

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Reading is an activity that literate people can do for getting information and pleasure. By reading we could obtain a lot of benefits e.g. widening our perspective, extending our knowledge. Asfadiyar, General Manager of *Mizan* Publisher Bandung, (*Pikiran Rakyat*, 4 July 2003) convinces us about the importance of reading developed since the early age. He says:

*Melalui membaca, anak-anak akan mendapatkan pengetahuan dan pengalaman yang luas sehingga mereka bisa mengikuti dan menikmati suatu diskusi dibandingkan dengan teman-temannya yang tidak suka membaca. Mereka lebih mudah mengolah informasi baru, punya lebih banyak tambahan ide dan lebih cepat melihat kepelikan yang ada. Selain itu, karena memiliki kosakata yang banyak dan beragam, mereka akan mudah menulis dengan baik dan mengekspresikan pikiran dan perasaan mereka. (*Pikiran Rakyat*, 4 July 2003)*

(By reading children could extend their knowledge, and it makes them more able to have and enjoy a discussion compared to their friends who are not interested in reading. Those who love reading are easy to keep up with new information, have a lot of ideas, see existing problems. Due to possessing a lot of vocabulary, they will be easy to write and to express their thought and feeling.)

In fact, reading habit among Indonesian people has not been developed well yet, since the oral tradition is still very strong in Indonesia (Campbell, 1995). Saputra, the Vice Governor of West Java, (*Pikiran Rakyat*, 4 July 2003) says the same statement that:

*Rendahnya sumber daya manusia di Jawa Barat salah satu faktor penyebabnya karena belum terbangunnya budaya membaca secara menyeluruh. Di kalangan anak didik, di seluruh strata juga memprihatinkan. Dari murid di sekolah dasar sampai perguruan tinggi, minat baca mereka masih jauh dari ideal. (*Pikiran Rakyat*, 4 July 2003)*

(Lack of good human resources in West Java is due to the lack of reading habit. The interest of reading on the levels of educated people- from elementary school students to higher education ones- is not quite ideal.)

Meanwhile, teaching learning process of literature in schools is considered not to encourage the development of reading habit as a core of the lesson. Since teachers still focus on efferent stance and neglect aesthetical stance (Alwasilah, *Media Indonesia*, June 30, 2001). They do not give a chance to students to express their feeling and thought when or after reading a literary work. Concerning with this issue, Morrow, et al (1990 cited from Sweet, 1993) presents their research finding that it is important to provide children daily with positive experiences involving stories and other literature. Such experiences include reading and retelling stories, discussing stories critically, role-playing, responding to stories both orally and in writing or through expressive art (e.g. drawing), and sharing books with peers. Cox and Many (1992) believe that by asking the students to respond to a story, the literary evocation will be revealed. They quote the meaning of literary evocation from Rosenblatt (1985) that it is the process in which the reader selects out ideas, sensations, feelings, and images drawn from his past linguistic, literary, and life experience, and synthesizes them new experience. Pugh (1988) adds that the most frequently given advice for stimulating creative reader response is simply to surround children with good reading.

Toffler (cited from Campbell, 1995) says that the world has passed from the industrial age to the age of information, information is the new capital and control of information is now more important than control of money. One of the ways to get

and keep up with new information is that people have to read, and a facility to read is reading material. It consists of many kinds of material, various written genres are shaped in books and novel is one of them, it is a long written story (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1992). It could be enjoyed by all levels of ages, from children to adults. The importance of books is stated by Cooper-Mullin & Coye (1998 cited from Heine, et al, 1999). They say that books play an important role in development and growth of ideas. Our future is shaped by our childhood, and the books of our childhood are such an important part of our journey. It is also added by Hunt (1994) saying that children's books are important tools in reading education.

In line with the increase of educated people and high technology applied, people are getting aware of the importance of developing reading habit from the early age and the way we read. To develop reading habit, people have to be aware of their reading experience, and the reading experience is influenced by the stances readers take towards texts (Briton et.al., 1984 cited from Beach & Hynds, 1991). Reader response is one of the ways to identify reader stance. Sweet, et al (1993) says that responding is a natural part of reading process. By responding to the stories students read, the students have a chance to express what they feel and think when they are reading or after reading, they are expected to enjoy what they read and think critically. In turn, this event is assumed to be able to trigger their interest to love reading.

To respond to a text, we need an object to read, and the choice of the object has to be considered appropriately. The following statement revealed by Bishop (1990) could be base of the choice of the book:

We ought to help young people to choose literature that can engage them in the kind of thinking and feeling and imagining that will help them grow into decent, contributing members of this society. Building literary experiences on books that deal with individual freedom, love, friendship, loyalty, courage, and hope, can be a powerful beginning.

Many publishing companies try to accommodate people's interest in developing their reading habit by cooperating with authors and translators to publish books for all levels of ages, whether the books are original or translated. Professional authors have created many kinds of books from fiction to science. Even, amateurs have participated in writing, some of them turn out to be brilliant, it is proved by the number of the books sold. One of the amateurs was J.K. Rowling, a single parent who was raising her daughter living in Edinburgh (at the time she wrote her first novel of *Harry Potter*). Surprisingly, her first novel, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* written in a local café during her daughter's naps, is acclaimed as an international phenomenon. Her novel was analyzed in mass media and got several awards including Children Book of the Year from British Book Awards and the Smarties Prize (<http://www.scholastic.com/harrypotter/author/index.htm>).

