

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides information about background, statements of the problems, aims of the research, significance of the research, limitation of the research, hypothesis, research methods, clarification of terms, and paper organization.

1.1 Background

Reading allows people acquire abundant information and enables them to express as well as to develop their knowledge. By reading, people could discover and explore numerous things outside their life. Therefore, reading is essential and is one of the most basic skills to be learnt in language learning.

Reading is not defined as an activity in which readers read every word available in certain text. Thus, it does not merely involve readers and texts. The definition of reading, according to Williams (1989: 11) is a process of looking at and understanding what has been written. It means that readers should comprehend the text when they are reading. It is also in line with Johnston (1983: 1, cited in Mickulecky, 1990: 2) who perceives reading as an activity which involves more than interaction between a reader and a text. Johnston defines reading comprehension as a complex behaviour which involves conscious as well as unconscious strategies to draw meaning which is assumed by the writer of a text. Similar to those definitions, Grabe and Stoller (2002: 17) state that reading comprehension is the ability of understanding and interpreting information in a

text correctly. Therefore, although there are some definitions that have been stated by language experts, they all have agreed that reading involves activity of taking, understanding, and interpreting information.

Besides reading has various definitions, there are also several purposes and reasons in reading. One of the purposes of reading is reading for learning. In classroom perspective, reading is essential in language learning. It is one of the four skills which is emphasized in English Language Teaching (ELT) since reading has some important roles in language learning. One of the substantial roles is the function of reading in supporting other language skills. By reading, learners can have more practice in language that they have acquired from listening and speaking. Reading also lets language learners practice and re-use the language in writing (Williams, 1989: 13).

Regarding the importance of reading, the selection of good materials is needed in language learning since there are abundant materials that can be used in English classroom. The materials may come from course books, text collection books, simulated authentic texts, and the real authentic text or authentic materials (Williams, 1989: 24).

The use of authentic materials has been discussed as well as has been debated for quite a long time. Dumitrescu (2000) states that in the last ten years, the use of authentic materials has become progressively more popular in learning situation. The term authentic materials or authentic texts refer to any text which is not written specifically for language learning or language teaching purposes (Williams, 1989: 25; Harmer, 1991 cited in Matsuta in Kilickaya, 2004; Wallace,

1992: 145 cited in Berardo, 2006; Nunan, 1999 cited in Oura, 2000). It means that authentic texts are written for native speakers of certain language and will be used by the speakers of the language in communication circumstances outside language classroom. Thus, most everyday objects in target language whether spoken or written such as magazines, newspaper, tourism brochure, signs, advertisement, menus, and recipes can be include as authentic materials.

There are several reasons that underpin the importance of using authentic materials. One of the main purposes of using authentic materials in the classroom is to represent the learners to as much real language as possible. Even if the classroom is not a “real-life” situation, authentic materials have a very important place within it. Providing some authentic materials in the classroom is believed can give a sense of achievement and confidence (Williams, 2006: 25).

Besides that, the use of authentic materials is motivating. Guariento and Morley (2001, cited in Berardo, 2006) state that extracting real information from a real text in a new or different language can be extremely motivating. According to them, exposing language learners to ‘real’ language will increase their motivation. Similar to this, Nuttall (1996: 172) says that authentic texts can be motivating because they are proof that the language is used for real-life purposes by real people.

Furthermore, regarding the language-culture connection, culture can not be separated in language learning. Since the aim of language learning is to communicate, the process involved in learning is not only making students to produce grammatical sentences but also enabling students to function the

language effectively in appropriate context and society. As many scholars have highlighted the impossibility of teaching language without culture, the use of authentic materials is believed can improve students' cultural knowledge. It is due to the richness of cultural content in the authentic materials (Wright, 2005; Philips and Shettlesworth, 1978; Clarke, 1989; Peacock 1997, cited in Richards, 2001, in Kilickaya, 2004).

On the other hand, although the use of authentic materials is interesting and challenging, Geddes and White (1978 cited in Hadley, 2001: 188) argue that using only unedited, non pedagogical materials in the classroom would seem to create more problems since materials are often difficult to select and obtain for learners at lower proficiency levels. Besides, some scholars also have stated that authentic materials may be frustrating for beginners (Ur, 1984; Dunkel, 1986, cited in Hadley, 2001: 188).

