CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Reading preferences have been studied for centuries by many researchers in the world. It always dramatically changes over the time period because of the movement of technology and the books published. In a year a thousand new books are published for any kind of reading purposes (the *Jakarta Post*, January, 2007). Various titles, topics and themes are introduced to please the reader. This is why reading preference studies are gradually developed.

The first published research on reading interest as cited in Quintana's research was made by True in 1889, entitled What My Children Read. Since then reading interest and preference have been studied in widespread theme and research (Norvell 1950, 1958).

Reading preference research has many significant advantages to achieve. For example, teachers use the research to help them design curriculum which are used to make children become excited in learning, and to build an interest in reading. In addition, children's psychologists have used their knowledge of children's interest to address their cognitive and emotional development. School librarians find it useful to add new books collection that students are interested in.

Although the ideal advantages of reading preference are obviously logical, especially in educational purposes, the researcher assumed that survey on reading preference toward students in Indonesia seem not to be priority. In line with this is Dewey

argues, cited in Alwasilah (the *Pikiran Rakyat*, December 27 2006), states that he absolutely disagrees with traditional-school practices, especially in five main points. Firstly, it is autocratic teachers, secondly is textbooks-based teaching practices. The third is a passive learning demanding to memorize facts. Fourth is isolated learning from a real-life based teaching, and the last one is physical punishment in order to enforce students' discipline.

One of the concerns is when teachers are depended on text books, and isolated from a real –life based teaching practice. Textbooks are often written for global market and may not reflect the interests and needs of students and may require adaptation (Isnaeni 2004). Language learning, especially teaching literature with the learning process and material come from daily life, is indirectly affected by this change. Teaching literature should use authentic learning material, such as magazines, novels, books, since they can give unlimited source to relate language to students' experience. Although most of teachers still use textbooks, teachers are ideally aware and respond it positively to make a better teaching material.

Teaching literature, on the other hand, can introduce students to various reading materials, from the easiest to the hardest one as students feel about. The starting point is to take students to where they can express their interests and their present needs and provide them with challenging material that they like to read.

Since the main purpose of teaching literature is to encourage students' personal involvement and interest, besides to improve students' cultural and language enrichment, Lazar (1993) points alternatives to select material to achieve these purposes. One of them

is to provide students with questionnaire designed to find out what kinds of material they read on their own language and what kind of material they would like to read in English. Knowing students' reading tastes will be very helpful for language teachers. It can be taken into consideration before teachers order many books or select reading material.

However some of books students' interested in could be a book with doubtful quality, it is very risky to introduce students to them. But Nuttal (1997) perceives this issue in some good ways. She states that choosing books that students are interested in with doubtful quality is one concern, but students' willingness to read them and motivation by reading them are the first step to a successful learning. She also adds teachers can wear them on to worthier material later. Alwasilah (2001:41) agrees with this by saying that literature should be taught following the principle of easy to difficult and simple to complicated.

All of research and journals found were conducted in United States of America. Therefore this research was conducted in Indonesian context, especially toward senior high school students. Teaching literature is chosen because there are many approaches, text analysis and methodology that have been introduced to how teaching literature is, but what students like to read is questionable, since there are no identifiable reading preferences studies in Indonesia. Reading preference study might give contribution to this issue. Connecting to the facts and theories above, this research intends to find out students' reading preferences for multi-genre books in literature subject. The research is a survey toward senior high school students of language program in Bandung Area, West Java.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Some problems that can be identified in the research are formulated as follows:

1. What are students' reading preferences for multi-genre books?

2. What are students' attitudes toward teaching literature?

1.3 Aims of the Study

Based on the problems formulated above, the researcher investigates this study in order to meet the following aims:

1. To find out students' reading preferences for multi-genre books.

2. To find out students' attitudes toward literature subject.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 Research method

The method used is descriptive or survey. The descriptive method is used since this research is not to search for something or make the prediction. It only describes the situation or phenomenon. According to Khan (1990) descriptive method is also known as survey method. It is concerned with the present attempts to determine the status of the phenomenon under investigation.

1.4.2 Study participants

The participants involved in this research are the second and the third grade of senior high school students in Bandung area, West Java. All of them are language program students. They learn English and Indonesian literature in their classroom. There are 412 students participating in the study. Since not all senior high schools in Bandung hold language program, then senior high schools participating in the research are only those that hold language program. The schools in survey area have already conducted language program for several years.

1.4.3 Methods of collecting data

In collecting data, the researcher employed questionnaire. It was used to obtain specific data gathered from the respondents.

1.4.4 Methods of data analysis

In analyzing the data, the researcher used the following steps:

1. classifying and coding the result of the questionnaires in each item of the questions based on respondents' gender.

2. interpreting and displaying the findings by analyzing the result for each item

3. drawing the conclusion

4. writing final report

1.5 Limitation of the study

The scope of the study was limited to find out reading preferences of 412 senior high school students of language program for multi-genre books and their attitudes toward literature subject in Bandung area, West Java.

1.6 Significance of the study

The result of this study is expected to contribute and give some informative data in teaching and learning literature in Indonesia. The findings are hopefully able to:

1. Inform the teachers about the students' reading preferences for multi-genre books.

2. Present a real portrait of the students' attitudes toward teaching literature in the classroom.

1.7 Clarification of Terms

In order to avoid misinterpretation of the terms, the researcher clarifies each term as follows;

a. Reading preference is a stated or implied choice between several reading options (Lynch-Brown and Tomlison, 1993;11)

b. Senior high school of language program student is a person who is studying in second or third grade of senior high schools and choosing language program as secondary program.

c. Genre means the category of different pieces of literature. For example, historical fiction, horror, religion ,etc. (Frazier, 2002)

d. Teaching is an act of giving lesson by teachers (Oxford Dictionary)

e. Literature is the use of language to evoke a personal response in the reader or listener (Lazar, 1993)

f. Attitude is way of thinking or behaving (Oxford Dictionary)

1.8 Organization of the Paper

The organization of this paper is as follows:

Chapter I Introduction discusses the research background, problems, and aims of the study, significance of the study, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II Theoretical Foundation discusses the definition of reading, theories of reading preferences, theories of teaching literature and the relationship reading preferences and teaching literature.

Chapter III Research Methodology discusses the research method, population and sample, data collection, and analysis of the data.

Chapter IV Findings and Discussion discusses the result of the research and its discussion concerning the collected data.

Chapter V Conclusions and Suggestions discusses the conclusions of the conducted research and some suggestions for further studies.