Based on the description above, the choice of the novels of *Harry Potter* to be the object of the response is quite reasonable. The power of the stories of *Harry Potter* is on the author's imagination without overlooking human values. The choice

is also supported by the statement of Hunt (1994) saying that a book for children is not a good book unless it is enjoyed by the majority of children.

From the issues and statements above, it can be inferred that this report was attempted to investigate the study of how students felt and thought when reading the novels of Harry Potter, i.e., how they responded to the stories when they were reading them. This study was also aimed to seek the similar and different responses to the stories made by Indonesian students and foreign ones to find the background of the similarity and the difference. Factors influencing the students' reading habit were also investigated.

1.2 The Purposes of the Research

To make it clear, it is necessary to present the purposes of the research. This study was attempted to seek explanation of kinds of stance the students had in responding to the stories. The similar and different responses made by Indonesian and foreign students were explored to get the background of the similarity and the difference. This study was also held to investigate the factors influencing the students' reading habit.

1.3 Research Questions

This study was conducted to answer the following questions:

1.3.1 What kinds of response did the students give to the Harry Potter stories based on the measure of reader stance proposed by Rosenblatt?

1.3.2 Were there any similar and different responses to the stories made by the Indonesian and foreign students?

1.3.3 What factors influenced the students' reading habit?

1.4 Significance of the Research

A research on "Readers' Responses to the Novels of *Harry Potter*" is expected to gain information that contributes significantly to the instruction of literature. Knowing how the students respond to the story will indicate their reading ability, so their teachers will be more easily to develop their belief and strategy to enhance their reading habit.

Response to literary works by writing provides an opportunity to promote reflection about the literary works. It involves students in linking their ideas to those put forward by the author, teacher, or other students. In this way, the students have a chance to think critically, and understand the difference of their responses to the same text. Therefore, the students will be used to thinking critically, and democratic teaching will be created.

The factors influencing the students' reading habit are expected to be found out by examining the background of the students. Thus, the factors are more readily designed to make the students successful readers.

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters preceded with Approval forms of the Supervisors and the Examiners, Preface, Acknowledgment, Abstract, Table of Contents, List of Tables, List of Appendices, and followed by Bibliography and Appendices.

Chapter I Introduction presents Background of the Research; Purposes of the Research; Research Questions; Significance of the Research; and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter II Theoretical Review reveals the theories dealing with the research, the theories are about Reading; Text, Reader, and Transaction; Reader Response; Literature; and Related Research Findings. Chapter III Methodology describes Research Design, Research Sites, Participants of the Research, Characteristics of the Participants, Data Collection Techniques consisting of Open-ended Questionnaire and Semi-structured Interview, Data Analysis, and Short Description of the Novels of Harry Potter. Chapter IV Data Analysis, Findings and Discussion presents analysis of the data gained from respondents, the data was classified into categories to make it easy to interpret. Measure of reader stance towards a literary work on efferent to aesthetic continuum proposed by Rosenblatt was used to evaluate the responses of students. After the data has been analyzed, findings are gained and then they are discussed to see how they fit into the research questions and the existing theories. Chapter V reveals Conclusions that can be drawn from the research and

Suggestions for those who are concerned with developing reading habit especially reading habit from early age.



Table 1.1

Research Continuum

Purposes	Research Questions	Significances	Methodology
<p>1. To seek explanation of kinds of stance the students had in responding to the stories.</p> <p>2. To find similar and different responses made by Indonesian and foreign students to get the background of the similarity and the difference.</p> <p>3. To investigate the factors influencing the students' reading habit.</p>	<p>1. What kinds of response do the students give to the Harry Potter stories based on the measure of reader stance proposed by Rosenblatt?</p> <p>2. Are there any similar and different responses to the stories made by the Indonesian and foreign students?</p> <p>3. What factors influence the students' reading habit?</p>	<p>1. Knowing how students respond to the story will indicate their reading ability, so their teachers will be more easily to develop their belief and strategy to enhance their reading habit.</p> <p>2. Response to a text by writing provides an opportunity to promote reflection about it. The reflection involves students in linking their ideas to those put forward by the author, teacher, or other students. In this way, the students have a chance to think critically, and understand the difference of their responses to the same text. Therefore, democratic teaching will be created.</p> <p>3. By examining</p>	<p>1. In this qualitative research, a case study was employed, since the case selected took place in the respondents of the sixth grade of elementary school students at Assalaam and Bandund International School.</p> <p>2. Purposive sampling was used, as the students chosen were the ones who had read <i>Harry Potter</i> stories.</p> <p>3. The questionnaire consisted of three categories: first one to gain information about the social background of the students; second one to get the data of their background of literacy; third one</p>

		<p>the background of the students, the factors influencing the students' reading habit are found out, thus they are more readily designed to make them successful readers.</p>	<p>to gain their responses to the stories.</p> <p>4. To categorize the reader's response towards a story, the measure of reader stance on an efferent to aesthetic continuum proposed by Rosenblatt was used.</p>
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