CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.

1.1. Background of the Study

Reading is one of the skills needed to learn language. Through reading, students can develop their ability in other skills. As 2004 curriculum states:

> "Kegiatan membaca dan membahas dalam bahasa Inggris otomatis juga mengaktifkan kegiatan mendengarkan dan berbicara karena siswa diberi kesempatan untuk mengungkapkan pendapat atau hasil refleksinya terhadap teks." (Reading and discussion activity in English automatically activate listening and speaking activity because students are given a chance to present their opinion or its reflective result toward the text)

Moreover, reading is a prerequisite in learning all subjects. All learning processes require a good reading competence. Preston (1968: 241-242) states:

> "Reading has the power to carry the (student) further and deeper ... than any other educational medium ... he can analyze more thoroughly...; he can compare passages for collaboration or to check seeming inconsistencies; he can stop for reflection ... ; he can choose a time for reading that will fit in with his mood and personal needs ..."

We cannot separate reading from learning. There should be mutuality between the two—reading and learning. We can say that successful learning is the result of competent reading. Fisher and Peter (1981: 116) state "Reading and its associated behaviors have received more attention than any other aspect of education, primarily because the ability to read well is vital to academic success".

In fact, many university students fail in their study because they are not competent in reading. It seems that their ability to comprehend the material from the text they read is low. We can assume that they are not fully equipped with reading skills. According to Shepherd (1973: 101), reading skills "… are aimed at helping the student develop independence in gaining information from printed materials".

Thus, students should be directed to be able to access themselves to absorb knowledge from understanding printed materials. In this case, self-study is very essential. Questions are one of the media for the students to dig more knowledge from the material they have read. Questions can give them more attention to the details or information, improve their understanding, and refresh their memory. Harris and Smith (1986) state "Questions do not only present students with a type of problem but also lead them to ask their own questions and to set personal purposes for reading".

Questions stimulate thinking which results in productive reading. According to Vacca (1981: 159), "Questions are important when used effectively in lessons that require reading. Oral or written questions stimulate thinking and light the way to productive learning and retention of written material". Questions also require the students to engage in the particular kind of thinking.

As mentioned above, questions can stimulate thinking, light the way to productive learning, and lead the student to ask their own questions. What kind of questions which are suitable to the requirements? Of course, questions which are organized based on the taxonomy of questions.

Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain is one of the taxonomies which present presents various levels of thinking skills along with the details in every major level. Besides, it has been used by Gronlund to present General Instructional Objective (GIO). Many people also try to develop and modify Bloom's taxonomy in their study.

Bloom's taxonomy presents six particular kinds of thinking skills which are famous for its name 'cognitive domain'. They are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. According to Bloom (1979:16), taxonomy should be organized from simple to complex classes of behavior. It will lead the students to practice learning how to fully understand the printed material. Even the simplest class of behavior is a prerequisite to reach the terminal behavior. These particular levels are parts of learning process.

In the writer's opinion, that would be worthwhile for the students to enhance their reading ability through the careful use of questions. Therefore, in her study, the writer would like to see to what extent the reading questions found in the first year of Senior High School English textbook contribute to Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain. The English textbook, which is used in her analysis, is "Headlight". She chose the book due to some recommendation from friends who conducted their teaching practice in some favorite school in Surabaya.

1.2. Statement of the Problems

Based on the points presented as the background of the study above, the major problem of this study is formulated as follow:

To what extent are the reading questions in "Headlight" constructed according to Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain?

The minor problems are:

1.2.1.   To what extent are the reading questions in "Headlight" constructed to check the students' knowledge of the text?

1.2.2.   To what extent are the reading questions in "Headlight" constructed to check the students' comprehension of the text?

1.2.3.   To what extent are the reading questions in "Headlight" constructed to check the students' application of the text?

1.2.4.   To what extent are the reading questions in "Headlight" constructed to check the students' the analysis of the text?

1.2.5.   To what extent are the reading questions in "Headlight" constructed to check the students' synthesis of the text?

1.2.6.   To what extent are the reading questions in "Headlight" constructed to check the students' evaluation of the text?

1.3. Objective of the Study

In line with the statements of the problems mentioned above, the major objectives of this study is:

To describe how far the reading questions in "Headlight" are constructed according to Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain.

And the minor objectives are:

1.3.1. To describe how far the reading questions in "Headlight" are constructed to check the students' knowledge of the text.

1.3.2. To describe how far the reading questions in "Headlight" are constructed to check the students' comprehension of the text.

1.3.3. To describe how far the reading questions in "Headlight" are constructed to check the students' application of the text.

