I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the background of the problems, identification of the problems, limitation of the problems, formulation of the research questions, objectives of the research, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of terms.

1.1. Background of the Problems

Reading is one of essential language skills that must be learnt and developed by all language learners. This is because most of beneficial information for them in the world, such as news, article, letter, advertisement, and journal are published in a written form. In addition, many education sources come up in a piece of writing. For instance, books and internet, which may provide big contribution of knowledge, are also mostly in a written one that requires every person who wants to get something from it reads it first. Seeing that, many students starting from the very base of education level are taught how to read.

Actually, this skill is not a matter of reading only, but more crucial than that is comprehending what people read. This term is known as reading comprehension. Although reading has been taught since elementary school, there are still many students who are confused of what they have read, even when they are in senior
high school. This is because there are some factors affecting comprehension, such as background knowledge, the ability to analyze the language as a means to convey ideas of the writer, the ability of the reader to think, the purpose of reading, clarity of the text, and physical condition, that is, the place or situation where reading takes place (Harris and Smith, 1986: 228). Among those factors, there are some which are in line with what the researcher found in the pre-observation to one of senior high schools in Bandar Lampung, that is, SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. It was found that comprehending a reading text had become a problem faced by most of the students there. That might be caused by many factors; (1) the students did not have much motivation to read the text, (2) the teachers used uninteresting method/strategy in teaching reading, and (3) there were too many unknown words on the text.

Concerning with the first and second factor, the researcher interviewed some second grade students there relating to their interest in reading and the problems faced by them, the strategies used to tackle the problems, and also the way how the teachers there conducted reading class activity. From their responses, it was known that their interest in reading, especially in the essay form, was mostly low that they were usually lazy to face a reading text. It occurred because they had a tendency to predict there would be many unknown words’ meaning. Then they were lack of strategies in tackling that problem. They usually tended to look up dictionary directly or just let the meaning of difficult words gone that would result in losing their reading comprehension.

Furthermore, they stated that the technique used by certain teachers was just
monotonous that those teachers just asked the students to read certain text and then they did the task following the text without any attempt to discuss the unknown difficult words encountered in a reading text. In addition, concerning with the third factor, the researcher interviewed one of English teachers in that school. The teacher told that most of the students had the same obstacle in reading comprehension, that is, they could understand only little part of the written text or sentence due to the fact that they did not know the meanings of almost all the words.

Thus, from those three factors, the problem of encountering unknown difficult words becomes the basic problem for the students. In addition, they did not have any strategy to tackle that problem. Actually encountering some unfamiliar words might not distract the overall understanding of the text, but if there are too many words which are unknown, the comprehension will lost. One way in which vocabulary knowledge can be enhanced so that they are able to comprehend a reading text is through the use of morphological analysis to learn or predict the meaning of novel vocabularies. That analysis is defined as breaking complex words into its constituent meaning elements called morpheme (bases, prefixes, and suffixes). When they have already known the meaning of its base form, they can predict the meaning of another word that shares the same form of its base. Then the next step is just adjusting the meaning of prefix or suffix that is attached to that base form to predict the whole meaning of that word.

To assess that, the researcher conducted a direct morphological analysis test to those 10 students who had been interviewed. The researcher asked them to break
down morphologically complex word and determine which one its base, prefix, and suffix. Take an example, the researcher gave the word primary, immortalize, and disadvantageous. 5 out of 10 students could successfully break them down and defined its meaning. But they just could determine the root form of the word without knowing prefix or suffix as its term as follows. prime + -ary, im- + mortal + -ize, and dis- + advantage + -ous referred those words had a meaning that related to the word prime, mortal, and advantage. The researcher then asked their reading comprehension achievement. Some admitted that they belonged to average category while the rest thought that they had lower achievement in it. Moreover, the researcher asked the meaning of differ instead of difference or different and fury instead of furious. 5 out of 10 students were able to define its meaning directly while for the rest, the researcher asked the other familiar forms of the same base form so that they could define its meaning.

The result showed those who had better achievement in reading also performed better in defining the meaning of the first word uttered by the researcher. Conversely, those who were not able to break down the morphologically complex words and define its meaning had lower achievement in reading. That indicated most of the students there seemingly did not know the words with the same base form but with various affixes shared related meaning. They also did not know the meaning of unknown words could be predicted from the meaning of its base form or the meaning from other familiar words which shared the same base form.

Given that elaboration, it could be considered that applying morphological analysis as one of the strategies to uncover the meaning of new and difficult
words was potential. Therefore, the researcher proposed to teach morphological analysis to help the students be able to predict the meaning of difficult words. That analysis could possibly help them to predict the meanings of the words found in the text and that might have helped them to comprehend such a reading text better.

