

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher will describe the background of the research which elaborates the reason why the researcher chooses the object to be discussed, the research problems which carry out the problem statement of the research, the objectives of the study that include the goal of the research, the limitation of the problem, the benefits of the research, thesis organization, and definition of terms.

A. Background of the Research

Along with many developments in human's activity, language has been one of the important forms that human needs to communicate with one another, to express the ideas they have in mind, to show their experiences and to become a cue for identity. Apart from other needs and interests, the need to learn the language is inevitable. However, there is no one language for the world. Different cultures and places raise forms of expressions as a means of communication, meaning that the language of one country can be very different from the language of other country. This leads to a variety of communication that people use in all parts of the world. English is as the first foreign language in Indonesia that is considered important to enlarge the knowledge, technology and culture to make the relationship with another country all over the world.

The teaching of English has become progressively substantial as a foreign language in Indonesia. It is an obligatory subject to be taught for three years at Junior High Schools and for three years in Senior High Schools. English also has been taught in Elementary Schools as an optional subject as the implementation of the 1994 Curriculum. It appears that the development of English language teaching in Indonesia hints the current English curriculum objectives. The general standard objectives of English language teaching at Senior High Schools in Indonesia are determined as follows: (1) Developing communicative competence both in oral and in written in order to reach the level of informational literacy; (2) Raising awareness of the nature of English as a foreign language in order to compete with other countries in global community; and (3) Developing comprehension of students about the relation between language and culture (*Depdiknas RI, 2006*).

In Indonesia, the teaching of English (either it is considered as a second or foreign language) is closely tied to the teaching and learning of the skills hold. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As one of the skills, reading is one of the aspects noted as a part of significant ability in extending readers' viewpoints, giving them a chance to comprehend the world. Reading ability can empower the readers to take control of their own information and further to elect their future.

Furthermore, in this research the writer only focuses on reading skill. Reading skill provides some crucial contributions in learning English. Brown stated that reading plays an important role in everyday life of human being. A fact showing that reading is essential in the existence of visual media which operates its function

by using written words. The written media such as newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, announcements or even a translated dialogue in foreign movie is used to convey information, to entertain, and to fulfill other functions (Brown in Merina: 2009). Besides, the students may get strength to increase their ability of listening, speaking and writing skills through reading. They can also multiply their knowledge of speaking expression, English sentence structure, the English guidance of the text, writing techniques and increasing their vocabulary all the way through reading. In other words that reading is the window of getting the world.

Reading is one of the language skills which needed be taught in language classroom. Students need to be able to read texts in English either for their careers, for study, or simply for pleasure. Reading also plays an important role for language acquisition. When reading texts are very interesting and engaging, the acquisition process will be more successful. Reading text also provides opportunities for students to learn vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and even good models for English writing in terms of the sentences, paragraphs, or texts are constructed. Last but not least, reading texts can introduce interesting topics and stimulate discussion. (Harmer in Fauziati, 2010: 32).

Grabe (2002: 9) defined reading as the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interprets this information appropriately and has some purposes of reading such as; to search for simple information, to skim quickly, to learn from the text, to integrate information, to write, to critique texts, and for general comprehension. Reading of the four language skills, can be classified into two types:

initial reading and reading comprehension. Initial reading is an effort made by those who have not been able to read to which is one learn reading (e.g., how to read the alphabets and combination of letters or simple words) whereas reading comprehension is an activity aimed to understand the messages of a particular text (William in Cahyono: 2011: 49).

The teaching of reading as a foreign language (EFL reading) in Indonesia can be commonly included in the teaching of reading comprehension. This is because it objectives to improve the skills of learners, who have been able to read in the first language and in EFL, in appreciative the meaning of a written text. Moreover in English learning, four skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing are distributed into two functions, language input or receptive skills and language output or productive skills. Reading is one of receptive skills.

Moreover knowing the capability of student's reading understanding, the teacher should identify whether the teaching learning process in the classroom is matched with the objective or not. By leading a test, a teacher can extent of the students reading skills and advance an input about the student's learning results. The outcome of the test can display to what level the students have grasped the reading skills over a certain period of time.

National Examination (*UN*) is one of the ways to measure the students' competence and becomes an instrument to determine the students' graduation. English is one subject tested in the National Examination. According to clause 2 of the Decree No. 34/2007 from the Ministry of National Education or *Permendiknas*

stated that National Examination is a test to measure and evaluate the students' competence nationally by the central government after the process of teaching and learning. As the national test, the main purpose of National Examination is to measure and assess the students' achievement in national standard for the certain lesson in science and technology lesson, (*Permendiknas* No 20, 2007 of assessment standard). Achievement tests rely on the former knowledge of the students's experience. Hence, the English test is used to evaluate students' achievement after studying English for three years.

