CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, the theoretical framework, the hypothesis, the definition of the key terms, the assumptions and the organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a tool of communication used by people whether it is spoken or it is written. In this globalization era, English is widely used as language to communicate around the world. In Indonesia, English is still known as a Foreign Language that makes learning English not easy in this country. In learning English, students have to master four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and three language components (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation). In order to master English Language, one of those important skills is reading.

"Reading is a language process requiring the understanding of written language" (Heilman et al.1981:50). Reading is used for a variety of different purposes both in and out of school. This is reflected in the wide range of terms used to describe kinds of reading: responsive reading, reading for pleasure, reading for learning, reading for information, and so on (Ronald Fyfe and Evelyne Mitchell, 1985). As a learner, one of those purposes that is used is reading for learning. In teaching and learning process, a good material is needed in order to make the

process going well and supporting the learners in reading. These materials usually have lots of concepts and information. Students are expected to have a meaningful and critical reading process and they are supposed to understand the text in reading comprehension.

Based on Wolley (2011) the goal of reading comprehension is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences. As cited in Goto (1998), according to Anamaria (1985:35), the teaching of reading should be based on: (l) the interest and needs of the students, (2) the background knowledge they already possess, (3) the understanding of how discourse is organized, and (4) the recognition of the functions performed by different language forms and discourse markers. The second point of Anamaria's statement is discussing about the knowledge which the students already have. It can be assumed that the teaching of reading has a relation with students' background knowledge which helps the students to comprehend the text in reading comprehension.

Background knowledge of the content area of the text is also known as content schemata (Carrel and Eisterhold, 1983, p.80). Content schemata refers to the familiarity of the subject matter of the text. It influences students' ability to comprehend the topic of the text. Teachers have the important role to help the students by giving them a complex text in order to make the students to expect, to predict and to discuss the concept of the text. As cited in Hosseini (2015) according to Fisher (1932), the ability to predict and to discuss the concept of the text depends on the large part on the background knowledge the students bring to the text.

Reading without having background knowledge is more difficult than having it. Because of that reason, the writer wanted to to find out whether there is a positive correlation between content schemata and reading comprehension of English Department students or not.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem statement is formulated as follows:

Is there a positive correlation between content schemata and reading comprehension of English Department Students?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The study is intended to find out whether there is a positive correlation between content schemata and reading comprehension of English Department Students.

1.4 Hypothesis

On the basis of the theoretical framework above, the following alternative hypothesis is formulated:

1.4.1 The Alternative Hypothesis

There is a correlation between content schemata and reading comprehension of the English Department students.

1.4.2 The Null Hypothesis

There is no correlation between content schemata and reading comprehension of the English Department students

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to give information about the correlation between content schemata and reading comprehension for teachers and readers. The researcher reminds English teachers of the importance of content schemata in reading comprehension. The teachers are expected to have method for the learners to enhance students' background knowledge and choosing suitable reading topics by considering students' background knowledge and give the students familiar topic their reading comprehension. So the students can increase their score and their ability.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

The subject of this study is English Department Students of private university in Surabaya who took Reading B especially the 2017 batch as the sample. The discussion in this study is limited to the study of the correlation between content schemata and reading comprehension of English Department Students that covered only one reading topic which was natural disaster passages happened in two regions which are Indonesia and Thailand.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Reading is used for a variety of different purposes both in and out of school. This is reflected in the wide range of terms used to describe kinds of reading: responsive reading, reading for pleasure, reading for learning, reading for information, and so on. (Ronald Fyfe and Evelyne Mitchell, 1985).

Wolley (2011) states that Reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. The goal of reading comprehension is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences.

Reading is an important skill that the English Department students should master. Reading subject in this Private University of Surabaya is graded into four levels such as reading A, B, C and D that should be taken start from the second semester. Based on one of Private University in Surabaya's RPS or lesson plan and the syllabus (2018) Reading A class provides exercises in meaning reconstruction of intermediate level reading passages, Reading B class provides exercises in activating their background knowledge to generate ideas related to the title of high-intermediate level reading passages, and Reading C class provides exercises in activating their background knowledge to generate ideas related to the title of advance level reading passages, and the last Reading D class provides exercises in activating their background knowledge to generate ideas related to the title of advance level reading passages. Readers should know how they retrieve or construct meaning from their own previous knowledge. This previous knowledge called the readers' background knowledge (prior knowledge), and the previously acquired knowledge structures are called schemata (Barrlett, 1932; Adamsand

Collins, 1979; Rumelhart, 1980). Content schema refers to "background knowledge of the content area of the text" (Carreli and Eisterhold, 1983, p.80).

1.8 Definition of the Key Terms

Based on the title of the study, there are four key terms that should be defined; they are correlation, content schemata, reading and reading comprehension.

1. Correlation

   According to Celia C. Reaves (1992, p. 122), a correlation is a relation between two variables. In this study, the variables are content schemata (independent) and reading comprehension (independent).

2. Content Schemata

   Content schemata is a background knowledge that the readers have, it refers to the familiarity of the topic to make the readers understand the context area. In this study, the background knowledge is about natural disaster happened in two regions.

3. Reading

   "Reading is a language process requiring the understanding of written language" (Heilman et al.1981:50).

4. Reading Comprehension

Wolley (2011) said that Reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. In this study, it refers to passages consisted of 4 passages and 40 questions.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is introduction presents about background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, hypothesis, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study,theoretical framework, definition of key term, and organization of the study. Chapter II concerns with the review of the theory that is used in the research and the related study of the research. Chapter III consists of the research methodology of the study. Chapter IV consists of finding and discussion of the result of the answer of research question. The last chapter is Chapter V concerns with the conclusion of this study and suggestion of the study.