In Indonesia, the use of authentic materials is considered as a new thing. Many teachers use English textbooks, their home-materials, or even students' worksheet which is usually called as *Lembar Kerja Siswa (LKS)*. Fortunately, many English textbooks have begun to adapt the need of authenticity of the texts. It is shown by plentiful texts in different kind of genres which are taken or adapted from many sources. However, besides using English textbooks containing authentic materials or simulated authentic materials, teachers should be creative to find out more authentic materials. It is intended to give a new atmosphere in learning circumstances.

Meanwhile, although the use of authentic materials has still been discussed, to prove and support the theories, some researchers have conducted some studies. Hwang (2007) states that by using authentic materials, students are encouraged to use the vocabulary and expressions in those materials for their own production of English. The previous research that has been conducted by Berardo (2006) has shown that authentic materials are effective in teaching reading. Since the use of authentic materials gives sense of achievement and encourages further reading, students have reflected changes in the use of language. Students also have found out that the use of authentic materials is motivating and challenging. In addition, in English teaching in Indonesian context, Sari (2002) through her research has shown that the use of authentic materials in teaching procedural text is effective in improving students' speaking ability.

Considering the aforementioned issues and the problems above, it will be interesting to investigate the implementation of using authentic materials in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. For that reason, this paper will try to investigate the effectiveness of using authentic materials in improving English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' reading comprehension.

1.2 Statements of the Problems

The issue to be discussed in this paper will be summarized in the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant difference in students' reading comprehension after the use of authentic materials?

2. How is the students' response towards the use of authentic materials in teaching reading?

1.3 Aims of the Research

In general, the study was conducted to find out the effectiveness in using authentic materials in improving EFL students' reading comprehension.

Being specific, the study investigated the information covering these areas:

1. To investigate whether there is a significant difference in students' reading comprehension after the use of authentic materials.
2. To find out the students' response towards the use of authentic materials in teaching reading.

1.4 Significance of the Research

Generally, the study is expected to prove the effectiveness of using authentic materials and describe the way it is used to improve students' reading comprehension. Being specific, this study could be used as a portrayal of the benefit of using authentic materials in learning English. This study is also hoped to enrich and to support theories of teaching reading. Besides, it is expected to provide beneficial information and to give a contribution for language teachers in choosing reading materials, determining appropriate technique in teaching reading, enhancing students' knowledge, and improving students' reading comprehension.

1.5 Limitation of the Research

The study was limited on the implementation of using authentic materials in improving EFL students' reading comprehension in the first grade of senior high school. The study also had limitation in terms of time, particularly for the treatment of the experimental group. The materials that were used during the treatment are some printed materials or texts which are obtained from the internet, tourism guide book, and imported magazine.

1.6 Hypothesis

According to Best (1981), hypothesis means a formal affirmative statement predicting a single research outcome, a tentative explanation of the relationship between two or more variables. It also limits the focus of the investigation to a definite target and determines what observations are to be made.

Furthermore, Hatch and Farhady (1982: 85-86) state that the most common hypothesis that is used in experimental research is null hypothesis, which states that there is no difference after receiving the special treatment.

Therefore, the null hypothesis in this study was formulated as follows: there is no significant difference between students' post-test score in experimental group and students' post-test score in control group after the treatment.

1.7 Research Methods

The study applied quasi-experimental method by using nonrandomized or non-equivalent control group pre-test and post-test design since the goal of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of certain method. The design was used

because of the limitation of time and school regulation. The design also used due to the impracticable random assignment of schools and classrooms (Kerlinger, 1970 in Cohen and Manion, 1994: 169).

According to Isaac and Michael (1982: 54), the purpose of quasi-experimental research is to approximate the conditions of true experiment in a setting which does not allow the control and/or manipulation of all relevant variables. Hatch and Farhady (1982: 23) also state that when conducting a research in social science or linguistics, it is not realistic to limit the research to the experimental design only. It is due to human behaviours, language learning, and language behaviour which the researcher deals with.

