

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background

Teaching English is intended to make students obtain all the language skills. They should be made aware that there are four important skills involved. The related skills are reading, speaking, listening, and writing. For years, reading is considered to be the most important skill which determines the students' success in studying. Rubin in Dupuis (1982:16) writes that one of the most salient factors leading students to drop out of high school is lack of *reading* skill necessary for success in content subjects. In line with her, Carell (1988:1) states, "... reading is by far the most important of the four skills in a second language; particularly in English ... reading is the main reason why students learn the language". Supporting Rubin and Carell's ideas, Paulston and Bruder in Tjandra (1988:2) points out that reading is the most important skill of all for most students of English throughout the world. Thus, the first reason for students to study English is undoubtedly to be able to read.

Here, being able to read is not only a matter of decoding symbols into sounds. It involves mental process which is called comprehension. Heilman, Blair, and Rupley (1981:236) confirm that the major goal of teaching reading should be aimed toward furthering students' comprehension abilities. Therefore, students must be able to grasp the meaning from the printed text when they read it.

Since the comprehension abilities are significant in reading, many experts have discussed several factors affecting them. The factors may be broad and varied, but, here, the writer only takes the one that mostly related to her study, the growth of the vocabulary in reading comprehension.

Jones in Burns, Roe, and Ross (1984:152) puts forward, "The growth of the vocabulary is essential to the development of labels of child's schemata. Students must call upon their existing schemata to comprehend. Vocabulary development is an important component of comprehension skill". Supporting that ideas, Searfoss and Readence (1985:186) state that reading comprehension is certainly much easier if the students possess a large stock of words to draw in their mind. Lack of a large reading vocabulary places them at a distinct disadvantage in getting meaning from the printed text. Furthermore, they point out that the present of words can facilitate thinking processes, and, since reading is a thinking process, vocabulary naturally is the prime contributor to reading comprehension. Based on the notions above, those students' vocabularies have a strong relationship towards reading comprehension and those students' vocabularies will influence their comprehension in reading.

The writer, through her study, attempts to find out a better way in giving vocabularies in teaching reading comprehension class. The writer hopes that giving students the necessary vocabularies to comprehend the reading text at the right time will increase the students' comprehension when they read. Now the question is when the teacher should add the students' vocabulary; whether in prior

to reading or in post-reading to improve students' ability in comprehending the text.

Carell in Silberstein (1987:32) suggests that pre-teaching vocabulary before the students read the whole text improves the students' reading comprehension. Meanwhile, the reading teachers implement the teaching of vocabulary after the students read the whole text. Related to this phenomenon, the writer, through her study, attempts to investigate whether teaching reading using vocabulary prior to reading and vocabulary post-reading gave different positive effects on the students' reading comprehension.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In line with the background above, through this study, the writer formulated the research question as follows:

Are there any different effects between teaching reading using vocabulary prior to reading and vocabulary post-reading on the students' reading comprehension?

Gilmore's, Sack's, and Yorman (1983:4) state that readers can really comprehend the text that they read if they can answer six fundamental questions. The basic questions involve subject matter, generalization, detail, significance, conclusion, and vocabulary. Meanwhile, Marksheffel (1966:224) states that most of students still fail to recognize the main idea of a paragraph. Therefore, the writer replaces the generalization questions which are asking about the main idea of the whole text with the main idea questions which are focused to the main idea

of every paragraph in the text. Whereas, Heaton (1988: 119) writes that it is useful to include items testing the students' reading comprehension to recognize reference features in the text. Thus, it can be concluded that readers can grasp the author's thought of the text if they can answer all of those seven types of questions (subject matter, main idea, detail, significance, conclusion, vocabulary, and reference-word).

Based on the ideas above, the sub questions of the major problem are:

- a) Are there any different effects between the teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in recognizing the subject matter of the text being read?
- b) Are there any different effects between the teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in identifying the main idea of each paragraph of the text?
- c) Are there any different effects between the teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in identifying the details of the text?
- d) Are there any different effects between the teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in identifying the significance of the text?

- e) Are there any different effects between the teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in drawing conclusion from the text being read?
- f) Are there any different effects between the teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in finding the meaning of the vocabulary being asked?
- g) Are there any different effects between the teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in answering the reference words questions?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Derived from the above formulated problems, the main purpose of this study was to find out: whether teaching reading using vocabulary prior to reading and vocabulary post-reading gave different positive effects on the students' reading comprehension.