1.3.4. To describe how far the reading questions in "Headlight" are constructed to check the students' analysis of the text.

1.3.5. To describe how far the reading questions in "Headlight" are constructed to check the students' synthesis of the text.

1.3.6. To describe how far the reading questions in "Headlight" are constructed to check the students' evaluation of the text.

1.4. Significance of the Study

It is expected that this study would be beneficial to:

1.4.1. Give feedback to the writer and the publisher of "Headlight" in constructing reading questions which are good in quality and quantity.

1.4.2. Encourage English teachers especially the teachers of reading to lead their students to comprehend the text through questions and to provide questions which are suitable to the level of intellectual skills.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

There are some taxonomies of educational objective: (1) cognitive which is concerned with intellectual skills, (2) affective which is concerned with interests and attitudes, and (3) psychomotor which is concerned with motor skills. Since the writer's concern here is with understanding the printed material, she will focus primarily on the cognitive domain.

Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain can be applied not only in reading but also in other disciplines. Yet, in her study, the writer would like to limit her study to analyze reading questions which aim at interpreting the levels of thinking skills in comprehending the printed materials. Thus, the pre-reading questions are not involved. Here, the cognitive domain functions as the parameter.

She selected "Headlight" for the first year of Senior High School students, which has been published to contribute the new curriculum, that is, 2004 Curriculum.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

There are some crucial theories which underlie this thesis, they are: theory of reading, the importance of question in reading, and Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain. In this chapter, the writer only gives a brief explanation. The more detail explanation of the theory will be presented in the following chapter.

1.6.1. Theory of Reading

Fisher and Peters (1981: 40-41) have elaborated some definitions of the term reading:

1. Reading is *complex*.

2. Reading is a *mental* activity

3. Reading involves *discourse*.

4. Reading occurs only when a reader *interacts* with discourse.

5. Reading is *meaningful*.

1.6.2. The Importance of Questions

According to Harris and Smith (1986), "Questions do not only present students with a type of problem but also lead them to ask their own questions and to set personal purposes for reading".

Vacca (1981: 159) states "Questions are important when used effectively in lessons that require reading. Oral or written questions stimulate thinking and light the way to productive learning and retention of written material".

Norris (1966: 6) suggests "students who have more practice with intellectual skills will develop them to a greater degree than those who have less practice".

1.6.3. Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain

This study is based on the principle of Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain. The cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy is concerned with intellectual outcomes. The following are the six main areas:

1. KNOWLEDGE = Remembering previously learned material

2. COMPREHENSION = Grasping the meaning of material

3. APPLICATION = Using information in concrete situation

4. ANALYSIS = Breaking down material into its parts

5. SYNTHESIS = Putting parts together into a whole

6. EVALUATION = Judging the value of a thing for a given purpose using definite criteria

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

In this thesis, the writer used some key terms which might be difficult to understand. Thus, she provided the definitions which are suitable to the context of this study.

1.7.1. Taxonomy.

Edgar Stones (1984: 151) points that taxonomy is a hierarchical system ranges from simple to complex behavior and from concrete to abstract behavior.

1.7.2. Bloom's Taxonomy.

According to Edgar Stones (1984: 151), Bloom's taxonomy which has become taxonomy of educational objectives is categorized into 3 domains: (1) cognitive domain which is concerned with the intellectual skills, (2) affective domain which is concerned with the interests and attitudes, and (3) psychomotor which is concerned with the motor skill.

1.7.3. Cognitive Domain.

Bloom points taxonomy of cognitive domain deals with intellectual skill. It is categorized into six levels: (1) knowledge, (2) comprehension, (3) application, (4) analysis, (5) synthesis, and (6) evaluation.

1.7.4. Reading Comprehension.

Reading comprehension can be defined as the ability to derive meaning from text (Gibson & Levin, 1975) and is thought to be the ultimate goal of reading instruction (Ross, 1975). According to Shepherd (1973), it is the ability to think about the information presented by the author.

1.7.5. Question.

Questions do not only present students with a type of problem but also lead them to ask their own questions and to set personal purposes for reading (Harris and Smith, 1986).

Questions are the main stay of teachers as they attempt to measure comprehension, and they are usually vital parts of reading purposes used widely by pupils and teacher, they can enhance understanding (Smith and Robinson, 1963: 228).

1.8. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction. It deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, definition of key terms, and organizational of the thesis. Chapter II is divided into two sections—theoretical framework and previous study. Chapter III deals with research design, subject of the study, research instrument, procedure of the data collection, and procedure of analyzing the data. Chapter IV composes of data analysis and findings. The last chapter—chapter V—deals with conclusion and recommendation.