The quasi experimental design using nonrandomized control group pre-test and post test design can be depicted as follow:

Group	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental Group	O ₁	X	O ₂
Control Group	O ₃	.	O ₄

Note:

- X represents the exposure of a group to an experimental variable
- O refers to the process of observation or measurement

(Campbell and Stanley, 1963 as cited in Cohen and Manion, 1994: 169)

The procedure of the study consisted of several steps. The first was organizing the teaching procedure in experimental and control group. The experimental group was given a treatment by giving authentic materials while the control group was given no treatment. The second was organizing the research

instruments. The research instruments used in the study were reading comprehension test and questionnaire. Then, the reading comprehension test was pilot-tested and analyzed in order to find out the validity, reliability, difficulty index and discrimination index of the instruments. The third step was administering pre-test at the beginning of the study to the experimental and control group in order to find out initial ability of reading comprehension between the two groups. The fourth step was organizing the lesson plan and conducting teaching experiment using authentic materials in experimental group. The fifth was administering post-test to experimental and control group to find out the result of the treatment at the end of the study. Then, questionnaire was administered to experimental group to know the students' response towards the use of authentic materials. The last was analyzing the data. All of the data which were obtained from the pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire were analyzed based on data analysis procedure.

1.7.1 Population and Sample

According to Best (1981), population is any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher, whereas sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. As quasi-experimental method does not allow random selection of subject, the sample of this study was chosen purposively since the classes used as the sample have the same number of students.

The population of this investigation is the first grade students of SMAN 10 Bandung, whereas the sample of this study is two classes of the first grade. One

was taken as experimental class (X-10) and another was taken as the control class (X-8).

1.7.2. Data Collection

The data of the study were collected through pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire. Pre-test was given to both groups before the treatment of using authentic materials to find out the initial ability on reading comprehension between the two groups. Meanwhile, post-test was administered in the last program of the research and was given to both groups. In addition, to know students' response towards the use of authentic materials in learning English, questionnaire was given to the experimental group.

1.7.3. Data Analysis

The data of this study were analyzed through quantitative approach. The data obtained from pre-test and post-test were analyzed by using SPSS 15.0 for windows. The procedures of analyzing the data of students' scores consisted of two steps. The first was analyzing test of normality distribution and homogeneity variances taken from students pre-test and post-test score. It was done as requirements to conduct independent *t*-test. The second was analyzing students' pre-test and post-test score using independent sample *t*-test in SPSS 15.0. It was aimed to find out the degree of significance of students' reading comprehension of both groups whether in pre-test or in post-test. Paired sample *t*-test was also used to see a progress on pre-test and post-test score in each group. Then, the data obtained from questionnaire were analyzed by calculating the frequency of

students who choose the items given. After that, the findings of the study were summarized to determine the effectiveness of using authentic materials in English as a Foreign Language classroom and its benefits in improving students' reading comprehension.

1.8 Clarification of Terms

1. Reading comprehension is a complex behaviour which involves conscious and unconscious use of various strategies, including problem-solving strategies, to build a model of the meaning which is assumed by the writer. (Johnston, 1883 as cited in Mickulecky, 1990: 2).
2. Authentic materials can be defined as spoken or written language data that have been produced in the course of genuine communication, and not specifically written for purposes of language teaching. (Nunan, 1999 as cited in Oura, 2000).

1.9 Paper Organization

Chapter I is Introduction. This chapter discusses information about the background, statements of the problem, significance of the research, aims of the research, limitation of the research, clarification of the terms, and paper organization.

Chapter II is Theoretical Foundation of the Research. This chapter discusses theoretical foundation and findings from other related research that relevant to this research would be provided at this section.

Chapter III is Research Methodology. This chapter discusses the methodology of the research, which includes method of the research, research subject, research instrument, research procedures, and data analysis.

Chapter IV is Findings and Discussions. This chapter discusses research findings and discussions to answer the research questions.

Chapter V is Conclusion and Suggestion. This chapter discusses conclusion from the findings of this study and also some suggestions for English teachers and further study.

