

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The chapter covers the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the limitation of the study, the assumption, the definitions of the key terms and the organization of the paper.

1.1. The Background

Reading the title of this paper at a glance might cause someone to wonder how newspaper can be used to teach reading Comprehension. However, if we take the time to relate it with the present development in our country we will not see any peculiarity.

Prof. Dr. John Tondowidjojo CM, in an interview with the writer, is of the opinion that this study is relevant to our present situation. The government has taken steps to distribute electricity and newspaper to people in the villages and remote areas, so that the reality of information can be widely distributed. Yet to support this relevance in using newspapers in the teaching of reading comprehension, the writer is still at the trial stage and it will not show its significance in a short time. Besides, there are other reasons,

a. In the 1984 SMA Curriculum of Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, it is stated that the objective of teaching English at the SMA is to provide SMA graduates with reading ability that enables them to comprehend information from texts written in the English language only ("siswa memiliki minat dan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris terutama membaca..."¹). Consequently, English teachers should emphasize classroom reading activities which provides the students with a skill to understand the reading material. This ability proves to be essential as:

1. The majority of students learning English as a foreign language may never speak much English but most of them shall have to read English in order to complete their study.²
2. Most textbooks used in higher education are in English. As a result, those students should be able to understand the English texts in order to understand the subject. Thus, they will have a hard time to become successful students if they do not master the English language.

¹Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Kurikulum 1984, Sekolah Menengah Umum Tingkat Atas (SMA). Petunjuk Pelaksanaan Materi Pengajaran. Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris; Jakarta, 1984, hal. 62.

²Jamco Word, "Techniques for Teaching Reading", English Teaching Forum, April 1984; Vol. XVIII, No. 2, p. 2.

- b. The writer notices that many senior high school students had difficulties in reading. They usually complain about not knowing the words, not understanding the sentences or the whole passage. In the end, they are not able to grasp the message of the reading material.
- c. According to Dr. John Tondowidjojo, journalism has been included in the co-curriculum activities at several SMA in Indonesia, among others in Surabaya. As a result, he hopes that these young cadres, after getting journalism for several years, will apply the use of newspapers in the reading comprehension class to ensure the success of the reading comprehension program. Once it is proven effective, SMA graduates will be able to understand everyday English.

Thus, the writer feels obliged to increase the students reading comprehension ability by suggesting the newspaper as a supplementary reader in the comprehension class. She is of the opinion that this material is up to date and what is told is found in the reader's daily life so that it is, hopefully, interesting for the students, and this might arouse their motivation to learn.

1.2. Statement of Problem

Based on the background described above the problem is stated as follows.

- How can this kind of material be presented in class, so that the students get the most benefits out of it?

1.3. Objectives

Derived from the above formulated problem, the objectives of this study are to suggest

- a. How to pick out the articles found in this kind of authentic material, so that it is appropriate for the students.
- b. Some ways to present this kind of authentic materials in the classroom.
- c. The use of Newspaper as a printed media in the teaching-learning process, especially in vocabulary because Newspaper deals with vocabulary and grammar. In this way the students can enrich their information on language based on the different writing experience.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Knowing that ability of understanding a reading material is important, the writer wants

- a. the student to get involved in social, economic, and cultural problems. As a consequence, the teacher will be of some help in forming broad-minded students. This way the teaching of reading comprehension becomes lively and yet it concerns our daily life.

b. to give a new and interesting atmosphere to the comprehension class in order to motivate the students to learn or to read any other material of their own. If the students are motivated or interested, they may be willing to read and practice more to improve their comprehension ability.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

Since the term authentic material is too broad to cover, the writer limits her study to newspaper. And the sections being chosen are several kinds of articles.

This paper focuses on Indonesian SMA students and the English newspapers being used are the ones that we have; i.e. The Indonesian Observer, The Jakarta Post, The Straits Times, The Asian Wall Steet Journal.

The above newspapers can be considered as authentic materials because the articles exposed in these newspapers are usually the same topics as those written in the Indonesian newspapers. Besides, the language is easy to understand.

The ideal object of the study starts from the first semester students of the SMA until the sixth semester.

1.6. Assumption

This study is based on the following assumptions:

- a. The senior high school students are curious to know about the world they live in, so that this kind of authentic material will trigger their interest.
- b. The students are mature enough to understand any article in newspaper. They should be between sixteen and nineteen years of age, at which stage their minds are quite developed to understand what is usually written in the newspaper.

1.7. Definitions of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation and/ or misunderstanding, it is necessary to define the following key terms:

- a. Reading - to Nuttall.³

Reading is not just linguistic exercises but it also involves getting the meaning from the text.

- b. Authentic Material - Nuttall is concerned not with language learning but the uses to which we put reading in our daily lives outside the classroom.⁴ Ellen Lamar

³Christine Nuttal, "Teaching Reading Skill in a Foreign Language", Heinemann Educational Books London 1982, p. 10.

⁴Ibid., p. 3.

Thomas & H. Alan Robinson⁵ in their book "Improving Reading in Every Class" say that textbook chapters on various subjects; such as science, math, social studies, Driver Education, article and supplementary books can be grouped as authentic material.

Idell Holburst⁶, in addition also says that newspapers, magazines, articles, and popular books are also grouped as authentic materials.

From the various definitions above, the writer concludes that the definition of authentic material, as used in this paper, is that newspapers, magazines, articles, and popular books are grouped as authentic material.

1.8. Organization of the Paper

This paper consists of 7 chapters. Chapter I presents the background of this study, statement of the problem, objective of the study along with the significance, assumption, definition of key terms and limitation of the scope. Review of related literature is in chapter II, whereas the advantages of using newspaper is in chapter III. Chapter IV discusses about how to pick out

⁵Lamar Ellen Thomas & H. Robinson, Improving Reading in Every Class, copyright Allys and Bacon, 1982, p. 121.

⁶Idell Holburst, How To Improve Your Reading Comprehension Skill, Monarch Press, New York, 1981, p. 67.

the material, while chapter V gives the illustration of the techniques of presenting a newspaper. The examples can be found in chapter VI, and chapter VII is the conclusion of this study.