CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Teaching English as a foreign language may offer special problems for some teachers. They are encountered with EFL learners that may vary in their motivation, their aptitude, and their interest in foreign language learning in general or individual activities.

During her PPL for about two months in one of the Senior High Schools in Surabaya, the writer has found the problems mentioned above. There are some students who are not capable in either comprehending or expressing the ideas of a reading text both orally and written in English. In this case, the students could be considered illiterate, that is they are not able to read (comprehend the text) and write (express their idea related to the text with their own words).

Realizing this situation, a teacher must be able to give an extra attention to the students especially in giving a reading text. Linda Schinke-Llano (1996:iv) states that reading becomes the focus of English lesson because it can cover all skills -speaking, listening, and writing- if it is appropriately used, including literacy in English.

Virginia G. Allen (1994:108) says that selection of appropriate reading materials will support EFL learners to move into literacy in their foreign language. That is why a teacher should be able to select and modify the materials according to the situation to help them master the foreign language. Therefore, the literacy of EFL learners is dominated by the materials and procedures that are selected or created by the teacher.

There are two main reasons enabling the selected reading materials to develop students' literacy. Firstly, the selected reading material will help the students grasp and interpret the ideas of the text better. Paul S. Anderson (1964:201) claims that the problem of the students is when they are looking at words of the text and discovering the meaning intended by the one who wrote them. The degree of relationship between the meaning of the writer and the interpretation of the reader determines the accuracy of reading. The meaning is not on the printed page, but in the mind of the reader. Thus meaning will differ, since each reader possesses different experiences in interpreting the words.

To avoid the students' interpretations that are not accurate, students can be provided with the selected reading materials. For example, the teacher selects and modifies

materials with vocabulary control or emphasizes content of stories, which may correlate with social studies.

Secondly, the students will be involved in developing topics of study which is valued or respected by them if the teacher selects the suitable reading materials. According to Bess Altwerger (1994:77), some topics may offer limited opportunities for EFL students to learn about issues significant to their lives or to engage in critical investigation or debate. For example, topics such as 'chocolate', 'pandas', or 'jewelry' offer limited opportunities for certain level of students to examine the realities of everyday life, and they do not prepare the students to solve problems in their own lives, their communities, or society as a whole. Topics such as 'change', 'nature', 'ecology', 'poverty', offer more potential for critical analysis.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Related to the background of the study, the problems which the writer wants to discuss are:

1. What kinds of selected reading materials can the teachers give to develop students' literacy?

2. How will the teachers develop students' literacy ability through selected reading materials?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In line with the statements of the problem, the objectives of this study are:

1. to discuss kinds of selected reading materials the teachers can give to develop students' literacy.

2. to present suggested teaching technique to develop students' literacy.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give some contributions to the EFL teachers and help them to have more considerations in literacy practices. Besides that, the writer hopes that the study is useful for the students in many schools or courses concerning the literacy development using selected reading materials. Moreover, the writer hopes that the result of the study will be useful for improvement of teaching learning process for EFL students.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

1. The study is limited to the development of students' literacy.

2. It discusses how to select reading materials to help the students develop their literacy ability in English.

3. The selected reading materials are limited into input modified and structure modified text version.

1.6 Research Methodology

In this study, the writer uses a library study to get complete information. She uses the information she has studied from books, papers and articles in order to gather ideas and tries to conclude them, then uses them in her study.

1.7 Definitions of the Key Terms

There are some terms used in this study:

1. Literacy Ability

   'Literacy ability' is not simply the ability to read and write, it means far more than being able to analyze and interpret words (S.B. Heath, 1984:18). It is the ability to go beyond simply getting the main ideas from a text. It is also the ability to talk and write about language, to explain and put into sequence implicit information from a text, and to speak and write for many purposes in appropriate forms. In this study, 'literacy ability' is meant for reading and writing skills.

2. Selected Reading Materials

   Selected reading materials means the best or the most suitable reading materials that are chosen carefully. According to Tsang Wai King (1987:31), selected reading materials are divided into three text versions: *native-speaker*, *input modified*, and *structure modified* version. Native speaker-version is an original English reading text. Input modified version is the simplification of native-speaker text. And structure modified version is the consideration of giving clarification and definitions, omitting redundancy and at the same time maintaining the same degree of syntactic and lexical complexity of the native-speaker text. In this study, the writer focuses only on input modified and structure modified text versions.

1.8 Organization of the Paper

   There are five chapters presented in this study. Chapter I consists of background of the study, the significance of the study, scope and limitation, research methodology, and the definition of the key terms. Chapter II discusses literacy. Chapter III consists of reading materials. Chapter IV discusses the suggested technique and the models. And chapter V consists of conclusion.