of the research, the scope of the research, and the definition of terms that are used in this research.

### **1.1. Background of the Problem**

English is the first foreign language in Indonesia. It is be considered important for students to understand English because textbooks and other publications are mostly written in the form of English. Based on Syllabus of Junior High School, standard competence in reading is comprehending the meaning specific information of short functional text and simple monolog text in form recount text and narrative text, and basic competence is responding the meaning of simple monolog text that uses every kind of verbal language in accuracy, fluency, and accepted in daily life text. It means that the students should be mastered to comprehend a text and understand the specific information in a monologue text especially in recount text.

The aim of reading stated in 2006 Curriculum is that the students are able to understand monologue and functional texts. Monologue text is a text that should be mastered and known by the students of Junior High School. It can be in forms of short article, narrative text, recount text, procedure text, descriptive text, and report text while functional text is a text used for everyday information. It is called functional because it helps the reader function in day-to-day life. It can be in form of invitation card, TV schedule, advertisement, a memo, and a pamphlet notifying the public of grad opening.

According to the English teacher at SMPN 6 Metro, most of students at second grades still have problems in comprehending a text. They have difficulties to answer the questions from the texts especially in recount text. They still find difficulty to get the main idea or the specific information. Therefore, the students' achievements in reading comprehension are still far from the objectives stated in the curriculum. They still had difficulties in comprehending the text.

During the researcher's pre-observation in SMPN 6 Metro, it was found that the students had difficulties in comprehending reading text. There were some factors that may have caused the students to have difficulties in comprehending the text. Firstly, the students had difficulties to comprehend a passage because they face unfamiliar code in which text that is expressed. As a result, many of them still got difficulty in getting specific information from the text. It could be caused by the amount of previous knowledge that the students bring to the text were still low, or

they lacked of vocabulary knowledge. Secondly, it was caused by the strategy of the teacher. The teacher should be successful enough in making the students comprehend the text well; therefore the teachers must choose the good strategy in teaching reading comprehension achievement. Most of the teacher just gives the students materials of the text in which the students should read the written text in-group and the teachers just give the answer without giving the reason. Most of group work is not effective in learning reading comprehension because sometimes some members of group never work in discussion. It will make students become confused in understanding the texts that have been read by the students.

The previous study done by Muthiah (2012) showed the students got difficulties to determine main idea and answer question based on the text. It was because the old technique without contextualization technique in learning that conducted by the teacher. As the result, their reading achievement was below the expectation. To overcome this situation the teacher should generate students interest by applying the various techniques and selecting the proper text. By using the good technique in process teaching, the teacher can help the students to think active and develop their ideas.

On recount text, sometimes students did not know the meaning of past form and specific words which appeared in the text. The last, students had difficulty in inferring significant information in the text, especially to infer the implicit meaning and conclusion of the text. As a good reader, students must have ability to identify the information in the generic structure and language features. Then,

students also have to infer the word which appear in a text. If they know those aspects, it can help them to comprehend the information in a text easily. Therefore, the teacher needs technique to help the students to solve their difficulties in reading comprehension on recount text.

The teacher usually has some methods in teaching-learning process, especially in teaching text. Method is treated at the level of design in which the roles of teachers, learners, and instructional materials are specified. When the students read Indonesian text, they have mastered vocabulary and structural system, they are demanded to have adequate knowledge of the target language which has different system. Students will get information and ideas which can enrich their vocabulary and ideas. However, sometimes it is difficult for the learners to learn and identify the meaning of an English word due to the fact that many words can have more than one meaning. Since many words can have more than one meaning, it can be a problem for the students to identify the meaning unless the words are used in context (phrase, sentence, or paragraph). In this case, the students are supposed to have their own strategies for learning vocabulary in reading skill.

In relation to this, Nation (1984:98-104) suggests that there are three strategies that the learners can use. They are (1) guessing meaning from the context, (2) using a dictionary, and (3) paraphrasing. Nevertheless, for the sake of this investigation, the researcher only focuses on the first strategy-that is, guessing meaning from context (here after referred to as guessing meaning strategy).

Context is referred to as morphological, syntactic, and discourse information in a given text, which can be classified in terms of general features (Nation and Coady, 1988: 102). To understand the key words by using guessing meanings from context is a skill that leads the learners to read effectively and efficiently. Guessing meaning of unfamiliar words in context is the most practical method to comprehend both written and oral communication. For some people, words learned in context are much more easily retained than those learned by any other methods because it involves generalizable skills of interpreting surrounding text, predicting, and testing predictions while reading which enhance reading skills as whole (Coady and Nation, 1988; Liu and Nation, 1985).

Furthermore, the types of text (genres) developed in the 2006 English Curriculum include transactional conversations (to get something done), interpersonal conversations (to established and maintain social relations), short functional texts (announcements, greeting cards, etc.), monologues and essays of certain genres. In other words, these are the communicative competence to be developed. Along with competence, the literacy levels are also determined based on the government regulation. At junior high school, graduates are supposed to be ready for handling the kinds of text which they face at Junior High Eight School levels that include: narrative, descriptive, recount, procedure, and report text. One of the types of the text is recount text. Gerot and Wicknel as cited in Setyowati (2008) states that recount text is a text which is used to retell events for the purpose of informing or entertaining. Events are usually arranged in a temporal sequence.

