C H A P T E R I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of this study. There are several topics in this chapter namely: background, limitation of the problem, statement of the problem, research questions, aims of the study, significance of the study, assumption, hypothesis, population and sample, method, procedure, technique of the research and clarification of key terms.

1.1 Background

There are four language skills that every single human being should require in order to be able to communicate with others, which are; listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, since human life is surrounded by written words, the ability to read becomes a great concern for many people (if not every one).This is due to the fact that written words play a very important role in almost every aspect of human life. Reading is acclaimed to be the source of much of our vocabulary knowledge, writing style, advanced grammatical competence and spelling. Moreover, according to Adler (1967 in Harsasujana 2003) "reading is a basic tool in living a good life".

The ability to gain information through printed media becomes more and more important, especially in the rise of the globalization era. People need to have certain skills to be able to compete with others. The demand for educated human

resource will very likely depend on the existence of printed medias (reading materials), and the ability of people to extract information from them. The illiterate members of society may be isolated because of their incapability to gain information, especially through printed mass medias. This also means that students, as the primary source of educated human resource requires a certain level of reading skill so that they are able to extract information from reading materials.

However, Indonesian students often encounter difficulties when trying to read an English text since English is a foreign language in Indonesia. This problem may create further difficulties for Indonesian students in their future, since English is the international language spoken all over the world and that English is the language of knowledge in the globalization era. Reading an English text requires them to have an adequate knowledge of the language and a certain set of skills.

There are many ways and techniques to increase students' reading skills. One of them is by using narrative texts to improve their reading mastery. According to Gary and Scott Poole (1986), stories are beneficial for teaching reading comprehension to upper level elementary school and junior high school students. Their method "force" teachers to spend more time on preparation, this means that teachers must read the story, study the vocabulary, and compose study questions. But later on in the classroom, teachers who are involved in the program found that it is worth the trouble. The Pooles build background for reading material, present the new vocabulary, and assign the reading material to be read

silently. Then reading material are either analyzed in class discussions, or the students are given questions to be answered in writing. The method helps the students to improve their reading skill.

Smith-Burke (1987), a language arts specialists hold that real stories and real characters are better vehicles for teaching reading comprehension than accompanying workbooks. This leads to the belief that narrative texts may be regarded as the appropriate device for boosting students reading skills.

Luckily, based on the 2006 curriculum, schools all over Indonesia have incorporated a genre based approach for teaching the English subject. The writer underlies that according to the 2004 curriculum (Department of Education, 2004) the term "genre" refers to kinds of text

English curriculum incorporated by Junior high schools in Indonesia emphasized on the use of text genres or kinds of text which exist in English culture as a result of cultural intervention. These genre or kinds of texts are used in the every day life of English communities. Kinds of texts (narrative, recount, descriptive etc) serve the function of communication in the everyday life of English speaking communities.

For a few years, English language teaching in Indonesia have emphasized on text based teaching. Based on the content standard for grade VIII of junior high school, we can see that the basic competence there are several basic competence that students must achieve. Considering the focus of this study is toward reading skill, the basic competence required is the identification of information or ideas in

a narrative text. Thus the use of narrative texts to achieve the required reading skill is relevant

1.2 Scope of the Problem

To limit the extent of the study, the writer conducted an experimental study to investigate students' reading skill, especially their reading comprehension after experiencing several treatments (treatments will be further discussed in the subsequent chapters). Thus the writer limits the research on the issue of using narrative texts to increase students reading skill.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

After examining the benefits of using stories (narrative texts) as means of language teaching, it is interesting how English language teachers show little or no attention at all to it. The existing data on previous research conducted on the attention of students toward stories have triggered the writer's curiosity to the issue and the following statement of the problem "Can narrative texts be used for increasing students reading skill?"