This means that the sub purposes were:

- a) To investigate whether students who were taught using vocabulary prior to reading and those who were taught using vocabulary post-reading gave different positive effects on the students' ability in identifying the subject matter of the text.

- b) To investigate whether students who were taught using vocabulary prior to reading and those who were taught using vocabulary post-reading gave different positive effects on the students' ability in recognizing the main idea of each paragraph of the text.
- c) To investigate whether students who were taught using vocabulary prior to reading and those who were taught using vocabulary post-reading gave different positive effects on the students' ability in finding the details of the text.
- d) To investigate whether students who were taught using vocabulary prior to reading and those who were taught using vocabulary post-reading gave different positive effects on the students' ability in finding the significance of the text.
- e) To investigate whether students who were taught using vocabulary prior to reading and those who were taught using vocabulary post-reading gave different positive effects on the students' ability in drawing the conclusion.
- f) To investigate whether students who were taught using vocabulary prior to reading and those who were taught using vocabulary post-reading gave different positive effects on the students' ability in interpreting the meaning of the vocabulary based on the context.
- g) To investigate whether students who were taught using vocabulary prior to reading and those who were taught using vocabulary post-reading gave different positive effects on the students' ability in finding the reference word.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Closely related to the statement above, the investigator attempted to supply some empirical evidence that supported the theory of reading comprehension showing that the use of teaching reading using vocabulary prior to reading or vocabulary post-reading helped develop students' reading comprehension.

From a theoretical point of view, the result of this study provided a clear description about the use of teaching reading using vocabulary prior to reading and vocabulary post-reading on the students' reading comprehension.

Hopefully, this thesis gave some contributions to the success of teaching reading comprehension at senior high school so that the objective of teaching English could be achieved.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

This study was carried out based on the linguistic schemata theory.

According to schemata theory, the reader cannot extract any information from a text unless he or she has the existing knowledge previously. The existing knowledge, then, can be used to facilitate an interpretation of the text. Therefore, the less familiar a reader is with the various schemata of the particular text, the more he or she will struggle to construct an accurate meaning (Kinsela: 1994).

In line with her, Carroll (1986:235) writes, "... comprehension and memory are poor when the passage is written so obscurely that we cannot determine what might be the right schema". It is clear that the reader encounters

so many hurdles in comprehending a certain text if he or she does not have any schemata of that text.

Thus, in a reading comprehension class, it is the teacher's job to provide students with the appropriate schemata of the related passage. Teacher must help their students enrich, activate, and retrieve their prior knowledge related to the topic about which they will read.

As stated previously that this study only focuses on the linguistic schemata, it must be important to recognize what components are involved in them. Kinsella (1994) stated, "Linguistic schemata includes knowledge of letters and their corresponding sounds, grammar, vocabulary, idioms, word attack skills, and distinctions between spoken and written forms of the language". However, the writer of this study merely concerns on the vocabulary aspect. According to this theory, giving the students enough vocabularies of the related passage as their prior knowledge before reading would provide an anchor for their deeper understanding (Williams, 1983:11; Devine, Caryl, and Eskey, 1987:186)

Related to the one of linguistic schemata theory's aspects on vocabulary, Mary Susiani (1997:20) states, "one's reading ability is determined by one's vocabulary stock. If he or she could not understand the vocabulary found in a passage, he or she could not comprehend the reading material either". Therefore, the writer of this thesis uses the vocabulary as a means of teaching reading. Here, the writer teaches the vocabulary in two ways. First, she teaches the meaning of the vocabulary before the students reads the whole passage given (vocabulary prior to reading). The second one is explaining the meaning of the vocabulary

after the students read the whole text (vocabulary post-reading). The vocabularies used in this study are the ones which belong to the keywords for understanding the ideas of the reading materials because the writer does not claim that students must understand every word found in the passages. What is important for the students' reading comprehension is to be able to get the meanings of the keywords so that they can comprehend the passages easily.

1.6 Hypothesis

The linguistic schemata theory states that too many words unfamiliarity can render the students' comprehension. Carell in Silberstein (1987:32) suggests that pre-teaching vocabulary before the students read the whole text improves the students' reading comprehension. It was two hypotheses in this study. One is called the Null Hypothesis and the other is called the Alternative Hypothesis.

