

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

English is one of the required subjects to be taught for senior high school level in Indonesia. The primary goal of teaching English is to enable the students to comprehend the written texts. The reason is that the senior high school students are supposed to continue their study to a university where they have to read a lot of scientific books which are written in English.

To read and comprehend the scientific books of their specialization, students need to have good reading ability. In the curriculum at senior high school, reading is more emphasized than other skills (Depdikbud, 1994:1). As a result, among the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), reading is put in the first priority. So, to put reading as a basic tool of learning which can facilitate other skills requires English teachers to focus the classroom activities on reading.

As outlined in the 2004 curriculum (page 11), the objectives of teaching reading at senior high school are as follows: 1) to enable the students to ascertain specific information. 2) to enable the students to get general information. 3) to enable the students to determine detailed information. 4) to enable the students to identify main idea stated explicitly. 5) to enable the students to recognize main idea stated implicitly. 6) to enable the students to determine inference. 7) to enable the students to recognize word reference. 8) to enable the students to comprehend words in contexts.

So far, the reading ability of the students of Semen Gresik senior high school has not been formally analyzed. That why, the writer conducted this study in order to know the reading ability of the students of Semen Gresik senior high school.

1.2 Statements of the Problems

In line with the background above, the study aimed at describing the students' ability in comprehending English texts.

Based on the objective of teaching reading at senior high school and as outlined at the 2004 English curriculum for senior high school, specifically the researcher tries to answer the following questions:

1. How is the students' ability in ascertaining specific information which are found on the texts being read?
2. How is the students' ability ion getting general ideas which are found on the texts being read?
3. How is the students' ability in determining detailed information which are found on the texts being read?
4. How is the students' ability in identifying information stated explicitly on the texts being read?
5. How is the students' ability in recognizing information stated implicitly on the texts being read?
6. How is the students' ability in determining inferences which are found on the texts being read?
7. How is the students' ability in recognizing word references found on the texts being read?

8. How is the students' ability in comprehending words in context?

1.3. The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to see the students' ability in understanding English written text. Specifically, the purpose of the study are to know:

1. The students' ability in ascertaining specific information found on the written text being read .
2. The students' ability in getting general information found in the text being read.
3. The students' ability in determining detailed information found in the text being read .
4. The students' ability in identifying main ideas stated explicitly on the text being read .
5. The students' ability in recognizing main ideas stated implicitly in the text being read .
6. The students' ability in determining inference found on the text being read .
7. The students' ability in recognizing word reference in the text being read.
8. The students' ability in comprehending words in context of the text being read .

1.4 The Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the results of the study will contribute a better understanding of the theoretical application of teaching technique in EFL reading class

For the theory , it is expected to

1. To clarify the understanding of reading strategies and comprehension processes in reading comprehension
2. To learn how to find comprehension clues.
3. To gain skill in suiting the technique to the type of materials being read.
4. To become adept at skimming what can be profitably skimmed; at scanning what requires no more than superficial scanning; and at paying close attention to what is important and central in a page being read
5. To describe the issue of how is foreign language reading ability of senior high school students is in term of cognitive domain.
6. Serve as preliminary study that in the future will lead to an investigation of other aspects related to teaching reading comprehension which has any potential effects EFL students' comprehension ability.

For the students; this study will

- Help them to develop their academic learning.
- Help them to learn the efficient way to study textbook material.
- Help them to gain skill in suiting the technique to the type of material being read.
- Help them to sharpen their comprehension.
- To help them become more strategic reader.

For the teachers; this study will give benefits to;

1. Give a wider variety of interesting roles/techniques.

2. Reduce the boredom by motivating students to compete with others.
3. Be more conscious of strategies that is used in helping students become more strategic reader.
4. Be creatively combining a numbers of reading techniques

1.5. The Assumption.

In writing this paper, the writer has made the following assumptions:

- The teachers have implemented the outlines suggested on the 2004 English curriculum for senior high school.
- The teachers have applied the materials as guided by the 2004 English curriculum for senior high school.
- The test used in this study is valid and reliable.

1.6. The Scope of the Study.

It is a case study which only investigated the reading ability of the students of natural science program grade XII of Semen Gresik senior high school

The reading ability covered in this study includes the following reading comprehension levels. They are:

1. The ability to ascertain specific information
2. The ability to get general information.
3. The ability to determine detailed information.
4. The ability to identify main idea stated explicitly.
5. The ability to recognize main idea stated implicitly.
6. The ability to determine inferences.

7. The ability to recognize word references
8. The ability to comprehend words in contexts.

1.7. The Definition of the Key terms

- Comprehension processes is defined as the way how readers solve the problems to understand words, sentences, or text during the reading process
- Reading comprehension is defined as the meaningful interpretation of printed or written verbal symbols. Comprehending itself is the result of the interaction between the perception of graphic symbols that represent language and the reader's language skills and knowledge of the world. (Harris and Sipay, 1980 :8 ;Djiwandono P, 1994: pp 15-16).
- Ability is the power or the skill required to do something.(Hornby 1995:2)
- Strategy. Strategy is the behavior or the way of reading or how one reads in order to achieve understanding from the text being read; this strategy may include scanning, skimming, intensive reading, etc. (Ngadiman A, 1990: 19).
- A Case Study is an empirical inquiry that: - investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its really-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and, in which multiple sources of evidence are used. (Yin , 1989: 23).

1.8 The Organization of Thesis.

This thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter I deals with the Introduction of the Study including background of the study, statement of the problems, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the assumption, scope and limitation of the study, defenition of key

terms and organization of the thesis. Chapter II Review of Related Literature , deals with theoretical background related to the study that discusses the theories about reading consisting of the nature of reading, the development of reading comprehension processes , the teaching in reading, the stages in teaching of reading comprehension, the problems in understanding a text and, teaching reading at senior high school. Chapter III deals with the research methodology. This includes the nature of the study, the population and sample, instrumentation and method of data collection; questionnaire, interview, The scoring techniques, the technique of data analysis. Chapter IV is about the results and discussion. Chapter V is the conclusion of the thesis that consists of a summary, a conclusion and suggestion.