

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the research which elaborates the basic thought of why the research is administered; research questions, aims of the research, scope of the research, hypothesis, significance of the research, and research methods which covers research design population and sample. It also provides data collection; research instrument, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

Since English has become an international language, more and more people learn English. The importance of English as an International language has engaged people to learn English as early as possible. Therefore, in mastering English, one of the important skills is reading. Reading helps the students improve their general language skill in English as well as speaking, listening and writing, because it forces them to think in English, to build their vocabulary, to improve writing skill, and to help them finding out new ideas, in facts and experiences (Oak, 2010 and Miculeckly, 2004). It was supported by Moats (1999:7) who believes that reading is fundamental skill upon which all formal education depends.

As a set of problem, there is a widespread case among academics in Asia that young learner should focus on speaking and listening skills than reading and

writing (Paul, 2003:83). Thus far, there are students who have difficulties in reading descriptive text. It was proven by the research conducted by Drummond (2005), there were about ten million children have difficulties in learning reading. Whereas, Paul (2003:83) suggests that being able to read and write enables English foreign learners to speak more communicatively.

In fact, the problems can be solved by applying interesting media, regard this, Brown (1989) state that the effectiveness of teaching was influenced by teaching media. Alesandri & Rigney (1981), Levie & Lenzt (1982), Levin, Angli & Carney (1987), suggest that there are four functions that visuals served in reading. First, they repeat the text's content. Second, they improve the coherence of the text. Third, they provide more concrete information to the readers. Finally, they do not only illustrate the text but also they develop the readers' interest in the material. The combined effect of these four functions can facilitate students to understand the text (Yin, 2009).

In addition, MacLeod (1980), as cited in Wilson (2001) believes that there is a relationship between the processes of comprehending a linguistic statement corresponding to a visual scene. One of those appropriate visual media is the use of pictures. This statement is supported by Raimes (1983:27) who believes that picture provides a stimulating focus for students' attention. Accordingly, picture helps teacher in teaching reading and developing students' reading ability.

Furthermore, previous research in the use of pictures in teaching reading (in this case, vocabulary) has been conducted by other researcher; Koncara (1995); and Amalia (2009). The result of the studies showed that pictures can

improve student's ability in reading and writing, and also engage students' motivation in learning vocabulary.

Referring to the problems and theories discussed above, the researcher would like to investigate the use of pictures in teaching reading in descriptive text to junior high school.

1.2 Research of Questions

The research proposes two research questions as follows:

1. Is the use of pictures effective in improving students' reading comprehension?
2. What are the students' opinions about the benefits of using pictures in teaching reading descriptive text?

1.3 Clarification of Terms

In order to avoid misperception on the key terms in this study, the following are the clarification of the terms:

1. Pictures as media : In this research, pictures are a story told in words and pictures (Glesson, 2003)
2. Reading comprehension: Reading comprehension is the process of inferring the ideas and information that depends on the information contained and the background information available with the reader (Shriley 1999, cited in Rosmalia 2008).

1.4 Organization of the Paper

This paper of study will be arranged in five chapters:

Chapter I – Introduction. It provides background of the study, research questions, clarification of the key term, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II – Theoretical Foundation. It consists of theoretical foundation; reading, pictures, and descriptive text.

Chapter III – Research Methodology. It describes the methodology which covers the process in collecting data, analyzing data, and the reason for choosing the research methodology employed in the research.

Chapter IV – Findings and Discussion. It interprets the findings from the data collected.

Chapter V – Conclusion and Suggestion. It contains with the conclusion of the research and suggestion for further research.