Historically in 1980, Indonesia went back to the integrated exam system. The *Evaluasi Belajar Tahap Akhir Nasional* (National Final Learning Evaluation), ordinarily abbreviated as *Ebtanas*, was applied for twenty-one years. Starting from the year 2003, a new form of nation-wide standardized exam was called *Ujian Akhir Nasional* (National Final Examination), widespread with the shortening *UAN* was presented. The subjects established were Indonesian, English, and Math. It was up to the schools and provinces to choose whether or not they are essential to the students to take final tests on other subjects. *UAN* itself was reserved to be completed until 2004. Under the fresh cabinet in 2005, the new Ministry of Education still definite to conduct a parallel form of test, which was agreed a new name, *Ujian Nasional* (National Examination), summarized as *UN*. Different from the earlier *UAN*, *UN* uses diversified format of testing. It covers of six subjects: Math, Indonesian language, English, Physics, Chemistry and Biology for Science program

and Math, Indonesian language, English, Sociology, Economic, and Geography to social students at the end of their senior year in high school (Afrianto: 2009).

National Exam has been subject of controversy since its inception. It became notorious for answer key leakage, cheating, fraud, and corruption. Some argue that the exam is too hard and demanding for students and teachers. Schools are forced to allocate more time for drilling students, putting more workload to both teachers and students. Critics argue that it did not give an accurate picture about Indonesian student's real competency, because of cheating problems and other issues. To deter cheating, National Exam question variation had increased for middle and high school, from one to five in 2011, and from five to 20 in 2013. Other measures are inclusion of barcode in 2013 partly to determine question variation codes and to tackle cheating. Even then, cheating still occurs.

The National Examination will be organized, but its existence still becomes a debate. There are a lot of people believe that it is not effective to evaluate students' competence. They have other reasons for that. First, it is alleged only in four days in which the subjects tested do not cover up all of the materials given during the teaching learning process in three years. Second, they think that the passing grade of the National Examination is too high that makes the students fail in the examination.

However, in the government's viewpoint, the National Examination is still essential to be held. There are some reasons why the government still holds the National Examination. The government needs the students' result to: (1) Determine the graduation of the students, (2) Select the students to continue to the higher

level of education, (3) Map the quality of education, (4) Determine the quality of a school and (5) Control and give aids to improve the quality of education (Wahyuni: 2006: 65).

National examination is held every year. All teachers who teach National Examination subjects will be very busy to prepare it, including English teachers. They hope that their students will get success and able to do the test well. One of the important things to do by the teachers is knowing the types of the questions will raise on the test, so it will be easy to them to teach the students what should be learned to face the test. For analyzing it, it will be related to the theory about the types of questions in reading comprehension test. It takes the important factor in measuring the teaching learning process, besides the educational curriculum.

Types of reading comprehension questions are very important to be understood by an English teacher because it can be used to help students interact with the text. This can be done by making sure that the students keep the text in front of them while answering questions on the text. It is also crucial to help the students respond to the variety of reading comprehension questions types of the final test. Inferential comprehension type for example, it is one of the type of reading comprehension question. In this type, the students need to understand what ideas behind the information in the text because much of reading text is really "reading between lines". By knowing it, the students are easier to understand what the ideas implied in the text.

There are three theories of types of comprehensions questions delivered by three scientists that are from GMAT, Richard R. Day et al and Barret's. Nevertheless in this research, the writer only takes two theories conducted by GMAT Gurus and Barret in order to avoid the overlapping in analyzing it. The writer uses the mixing theories of both of them. Actually there are seven types of reading questions by GMAT, they are: universal, specific, vocab in context, function, inference, application, and tone. Meanwhile, according to Barret's taxonomy, there are five types of reading comprehension: literal comprehension, reorganization, inferential, evaluation, and appreciation. Yet, in this research the writer finds that there are 6 types of reading comprehensions questions used in English national examination of 2011 to 2015, they are: vocab in context, inferential comprehension, function, literal comprehension, specific and evaluation.

Truly, there are still a few studies concerning with English National Examination. There are several researches have been conducted to study of English National Examination by other researchers. In this research, there are eight researchers with the different point of view to be analyzed.

The first researcher dealt with an analysis about English National Final Exam (UAN) For Junior High School viewed from School Based Curriculum (KTSP), the second research emphasized on analyzing the multiple-choice items of the reading test in Senior High School National Examination that the purposes of the research are to measure the objectives of English reading skills as stated in KTSP, the third research described about the Study of Morphemes used in National Examination's

Reading Comprehension Text that attempted to describe the English bound morphemes are used in National Examination's reading comprehension texts, the fourth research revealed about the student's lived-experience of English test in National Examination, the fifth study exposed concerning with the assessment of Turkish written examination questions based on the text in accordance with the barrett's taxonomy, the sixth study was related to analysis of face and content validity of reading section of the 2007 national final examination for vocational high schools, the seventh research stressed on The Washback Effect of English National Examination on the XII Grade English Teachers'Classroom Teaching, and the eighth research described a comparative study between the performance of Iranian High and Low Critical Thinkers on Different Types of Reading Comprehension Questions.

Meanwhile the current researches focused on analyzing of the document of English National Examination item included the types of reading comprehension questions, the frequency of each type of reading comprehension questions, and the differences and similarities of types of English national examination for senior high school students in year 2011-2015. Based on the differences above, the position of the current research is to extend some previous researches that have been conducted.

