

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of this study. This chapter consists of background, research question, research purpose, limitation of the study, the scope of the study, clarification of terms, and organization of paper are also presented.

1.1 Background

People read everyday, ranging from reading newspapers to brochures or even advertisements on TV. In doing so, people need to have good reading skills. Thus, reading skill has been a crucial part in people's lives and so has been for students at the school. In learning to read at the school, students are guided to learn vocabulary items, grammar, or punctuation that is useful to construct sentences and paragraph (Rivers and Temperley, 1978). Besides, reading can be a good way to practice English in non-English speaking country and also a good way to discover new facts, and experiences (Mikulecky & Jeffries, 1996, pp. 1-2). From the statement, it can be said that reading is one important way to improve English language skills.

Unfortunately, a study discovers that 15-year-old Indonesian students have low reading performances (Kompas, cited in Sukyadi & Hasanah, 2010). To be more detail, the study finds that there are 37,6 % of 15-year-old Indonesian students who are only able to read the texts without comprehending the meaning of the text. Meanwhile, there are only 24,8 % out of them who are able to connect the texts to their prior knowledge and comprehend the texts. This study is supported by the research of the Organization for Economic, Cooperation, and Development (OECD) which finds that tenth graders in Indonesia have low reading performance (Grazella, 2011). Departing from the findings, many Indonesian students are not able to comprehend reading text. Moreover, many teachers in Indonesia still employ teacher-centered classroom in which the teaching activities only involve listening to teacher's explanations, making lists of

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difficult words, translating English text into first language, asking learners to read loudly or silently, and getting students to answer questions which are related to the text (Sunandar, 2006). In a teacher-centered approach, there is no group work, whereas students' interaction within group work is an important element in the learning process (Piaget, cited in *The Concept of Classroom*, 2004). Moreover, knowledge itself can be acquired through dialogue (Vygotsky, 1978, cited in Forman & Cazden, 2004, p.180). Thus, it can be said that teacher-centered approach may not be effective to construct understanding among students (Noor, 2011).

Therefore, the demand of having a better learning to read for language students directs the need to develop teaching and learning approaches of reading skill in the classroom. An effective language classroom requires meaningful use of the language in which the teaching material should be in connection with students' prior knowledge and interests (Brown, 2001, pp. 56-57). It indicates that students' prior experiences and interests will encourage learners to actively construct their understanding. In consequence, interactive and fun activities should be carried out in the language classroom to get the students' active participation in the learning process of reading.

Based on the previous theories, it can be said that one way to trigger students' success in reading comprehension is through Constructivist Approach. Constructivist Approach is considered appropriate by many experts to provide meaningful use of the language in the classroom. It is proven by some prior research which investigates the use of Constructivist Approach. In Turkey, a qualitative study of reading activity through a CA (Altun & Büyükduman, 2007 in Mvududu & Burgess, 2012) reveals that the students appeared to be more active on task during the classroom activity and they were better able to connect their learning to previous knowledge by participating in group work. In addition, Kim (2005), who conducted a quantitative study of constructivist approach in English subject in China, identifies that constructivist teaching is more effective than teacher-centered teaching is in terms of academic achievement and it has some positive effects upon students' motivation, anxiety towards learning and

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self-monitoring. It can be drawn a conclusion that Constructivist Approach is considered appropriate to be implemented in teaching and learning reading comprehension.

Constructivist Approach refers to a teaching approach that guides learners to construct their own understanding of the new information based on learners' prior knowledge (Bruner, 1996). Therefore, the learning material should be as authentic as possible to the real-world situation where learners will possibly take part (Lavadenz, 2011). In addition, the interaction between learners and their current knowledge and also the learning situation which is created by the role of teacher evoke the occurrence of an active learning (Moore, 2004). This element supports the use of CA in teaching procedure text, as the focus of the present study, because procedure text exists in the real-world situation (Gerot and Wignell, 1995). The use of prior knowledge in CA also supports the implementation in teaching procedure text since procedure text can be found in the daily life, such as in making a cup of instant noodle and in creating social media account.

