

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

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#### 1.1 Background of The Study

Learning to read is a major achievement in a student's language development, and the ability to read plays a major role in many people's lives, since the written word has a central function in our society as a primary transmitter of culture. Gibson and Levin in DeStefano's (1978:125) note that "reading has received more attention than any other aspect of education". The ability to read well is the basis for success in school and later, so there is small wonder that instruction in the early grades is organized around learning to read.

In Indonesian high schools, English is one of compulsory subjects that must be learned by all students. Regardless in what field they are learning, it is expected that high school graduates will be able to read English textbooks on the various subjects at higher education with full understanding, because the sources of the knowledge and information are usually written in its original language. It is also stated by Strang (1953:4) that reading proficiency is the royal road to knowledge; it is essential to the success in all academic subjects. Thus, Senior High School students should be provided with

a reading skill adequate for their future studies.

Some factors such as motivation, interest, self confidence, anxiety, etc which influence the students' reading ability cannot be neglected. Rumelhart quoted by Ngadiman (1990:1) suggests that when readers read a story they use a cluster of schemata to discover its meaning. It means that there should be a match between the reading passage and the student's background knowledge or schemata. Ngadiman said that the important element in reading is the reader's ability to fit the new information in reading selection to his existing schemata or prior knowledge. Therefore, the student's existing knowledge or schemata have important roles in process of reading.

Nowadays English programmes on videos, radios and televisions are much available. A repertoire of expressions students have already heard and learned may help them mentally reconstruct the message or information from what they read. Borrás and Lafayette (1994:61) state that subtitles may help develop language proficiency by enabling learners to be conscious of language that they might not otherwise understand. Besides that, Secules, Herron and Tomasello (1992:480) also say that watching the video would enhance students' learning of vocabulary and idiomatic structures because of the contextualized presentation in the video.

## **1.2 Statement of The Problem**

Based on the discussion in the background of the study, the writer would like to state the problem for this study. It says: "Is there any significant correlation between the students' reading habits and their comprehension achievement?"

## **1.3 The Objectives of The Study**

Derived directly from the above formulated problem, this study investigate whether there is a significant relationship between the students' reading habits and their reading comprehension achievement.

## **1.4 Scope and Limitation of The Study**

Because of the limited knowledge, ability and time that the writer has, the thesis is restricted. The study is focussed on the reading habits namely reading.

Other important factors such as motivation, interest, self confidence, anxiety, etc, are involved in but they are not measured.

The first year students of SMUK St. Agnes Surabaya belonging to the school year of 1995-1996 are taken as the population of this study.

### 1.5 Assumption

Reading skill has been taught to the first year of Junior High School, so they are assumed to understand how to comprehend English reading passages.

### 1.6 Definition of The Key Terms

For the sake of clarity and to avoid misinterpretation, it is necessary to define the key terms used in this thesis; they are: reading comprehension, achievement, correlation and background knowledge.

- Reading comprehension means an active interactive psycholinguistic process of reconstructing the writer's message by means of recognizing the schemata, relating new information to the schemata and finding a configuration of the schemata which offer an adequate account of the passage (Rumelhart in James Flood's book (1984:18). In this study, the reading comprehension of the students is reflected in their ability to answer the questions depend on the student's background knowledge.
- Achievement is the extent to which an individual has mastered the specific skills or body of information acquired in formal learning situation (Harris,3-4). In

this study it was represented by the scores of the questionnaire and the scores of the reading comprehension test.

- Correlation here means the relation or connection between two or more variables. According with to George A. Ferguson (1959:86) 'correlation' is concerned with describing the degree of relation between variables. The independent is reading habits, while the dependent variable is the reading comprehension.
- Background knowledge here is the previously acquired knowledge of the readers in general world knowledge (Carrel,1983:556). These previous experiences exist in the mind of the reader and are used to create meaning from the text. During the reading process, selected new information from the text is related to old information acquired from the reader's previous word knowledge (Aron,1986:136).

### **1.7 Significance of The Study**

The result of this study is expected to provide teachers of English with a clear picture of the role of the reading habits media in reading comprehension. Hopefully, in the field of language teaching the teachers of English Senior High School will try to make use of reading habits to develop suitable techniques for

teaching reading comprehension in their efforts to enhance the student's reading comprehension ability.

### **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

This study is based on the theory of schemata and media. According to Rumelhart quoted by Ngadiman (1990:1), schema is define as an abstract data for representing the generic concept stored in memory. Schema theory represent an attempt to explain and describe the way that experiences and concepts gained from them are stored in memory. In schema theory the important element is the students' ability to fit the new information in the passage to their existing schemata.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the schemata are needed to read a text. The background knowledge of the students can help them to get the information out of the text which is usually related with our lives.

### **1.9 Hypothesis**

There are two hypotheses in this study. The first is called Null Hypothesis and the second is called Alternative Hypothesis.

The Null Hypothesis says there is no significant

correlation in student's achievement between the reading habits and achievement in reading comprehension.

While the Alternative Hypothesis for this study says there is a positive significant correlation between reading habits and achievement in reading comprehension.

#### **1.10 Organization of the Study**

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction. Chapters II discusses Review of Related Literature. Chapter III is Research Methodology, and Chapter IV is Finding and Interpretation. The last chapter, Chapter V, is Conclusion and Suggestions.