The types of reading comprehension questions are interesting and important to be studied because there are many uses to help students respond to a variety of types of comprehension test that are very crucial to get success in passing on their national examination test. Therefore, the researcher decided to formulate

the study entitled **“TYPES OF READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS OF ENGLISH NATIONAL EXAMINATION FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS”**

B. Research Problems

Based on the title of research above, the problem of the research can be stated as follows: “What are the types of reading comprehension questions of English national examination for senior high school students?”

From the research problem, it will appear some research questions as follows:

1. What are the types of reading comprehension questions of English national examination for senior high school students in year 2011-2015?
2. How is frequency of each type of questions of English national examination for senior high school student in year 2011-2015?
3. What are the differences and similarities of types of English national examination for senior high school students in year 2011-2015?

C. Objectives of the Research

In relation to the research questions described, the objectives of this research are as the followings:

1. To unearth the types of reading comprehension questions of English national examination in year 2011-2015.
2. To reveal the frequency of each type of questions of English national examination

in year 2011-2015.

3. To illustrate the differences and similarities of types of English national examination for senior high school students in year 2011-2015.

D. The Limitation of The Problem

The focus of attention of this research is limited to the two aspects. Firstly, this study focuses on English National Examination (*UAN*) for Senior High School in year 2011-2015. Secondly, this research only analyzes on the reading comprehension questions items test which is covered 152 items.

E. The Benefits of the Study

The result of the study can be useful for:

1. The writer

After finishing the research, the writer supposes to get further information about English National Examination items for Senior High School students especially about types of reading comprehension questions. And also as an additional science and reference how to implicate the analyzing of reading test items. Hopefully, the writer has better comprehending about each of items in English National Examination. Furthermore, it can become a useful input to create a further strategy dealing with preparation to the students to get success for their final test.

2. The English Teachers

The outcome of the study can be used as additional information dealing with English National Examination preparation to the students. It can be used to help students become interactive readers. It may also be used as a checklist for language teachers as well as materials developers. Teachers can use it to make their own comprehension questions for the texts that their students read and to help them understand better what they read. In addition, they can be used to analyze instructional materials and to develop materials to ensure that the various of questions are used to help students respond to a variety of types of comprehension.

3. The stakeholder

This research is trying to insert an insight to the education stake-holder, test makers, and as information for giving an input to The Department of National Education whether the variety of the type of reading comprehension questions has been applied well in English National Examination for Senior High School in year 2011-2015.

4. The other researcher

The other researchers are expected to carry out further research about this topic.

F. The Thesis Organization

To build a systematic writing, the writer will present the writing outline as follows: Chapter I is Introduction. This chapter consists of the background of the

study, the research problems, the limitation of problem, the objectives of the study, the benefits of the study, thesis organization and definition of terms. Chapter II contains Literature Review. Every detail of the theory used in this research is explained in this chapter, including the previous studies and the underlying theory such as: Language testing, Reading comprehension, Reading comprehension test and Type of reading comprehension question.

Furthermore in Chapter III is Research Method. This chapter describes the research method used in this research. It consists of type of research, data and data source, data collection techniques, data validity, technique for analyzing data and theoretical framework. In chapter IV is Findings and Discussions. In this chapter consists of the findings of the research and discussions of all of the analysis of English National Examination in 2011-2015. Finally in chapter V the writer will conduct the closing chapter that contains conclusions of this research, pedagogical implication and presents some suggestions for further study.

G. Definition of Terms

In this section will put forward the definition of terms built-in such as Reading Comprehension test, National Examination, Comprehension questions, and Types of reading comprehension Questions.

1. Reading Comprehension Test

According to Alderson (2000: 12) reading is an activity consisting of decoding and comprehension activities of written verbal stimuli. Reading comprehension

test is an instrument used to measure the students' ability in comprehending information in the text in Setyaka (2002: 26).

2. National Examination (*UN*)

National Exam commonly abbreviated as *UN / UNAS* is a standard evaluation system of primary and secondary education in Indonesia and the equation of quality of education levels among the areas that conducted by the Center for Educational Assessment. *Depdiknas* in Indonesia based on *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia nomor 20 tahun 2003* states that in order to control the quality of education nationwide to be evaluated as a form of accountability of education providers to the parties concerned.

3. Comprehension Questions

Comprehension is a process in which readers construct meaning by interacting with text through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience, information in the text, and the stance the reader or listener takes in relationship to the text (Pardo, 2004:272).

4. Types of reading comprehension questions

Hornby (1974: 934) defined the word "type" means person, thing, event, etc, considered as an example of a class or group. Rosenshine (1980: 62) states that reading comprehension questions commonly entails seven skills, namely, recognizing the sequence, recognizing words in context, identifying main ideas, decoding details, drawing inferences, recognizing cause and effect and comparing and contrasting.

In line with description above, it means that types of reading comprehension questions is a classification or a group of the various of types of reading comprehension questions to help students respond to a variety of types of comprehension questions.