Furthermore, CA has a number of characteristics namely the learners are actively involved, the environment is democratic, the activities are interactive and student-centered, the teacher facilitates learning process in which learners are encouraged to be responsible and independent of what they have learned (Gray, 2000). Those characteristics show that Constructivist Approach tries to use the meaningful and automaticity teaching principles that can encourage learners to comprehend the reading text better (Brown, 2001, pp. 55-57). Based on the experts' findings of constructivist study and also its elements, thus, Constructivist Approach can be suitable and applicable to be used in teaching reading in procedure text.

Regarding the background of the study as well as the importance of reading comprehension in learning English for EFL students in Indonesia, this research is aimed at investigating the use of Constructivist Approach to enhance students' reading comprehension and students' perceptions towards the approach to their reading comprehension.

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1.2 The Statement of Problems

This study is directed to answer:

1. Is Constructivist Approach effective to enhance students' scores in reading procedure text?
2. What are students' perceptions toward the use of Constructivist Approach in teaching the reading of procedure text?

1.3 The Aims of the Study

The aim of this study is to achieve these following objectives:

1. To find out the enhancement of students' scores in reading procedure text by the use of Constructivist Approach; and
2. To find out students' perceptions toward the use of Constructivist Approach in teaching the reading of procedure text.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the use of Constructivist Approach in enhancing students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, the use of Constructivist Approach focuses on procedure text in tenth grade of Senior High School. In addition, this study was conducted to one Senior High School in Cimahi.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

This study is expected to improve an innovative teaching and learning approach that is used in the language classroom in order to enhance students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, the research can be used as a reference for English teachers to develop their teaching skill.

This study can also be useful and helpful for English language teachers as one of the sources in teaching English through constructivist classroom. This study may also inspire other researchers to investigate issues that are related to the implementation and development of Constructivist Approach.

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1.6 Clarification of Terms

In order to avoid misinterpretation, several terms are clarified as follows:

1. Constructivist is the adjective from the word 'construct' which is defined as to build something or to put together different parts to form something whole (Cambridge University Press, 2008). Meanwhile, approach is defined as the act of coming nearer (Oxford University Press, 2013). Therefore, Constructivist Approach means the act of getting nearer to achieve something by putting together some parts. In addition, CA is defined as an innovative teaching and learning approach which leads students to build their own understanding (Hoover, 1996, cited in Mvududu and Burgess, 2012). Here, CA utilizes several elements in order to construct learners' comprehension, they are learning interesting and real-world topics, interacting with teacher and other students, and making connection between what they have known with the new idea (Philips, 2000). In this study, those principles of Constructivist Approach are employed to enhance students' reading comprehension.
2. Procedure is an usual or proper way of doing something while text is a main printed part of a book (Oxford University Press, 2013). Thus, procedure text is printed words that contain of a proper way of doing something. In addition, procedure text is a text which describes how something is accomplished through a sequence of an action or steps (Gerot and Wignell, 1995). Moreover, procedure text is also defined as a text which is presented in a logical sequence of events where it is broken down into small steps in sequence (Gatzke, 2003). In this research, Constructivist Approach is employed to enhance students' reading comprehension, especially in procedure text.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This paper is presented into five chapters as follow:

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

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In this chapter, the paper elaborates the background of the research. It discusses reading comprehension which becomes the focus of the research and why analyzing students' reading comprehension is important. In addition, this chapter states the research questions, the aims of the study, the limitation of the study, the significance of the study, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

CHAPTER II : THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This chapter explains some theories in relation to reading, procedure text, constructivist approach, and the elements of constructivist approach.

CHAPTER III : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter gives clear explanation about how the study is conducted and analyzed. The data analysis also briefly explained.

CHAPTER IV : FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of this research. In the discussion part, the findings are clearly analyzed and explained.

CHAPTER V : CONCLUSION

This chapter explains the conclusion and several suggestion of the research based on the analysis in chapter four. The conclusion states the answer to the research questions about the effectiveness of Constructivist Approach to enhance students' reading comprehension in procedure text and also the students' perceptions toward the implementation of this approach. There are also several suggestions for further research in relation to the use of Constructivist Approach.