In this study, Alternative Hypothesis states, "the teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading have a significant difference between the group which was taught by using vocabulary prior to reading and the group which was taught by using vocabulary post-reading on the students' reading ability".

Meanwhile, Null Hypothesis states, "the teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading do not have any different effects or no significant difference on the students' reading comprehension".

Then, the alternative hypothesis was tested using seven minor hypotheses as follows;

- a) The teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading give a significant difference between the group which was taught using vocabulary prior to reading and the group which was taught using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in recognizing the subject matter of the text being read.
- b) The teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading give a significant difference between the group which was taught using vocabulary prior to reading and the group which was taught using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in identifying the main idea of each paragraph of the text.
- c) The teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading give a significant difference between the group which was taught using vocabulary prior to reading and the group which was taught using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in identifying the details of the text.
- d) The teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading give a significant difference between the group which was taught using vocabulary prior to reading and the group which was taught using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in identifying the significance of the text.

- e) The teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading give a significant difference between the group which was taught using vocabulary prior to reading and the group which was taught using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in drawing conclusion from the text being read.
- f) The teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading give a significant difference between the group which was taught using vocabulary prior to reading and the group which was taught using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in finding the meaning of the vocabulary being asked.
- g) The teaching of reading using vocabulary prior to reading and the teaching of reading using vocabulary post-reading give a significant difference between the group which was taught using vocabulary prior to reading and the group which was taught using vocabulary post-reading on the students' ability in answering the reference words questions.

1.7 Assumptions

This study was based on the following assumptions:

1. The two groups of students (the try-out students and the samples) were of the same academic background of English. They had learnt English for three years in the junior high school.
2. The condition and the situation of the room of the two classes used for the experiment were the same.

3. The reading materials had been selected to suit both groups.
4. Students' marks given for each reading comprehension test represent their English reading comprehension.

1.8 Scope and Limitation

Being aware of how broad the topic of this study is, the writer thinks it is necessary to limit the scope of the study. In this study, the writer is primarily concerned with teaching reading comprehension to the first grade of St. Stanislaus Senior High School Students in the academic year of 2003-2004. Thus, the vocabulary was limited to 2000 words. Other level of the vocabulary was not discussed.

This study was carried out at St. Stanislaus Senior High School, Surabaya. The experiment lasted for five sessions of 45 minutes effective teaching time and was conducted in two classes of the first grade who were taken as samples. Within these samples were homogeneous students with approximately the same academic competence and background knowledge of English. They had learnt English for three years in the junior high school. This data was collected in the morning and at school when the students were having their classes so that they would not feel that the experiment became a burden for them.

1.9 Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation and/or misunderstanding, it is necessary to define the key terms. The terms to be defined are:

1. Effect(s)

Morris (1969) defines the term “effect” as something brought about by a cause or agent while Hornby (1995:369) defined it as a result or an outcome. In this thesis, the term ‘effect’ means the result of the implementation of teaching reading using vocabulary prior to reading or vocabulary post-reading on the students’ comprehension measured by pre-post test design to determine if there is any significance difference between the scores of the group taught using vocabulary prior to reading and the one taught by using vocabulary post-reading.

2. Reading comprehension:

It is a process of making sense of written ideas through a meaningful interpretation and interaction with language (Heilman, Blair, and Rupley; 1981:242).

3. Schemata (singular is schema)

It is related to something which is previously experienced and learned. It is stored in the brain in categories (Kinsella: 1994).

4. Vocabulary prior to reading

It is a necessary vocabulary which belongs to the key words and it is given before a reader reads the whole passage.

5. Vocabulary post-reading

It is a necessary vocabulary which belongs to the key words and it is given after the students read the passage.

6. Key words

They are the certain words which help readers comprehend the ideas. They stand for an idea and is so central to the idea that if the readers understand the words, they are almost sure to comprehend the entire concept that goes with the words. (Langan, 1982)

1.10 The Organization of Thesis

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is talking about the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of study, theoretical framework, hypothesis, assumptions, scope and limitation, key terms, and the organization of the thesis. The second chapter is dealing with the underlying theories, and thesis reports related to this study. The third chapter is discussing about the research design, the population and samples, the treatments and the instrument, data collection, and data analysis. The fourth chapter presents about findings and the discussion of the findings. Conclusion and suggestions will end the last chapter of this thesis report.