1.2. Identification of the Problems

Based on the pre-observation done by the researcher in the background stated before, it seemed that there were ten identification of the problems and they were formulated as follows:

1. Most of the students got difficulties in comprehending a reading text, especially in the essay form.
2. Most of the students had low interest in reading—essay. They tended to be lazy to face that kind of reading text.
3. Most of the students faced problem toward difficult words. They could not understand the meaning of those words found in a reading text.
4. Most of the students were lack of strategies in reading comprehension activity.
5. Most of the students did not want to predict and guess the meaning of unknown words encountered in a reading text.
6. Most of the students tended to look up dictionary directly to find the meaning of unknown words.
7. The technique used by certain teachers in reading comprehension class activity was monotonous. Those teachers just asked the students to read
certain text and they were asked to do the task following the text.

8. Most of the students had not known that the words with the same base form but with various affixes shared related meaning.

9. Most of the students had not known that the meaning of unknown words might have been predicted from the meaning of its base form.

10. Most of the students had not known that the meaning of unknown words might have been predicted from the meaning of other words which shared the same base form.

1.3. Limitation of the Problems

In line with the identification of the problems above, the focus of this research was on number 4, 8, 9, and 10 concerning with introducing a strategy to tackle the meaning of difficult words found in a reading text. Moreover, the students should have been introduced that the words with the same base form but with various affixes shared related meaning. In addition, the meaning of unknown words might have been predicted from the meaning of its base form or the meaning of other words which shared the same base form. Then the main concern of this research was finding out the effect of teaching morphological analysis as one of reading strategies in reading comprehension whether this strategy would result in the students’ better comprehension achievement or not.

1.4. Formulation of the Research Questions

Related to the limitation of the problems stated before, the researcher formulated the problems as follows:
1. Is there any difference on the students’ morphological analysis achievement before and after being taught through morphological analysis teaching?

2. Is there any difference on the students’ reading comprehension achievement before and after being taught through morphological analysis teaching?

3. Is there any effect of teaching morphological analysis on the students’ reading comprehension achievement?

4. What are the problems faced by the students in analysing words through morphological analysis?

1.5. Objectives of the Research

In accordance with the formulation of the research questions, the objectives of this research were as follows:

1. To find out whether there is a difference on the students’ morphological analysis achievement before and after being taught through morphological analysis teaching.

2. To find out whether there is a difference on the students’ reading comprehension achievement before and after being taught through morphological analysis teaching.

3. To find out whether there is an effect of teaching morphological analysis on the students’ reading comprehension achievement.

4. To investigate the problems faced by the students in analysing words through morphological analysis.
1.6. Uses of the Research

The findings of this research might have been useful both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically, the finding of this research might be useful for supporting the theory of morphological analysis in helping the readers assign meaning to new or difficult words they encounter on the text and in helping them to comprehend a reading text better.

2. Practically, the result of this research is expected to provide teachers with a new insight that might be taken as a guideline in teaching reading so that the students are able to comprehend English texts better.

1.7. Scope of the Research

This research was focused on teaching morphological analysis as the strategy to help the students to tackle the meaning of complex difficult words encountered in a reading text so that they were able to comprehend that reading text better. The researcher conducted this research to the second grade students of SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. The sample, that is, XI Lintas Minat 5, was selected by using simple random sampling. The researcher limited the ability of analysing morphological aspects on analysing inflectional, prefix derivational, circumfix derivational, suffix derivational, and compound words aspects. In addition, the limitations of the reading comprehension aspects were on determining main idea, making predictions, interpreting problem/solution, understanding vocabulary, and making a generalization. The researcher focused on hortatory exposition text
because it was one of the examples of essay text that comprised of unknown complex difficult words that its difficult words could be analysed by using morphological analysis to predict and find its meaning. Then, the materials were taken from English Books for the second grade of senior high school.

1.8. Definition of Terms

Several terms used in this research were defined as follows:

1. *Reading Comprehension* is the ability to read text, process it, and understand its meaning.

2. *Morphological Analysis* refers to the ability to use knowledge of root words and affixes to determine the meanings of unfamiliar morphologically complex words.

3. *Hortatory Exposition Text* refers to a text that elaborates the writer’s idea about the surrounding phenomenon. It is also a kind of text that presents one side of an issue in a form of arguments. Its purpose is to argue/persuade the reader that something should be or should not be done or supported. Its generic structures consist of thesis, arguments, and recommendation.

4. *Effect* is a change as a result or consequence of an action or other cause. In this case, it is the difference in the result of teaching morphological analysis on the students’ reading comprehension achievement before and after the treatments. That means the posttest score is better than the pretest one.

That is the introduction of this research. Then the next chapter will discuss the theoretical background of this research.