CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to curriculum S.M.A. 1975 and 1984, the goal of teaching English in Indonesia is not emphasized on speaking, but rather on the ability to reading. To make it clearer, the following is the direct quotation of the objective of curriculum '84 stated in the Garis-Garis Besar Program Pengajaran (G.B.P.P.):[1]

> *Siswa memiliki minat dan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris terutama membaca, dan disamping itu siswa juga diharapkan dapat menyimak, berbicara dan menulis karangan sederhana dalam bahasa Inggris yang menggunakan pola kalimat lanjutan bahasa Inggris dengan kosa kata dalam tingkatan 4000 kata.*

This means that in Indonesia, especially at the S.M.A., reading should have a priority among the four language skills; namely, reading, listening, writing, and speaking; though the other three language skills should, of course, not be neglected. It is an important skill, as Julia Dakin states that the most important language skill, the most valuable and the most enduring is reading.[2] Especially,

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1 <u>Kurikulum Sekolah Menengah umum Tingkat Atas (S.M.A.)</u>, Garis-Garis Besar Program Pengajaran (G.B.P.P.), Depdikbud, 1986, hal.62.

2 Julia Dakin, <u>Reading</u>, unpublished paper.

it is needed mostly by University students to assist their study, since many books on science and technology are still written in English. Having the ability to read will help them achieve their goal of studying successfully as it is stated by Smith and Dechant that reading is so interrelated with total educational process that educational success requires successful reading.[3] Therefore, reading should be learned by the S.M.A. students in order to provide them with a reading skill adequate for their next studies.

However, the fact shows that learning to read is not easy for the S.M.A. students--the first year students of S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus. During my 'Praktek Pengalaman Lapangan' (P.P.L.) at S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus, I found that the first year students' marks on Reading Comprehension tests were less satisfactory. The following data show the number of students who receive marks below 60 in each of the four Reading Comprehension tests during 1986-1987 school year along with the date, number of testees and the percentage of the students who receive marks below 60.

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3 David L. Sheperd, Comprehensive High School Reading Methods, Charles E. Merrill, Publishing Company, 1973, p.7

Reading tests	Date	Number of Testees	Number of Students Who Receive Marks Below 60	
			Number	Percentage
I	10-02-1986	130	90	69 %
II	15-04-1986	130	86	66 %
III	30-08-1986	128	78	61 %
IV	15-11-1986	132	95	72 %

When we read something, we need to understand and to comprehend passages in order to be able to answer the comprehension questions successfully. An individual's comprehension ability of a passage can be improved since it is not an inborn quality.[4] To prove one's reading comprehension, William D. Baker in his book "Reading Skills" says that no one can improve his reading merely by wishing or by reading more. The first thing to do is to discover your reading weaknesses.[5] To know the first year reading weaknesses, I examined the students' answers on their reading comprehension tests. Having checked the students' answers, I found that most of them got difficulties in answering: 1. Best-Title Question, 2. Direct Referential Question, 3. Indirect Referential Question, 4. Direct Inferential Question, 5. Structural Question, 6. Vocabulary Question.

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4 William D. Baker, Reading Skills, second edition, Prentice-Hall,Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1974, p.8.

5 Ibid., p.8.

Starting from the students' difficulties in answering those types of reading comprehension questions, I am interested in finding out how far the reading comprehension question types have helped the first year students of S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus in their reading comprehension. Therefore, I decide to conduct a study on the reading comprehension question types and the first year students' reading comprehension proficiency to see whether they really correspond to each other.

1.2 Problem Statement

In connection with the background of the study, that is to see whether there is a positive significant correlation between reading comprehension question types and reading comprehension proficiency of the first year students of S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus, the statement of the problem under discussion is formulated as follows:

Do reading comprehension question types significantly account for the ability of the first year students of S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus in comprehending the passage?

1.3 Aim of the Study

Hopefully the findings of this study will be of some help for the English teacher of the first year students of S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus to determine her students' ability in comprehending the passage especially the ability in answering reading comprehension question types.

So far I have never seen an indication in the English curriculum either in Curriculum '75 or Curriculum '84 that states about the reading comprehension question types which are suitable for the S.M.A. students in comprehending the passage suggested to be used in teaching. Therefore, it is also hoped that these findings will also be helpful for the future English curriculum designers to redesign the reading lesson which includes also the reading comprehension question types for the first year students of S.M.A.

1.4 Fundamental Assumption

Attempting to answer this question. I have drawn the following assumptions:

a. The students' marks on their reading comprehension test are reliable and valid representatives of their reading comprehension proficiency. If the test is valid and reliable, the data interpretation will be confident.

b. The first year students belonging to the 1986-1987 school year have more or less the same level of competency in

learning English. They have got English three years during their study at S.M.P.

c. The teacher's explanation in reading lesson is clear enough for the students to comprehend.

d. The passages given to the students are chosen according to the first year students' level. They are taken from the book "English for the S.L.T.A., Supplementary ReaderI" suggested to be used by Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia.

1.5 Hypotheses

Based on these assumptions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

1.5.1 The Null Hypotheses (Ho)

1. There is no significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Best-Title Questionand the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

2. There is no significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Direct Referential Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

3. There is no significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Indirect Referential Question and the students' reading

comprehension proficiency.