On the other hand, the language features of recount text are: a.) focus on specific/Independent participants, b.) use of simple past tense, c.) circumstances of time and place, d.) focus on a temporal sequence of events, and e.) use of material process. The writer chooses the recount text because it tells about students' experience so that it makes the students are interested to study in the class.

The writer is interested to do the research in SMPN 6 Metro, because based on the writer experiences during teaching practice there are some difficulties vocabulary in English especially with recount text materials in SMPN 6 Metro. The difficulty is usually faced by the students. They should find out some methods to teach English in order to make students fun. The students tend to study vocabulary or pronunciation and also especially reading included it as important things.

Guessing word meanings from context has a long history of research related to first language (L1) reading in English (Johnson and Bauman, 1984, cited studies on it from the 1940's, for example), with the great majority of studies demonstrating its value. Justification for applying it to second a language (L2) reading has come from cognitive science models of reading and schema theory, which are now widely accepted in ESL/EFL circles (see Jannuzi, this issue, for a discussion of schema theory and reading). This is especially true of models that emphasize top-down processing-that is, the process that refers to analysis assisted by word association and predictions based on additional knowledge resources and on the information already processed (Brown and Yule, 1983: 234). Besides, it is

also in accordance with Goodman's (1967) famous characterization of "reading as a psycholinguistic guessing meaning game" as probably the most influential.

The numerous studies, which indicate that the strategy is effective, provide validation for a strategy that is in itself intuitively appealing and appears to offer many advantages over laborious, time-consuming, methodical instruction in vocabulary and collocation. Another claim in support of the guessing meaning is that it involves generalizable skills of interpreting surrounding text, predicting, and testing predictions while reading, which enhance reading skills as whole (Coady and Nation, 1988; Liu and Nation, 1985). In addition, guessing has been advocated instead of dictionary while reading interrupts the flow of reading (Brown, 1972).

Furthermore, support also comes from experimental word recognition studies with L1 subjects, which have consistently shown that context plays a role in the identification of words in text (Gough, Underhill and Batt, as cited in Aditya 2007:4). Studies of context effects have established, among other things, which words are recognized better in context, and that simple word association enhances word recognition. For example, experiments show that lexical decision latency for a word is significantly reduced if it is preceded by a semantically related word in text (such as the word in text "girl" being displayed, the followed by "boy"). Appropriate sentential context has also been shown to improve the speed of lexical decision. Such results and their implications have been used to support the use of the guessing strategy for L2 readers.

To support this study, according to Ma Tim Tim (2008) in his research with the title “The effectiveness of guessing meaning using contextual clues and learning word list in terms of vocabulary retention” tell that guess the meaning of the word; second justify the guess using a variety of clues; finally, read just the guess if necessary. In the case of vocabulary, the writer is interested in conducting a research entitled Increasing The Second Grade Student’ Reading Skill by Guessing Meaning from Context of Recount Text at SMP N 6 Metro. Applying Guessing Meaning from Context Technique can help the students to improve their reading skill by enabling the reader to take a more dynamic role in the reading process. An active reader engages himself or herself in the reading process, which eases much more understanding of the issues. Contrary to the active reader is a passive reader who reads the words in the book, but takes no positive movement to guarantee the material is being understood or applied.

## **1.2. Formulation of the Research Question**

Based on the limitation of the problems above, this research is addressed the following research questions:

1. Is there any difference of students’ reading skill before and after being taught by using Guessing Meaning from Context strategy at SMP N 6 Metro?
2. In terms of strategies for Guessing Meaning from Context which strategies produced better achievement by the students?

### **1.3. Objective of the Research**

The objectives of this study were:

1. To find out whether there is significance difference of the students' reading skill before and after being taught by using Guessing Meaning from Context.
2. To find out terms of strategies for Guessing Meaning from Context which strategies produced better achievement by the students.

### **1.4. Uses of the Research**

The uses of this research were as follows:

1. Theoretically

This research was proposed to correlate whether the findings of this research was relevant or not with the theory of Guessing Meaning from Context and its improvement.

2. Practically

As information for all teachers and students about the improvement of students' reading skill using Guessing Meaning from Context Technique in learning English. And as information for other researcher who was interested in using Guessing Meaning from Context and its improvement on students' reading skill.

### **1.5. Scope of the Research**

This research will be conducted at SMPN 6 Metro. The subject of this research is in the second grade students. This research is focuses on how the use of Guessing Meaning from Context in developing students' ability in reading recount text.

The researcher chooses recount text to be used research and will be done in second grade students of junior high school.

### **1.6. Definition of Terms**

There are some terms used by the researcher and to make them clear and to avoid misunderstanding, they are clarified as follows:

1. Guessing meaning of unfamiliar words in context is the most practical method to comprehend both written and oral communication. Guessing from context refers to the ability to infer the meaning of an expression using contextual clues.
2. Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts in order to get information and knowledge from the text.
3. Recount is a text which retells events or experiences in the past. Its purpose is either to inform or to entertain the audience. There is no complication among the participants and it differentiates from narrative.