CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is important in human life. Through reading, we can develop our knowledge, we can see more about our surrounding, and the development of human race in almost all parts of the world. Many of us spend our leisure time on reading books such as fiction book, science book, magazine, and newspaper. These sources of reading are valuable for they invite the reader to judge, what is going on in their surroundings and what to do in the process of education.

Since most of science and technology books are still written in English, the teaching of reading comprehension is very important. Realizing this importance, reading ability has to be increased because reading ability is recognized as centrally important, since without it very little academic learning can go on.

Reading in a second language such as English is different from reading in one's native language such as Indonesian. This difficulties is usually caused by the different vocabularies and syntactic patterns. This is

supported by Gadessy (1987:91) who claims that a lot of EFL and ESL students, even at advance level complain that they do not understand a text because of the vocabulary more than anything else. In other words, to them word knowledge is more important than background knowledge.

Based on the writer's experience and observation on the reading ability of the third year of SMP, it is clear that many students often complained when they are given an English reading passage. They say that they do not like the reading class because they do not understand what they are reading. Some others say that reading class is so boring that it makes them sleepy. One of the reasons is that the techniques and procedures used in teaching them are too monotonous. French (1972:101) says that children like to do things. They quickly get bored if they are expected merely to sit and have information pumped into them.

As the writer has observed, in teaching reading, most SMTP English teachers follow this procedure:

1. Giving the students a reading passage.
2. Explaining the difficult words found in the reading passage.
3. Reading the whole passage once.
4. Asking the students to answer the questions based on

the passage.

5. Checking the students' work and give them the correct
answers.

Looking at this procedure, one may conclude that the
students are made dependent on what the teacher does.
This type of procedure does not bring the class into an
active process but a passive process.

To improve this kind of condition, the writer
suggests that the English teachers of reading design
appropriate teaching technique in order to arouse the
interest of the students to learn the subject. For
example: by using visual aids like pictures related to
the topic the teacher can attract the students to read
the passage. Billows (1961:129) says that most teachers
see the need for making use of visual aids in one form
or another to help the pupils' imaginative experience
beyond the reach of the classroom. Moreover it is also
important to make the teaching learning activities more
communicatively. It is said that learning to read is not
a passive process. That's why the teacher should bring
the class to take an active part in the lesson. This
opinion is suitable with the principle of Students'
Generated Questions suggested by Henry (1983:29).
According to him, "Questioning has long been used as a
tool for improvement of comprehension". To him, this

approach encourages students to see reading as an interactive process that takes place between the reader and the text.

Interested in this mater, the writer has written this thesis entitled "Teaching Reading Through Students' Generated Questions with Special Reference to Pre-Reading Activities". The writer takes this technique because by nature it will bring the class into an active process. When the students are given a text they should be able to make questions. Questioning itself is a skill which must be practiced and refined if it is to be any value. Being practiced through this technique, the students' questions will gradually become more focused and more interesting.

By listening to students' questions, the teacher have the opportunity to learn about the background knowledge and culture understandings with which the students address a text. Another important result in using this technique is that students learn that some questions are fairly easy; others require more careful reading or further reading (of other texts), while still some others are unanswerable. Moreover, it has often been pointed out that in the classroom "the most valuable information is students' perception and not teachers".

This technique is suggested to prevent the students from getting bored and arouse their interest in reading. The writer realizes that if the students are interested in reading class, they will pay attention to the process of reading and as a result they will comprehend the reading text better.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In accordance with the background described previously, the thesis problem has been formulated as follows: "How can students´ generated questions be used to improve students´ reading comprehension ability?"

1.3 The Objective of the Study

In line with the background, this thesis intended to suggest some ideas about how to improve students´ reading comprehension ability based on their generated questions.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the ideas presented in this thesis can (1) make English teachers aware of the

processes that usually take place when a student reads a passage, and (2) encourage English teachers to be creative and innovative in selecting suitable methods and techniques of teaching reading.

1.5 The Scope and Limitation

Since this thesis deals with the teaching of reading comprehension at the third year of SMP, it is important to bear in mind that the students have known how to read, in the sense that they have known how to decode written symbols. It is also assumed that the students have mastered the basic grammar and vocabulary need, since they have got these things at the first and the second year of SMP.

The techniques that are being discussed will only cover those that will help them to achieve the instructional objectives: Students´ .generated questions based on the first sentence stimulus, the thematic stimulus, the picture stimulus, and the reading stimulus. These generated questions are those made by the Students in the Pre-Reading Step. And since the techniques proposed here are meant to be used in teaching SMTP students, the examples chosen and used will also be the ones which are suitable with the

ability of the SMTP students.

1.6 The Definition of Key Terms

1. Technique

   Technique is implementational and it what actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, strategy or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective (Richard, 1986).

2. Reading

   Reading is a process of interpreting/understanding the text in terms of the questions that the reader formulated about the text (Smith, 1971:28).

3. Generated Questions

   Generated questions are questions that the students make about the text. Henry (1984:29) states that when someone reads, s/he naturally asked her/himself questions, questions which occurred to her/him spontaneously about the content of a text.

1.7 The Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. In this chapter, the writer explains the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the signifi-

cance   of the thesis, the scope and limitation of the
study, the definition of key terms and finally the
organization of the thesis. In chapter two, the writer
describes the theoretical framework of this thesis.
Students´ Generated Questions is presented in chapter
three. Application is presented in chapter IV. In
Chapter Five the writer is presented the conclusion in
the form of a summary. And to close this thesis the
writer gives some suggestions concerning the topic of
the thesis.