1.4 Research Question

This research investigates the use of narrative stories to reading learning by answering this following question:

1. Do reading narrative texts have any influence on junior high school students' reading skill?

1.5 Aim of the Study

This research is aimed at:

1. Finding out the influences of reading narrative texts on junior high school students' reading skill.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is conducted to find out the use of narrative texts to increase students' reading skill. Therefore this research will bring some benefits to:

1. English as foreign language teachers who wants to develop their classroom activities.

2. Teachers who are interested in using stories, in this case narrative, to increase their students reading skills.

1.7. Assumption

Reading skill is a very important factor in English mastery. According to Crandall (2002) academic and cognitive demands increase with every grade level, the need for continual improvement in students' reading ability becomes urgent. Teachers can use a variety of strategies to ensure that students are actively engaged in reading. In accordance with what Crandall says, the writer assumes that the use of narrative stories in EFL classrooms is a method worth trying.

1.8 Hypothesis

The objective of this research is to prove the hypothesis: "Reading narrative texts have a significant influence on junior high school students' reading skill."

1.9 Population and Sample

The population of this research is the eight grade junior high school students who have learned English language for at least one year. It is time for them to realize that there are parts of English language that they can enjoy.

1.10 Method, Procedure, and Technique of the Research

This research uses the experimental method. According to Hatch and Farhady (1982), This method involves three basic characteristics, which are;(1) a control group is present, (2) the students are randomly selected and assigned to the groups and (3) a pre-test is administered to construct the initial differences between the groups.

The research will be based on the following procedure:

1. Method of Research

The researcher took two classes, or two groups. The first group (G1) as the experimental group will be given a pretest (T1), treatment (X) and posttest (T2). The second group (G2) as the control group will be given a pretest (T1) and posttest (T2), but without treatment (X).

2. The Procedure and Technique of the Research

This research is based on the following procedures

a. Administer a try out test to check the validity issue of the instruments used in the research (the pre test and post test instruments).

b. Collecting the Data

The data will be obtained from the following

1. Pretest, to check the homogeneity in the groups regarding the reading skill they are supposed to achieve during the study.

2. Posttest, employed in the end of the study to check the skill improvement of reading skill of the control and the experimental group.

c. Analyzing the data

Based on the data collection taken from the process of teaching and learning in the reading classroom, the writer will try to decipher the information by using various theories, methods, research steps and computer programs.

d. Interpreting the data

To have a clear picture of the result of investigation, the writer will elaborate the result based on the analysis supported by theories from some reference books, articles, and journals taken from the internet.

1.11 Clarification of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding of the problem investigated in this research, the writer would like to clarify the terms used in this research, which are follows:

1. Analysis: is a study of something by examining its parts (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 1995).

2. Text: A text is not of a set of words, it is actually a set of meaning. According to Halliday (1985) as cited in Nn (2004) a text is not a unit of words, it is more a "semantic" unit.

3. Narrative text: A narrative text is a kind of text which serves the function of communication. The function of the text is also to amuse, to entertain, to deal with actual or various experiences in different ways. The generic structure of a narrative text is: orientation-complication-resolution (Endang and Rini, 2006).

1.12 Organization of the Paper

The writer organizes the paper into five chapters as follows:

CHAPTER I

This section provides the introduction which generally discusses: background, limitation of the problem, statement of the problem, research question, aims of the study, significance of the study, assumption, population and sample, research methodology, clarification of the key terms, and organization of the paper.

CHAPTER II

It provides theoretical foundations, which serve as a basis for

investigating the research problem at hand. This chapter consists of reading and its importance, teaching reading in general, teaching reading based on genre based approach and teaching narrative text.

CHAPTER III

Included in this section is the methodology of the research, which discusses the method of the research and procedure of the research: research design, population and sample, variables, research procedure and data analysis.

CHAPTER IV

This chapter reports the result of the study.

CHAPTER V

It provides the researchers' interpretation of the result of this research in the form of conclusions and the implications or suggestions in accordance with the result of the research