4. There is no significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Direct Inferential Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency

5. There is no significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Structural Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

6. There is no significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Vocabulary Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

1.5.2 The Alternative Hypotheses (H1)

1. There is a positive significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Best-Title Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

2. There is a positive significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Direct Referential Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

3. There is a positive significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Indirect

Referential Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

4. There is a positive significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Direct Inferential Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

5. There is a positive significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Structural Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

6. There is a positive significant correlation between the ability of the students to answer the Vocabulary Question and the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

1.6 Limitation of the Study and Some Definitions

Being aware of how broad the topic of this study will be, I find it necessary to limit it. For this purpose, it would be useful to define the terms found in the title of this study. They are reading, question types, proficiency, first year students, S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus, case study.

What I mean by reading here is reading for comprehension. Reading comprehension means the understanding, evaluation, and utilizing of information and ideas gained through an interaction between reader and

author.[6]

What I mean by <u>question types</u> here are: (1) Best-Title Question, (2) Direct Referential Question, (3) Indirect Referential Question, (4) Direct Inferential Question, (5) Structural Question, (6) Vocabulary Question. I limit my study on the six types of question since I consider them suitable for the first year students' level. Moreover, those questions have already been taught by the teacher of English at S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus and they were always included in every reading comprehension test. The following are the six types of reading comprehension question types along with their short explanation.

1. Best-Title Question

This question requires the students to find the best-title of the given passage.

2. Direct Referential Question

The direct referential question has the same wording as the passage and the student can copy the answer without any change of structure or vocabulary.[7]

3. Indirect Referential Question

The indirect referential question may not include the words from the text, so the students' search for the

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6 Nila Banton Smith and H. Alan Robinson, <u>Reading instruction for Today's Children</u>,Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1963, p.5.

7 Desmond R. Burton, 'Testing Reading Comprehension', <u>English Teaching Forum</u>, July 1978, v. 16, no.III, p.18.

relevant information is slightly more difficult or this question may require that the students' answer be different in structure from the passage.[8]

4. Direct Inferential Question

This question usually requires the student to relate two or more items in the text and form simple conclusion.[9] About this William E. Norris in his article 'Advanced Reading': Goal, Technique, Procedures' says that the information is not stated explicitly in the selection.[10]

5. Structural Question

This category includes the identification of certain classes of words (such as pronouns and relatives) with their referents and recognition of subjects, main verbs, etc.[11]

6. Vocabulary Question

This question is given in context and is taken directly from the passage. This one requires the student to give the suitable answer either synonym or opposite of the underlined word or phrase.

Proficiency is the state of being proficient; skill,

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8 Ibid., p.18.

9 Ibid., p.19.

10 William E. Norris, 'Advanced Reading: Goal, Techniques, Procedures', English Teaching Forum, 1975, v.8, no.III&IV, p.11.

11 Burton., op.cit., p.18.

knowledge.[12] To know the students' reading comprehension proficiency, I ask them to summarize the passages in Indonesian and some numbers of multiple-choice items which include the six types of reading comprehension question.

What I mean by the First Year Students are all the students who during the 1986-1987 school year belong to classes I_1 , I_2, I_3 of the S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus, Surabaya.

S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus is the name of the Senior High School in Surabaya where I conducted this study.

Case study is a study which tries to learn intensively about the problems found in a certain group in a certain place and the result of this study will be much helpful to solve the problem in that group. I do not aim to generalize this study into wider cases. In this study, I try to learn intensively about the difficulties of the first year students of S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus in answering reading comprehension question types, and those questions will be correlated with their reading comprehension proficiency. The result of this study will be of some help for the English teacher of the first year students of S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus to determine her students' ability in comprehending the passage, especially the ability to

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12 Merriam Webster, The Lexicon Webster Dictionary; with a Historical Sketch of the English Language, English Language Institute of America, Inc., 1977, v.2, p.761.

answer reading comprehension question types.

This study is on the relationship between reading comprehension question types and reading comprehension proficiency of the students of S.M.A.K. Santo Stanislaus who during 1986-1987 school year belong to classes I_1, I_2, I_3.

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I, the Introduction, deals with the background of the study (1.1), Problem Statement (1.2), Aim of the Study (1.3), Fundamental Assumptions (1.4), Hypotheses (1.5), Limitation of the Study and Some Definitions (1.6), and Organization of the Thesis (1.7).

Chapter II, Review of the Related Literature, deals with a brief review of related papers ever written by the graduates of the English Department of the Teacher Training Faculty, Widya Mandala University (2.1), and the theoritical background is related this study (2.2).

Chapter III, Methodology of Research, is divided into four parts. Those are Research Design (3.1), Population and Sample (3.2), Instrument (3.3), Procedures of Data Collection (3.4).

Analysis and Interpretation of Data, Chapter IV, is divided into two parts. The first part is Raw Data of the Test (4.1); the second part is Data Analysis and Interpretation (4.2).

The last chapter, Chapter V, consists of two parts: Summary (5.1) and Suggestions (5.2).