

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Four skills need to be mastered in learning English; speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Teaching reading tends to be a passive activity than teaching speaking. The objective of teaching English in senior high school is to make students read and comprehend reading materials. Based on the Regulation of National Education Ministry No. 23/2006 about Graduate Competency Standard that emphasizes the students to understand the meaning of interpersonal and transactional written discourse, genres (narrative, descriptive, procedure, report, analytical exposition, news item, exposition hortatory, spoof, explanation, discussion, and review texts), and formal and non-formal.

Reading, then, is a skill that students and teachers highly value. Get along with it; teaching reading becomes the focus of English language teaching for senior high schools in Indonesia. The National Examination in English is applied in the form of a reading test. So the students and the teacher should be ready to face it through their suitable learning strategy and methods. The teacher should have adequate preparation in teaching reading as well. Since the blueprint of the national examination at English is more than eighty percent of the test items are for reading skills. Consequently, in English language teaching for senior high school, reading skills become the priority of the teaching and learning process.

Reading is a complex process that depends upon the individual's language development, cognitive ability, and attitude toward reading. Reading ability results from applying these factors as the individual identifies, interprets, and evaluates ideas from written materials (Wallace, 1993:14). Anderson (2003) states reading is an essential skill for English learners because dialog occurs between readers and writers. Reading is also a purposeful process of identifying, interpreting, and evaluating ideas in terms of the mental content; therefore, a reading strategy can help the students comprehend reading materials. Based on the expert above, it can be inferred that the reading process involves identifying the text's meaning and interpreting and evaluating ideas from a textbook.

Furthermore, the students need appropriate reading strategies to develop their reading ability. According to Heisat (2009:311), reading strategies are related to deliberating goal-

directed attempts, controlling and modifying the readers' efforts. In line with Noor et al. (2009:139), whose reading strategies are to decode text, understand words, and construct text meanings. Oxford (1990) states that attempts to help learners have been developed among teachers and researchers. Interest has been shifting from what learners learn for language learning to how learners gain the language to process orientation; language learning strategies become part of this shifting interest since these strategies are an aspect of the learning process (Takac, 2008).

Language learning strategies are an aspect to consider because these are essential for developing communicative competence needed in reading (Oxford, 1990). Learning strategies are classified into six categories: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Different learning strategies learners use reflect learners' variation in terms of gender, level of proficiency, learner's belief, etc. Developing language learning strategies is also a way to establish conscious learning to obtain better ability, especially in reading. Language learning strategies are a useful tool kit for active and deliberate learning, and that these strategies pave the way toward greater proficiency, learner autonomy, and self-regulation (Dornyei,2005:195). The choice, each individual has a different way of combining and sequencing language learning strategies.

A teacher needs to pay attention to students' differences in language learning, both high and low achievers. Savile (2006) says that not all strategies are the same; some methods are more effective than others. Therefore, it is necessary to know which learning strategies are used by successful or high-achieving learners.

Moreover, by knowing what strategy the students apply, the writer wishes it can be valuable for improving the teaching process in class since reading skill is very needed in facing national examination. Secondly, by knowing students' reading strategy, hopefully, it can be beneficial for the teacher to know the best way to improve students' ability in reading comprehension; then, it can help them face national examinations better than before. Therefore, the researcher is interested in examining the reading strategies used by two categories of high school students, namely: high achievers and low achievers at SMA Batik 1 Surakarta.

SMA BATIK 1 is one of high school in Surakarta. The English achievement of the students is not equally similar. Most students feel difficult to understand the text because of their

lack of vocabulary. They do not know the meaning of the words. Moreover, the teachers must have a formulation to overcome this problem.

There are at least two categories here, i.e., high achiever and low achiever. These categories are defined based on the minimal fulfillment criteria on the score of 75. The high achievers are the students who score above 75 at least 80, and the low achievers reach under 70. Meanwhile, to make all the students pass the minimal score, there should be an improvement. The improvement is started by understanding their learning strategy.

The previous researcher had studied the study of learning strategy in reading is by SEPTI (UMS 2012) with "*Learning Strategies In Reading Used By The XII Grade Students Of SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Surakarta*". The study describes the learning strategy to improve their reading ability. Meanwhile, my current study focuses on the approach applied by the high and low achiever students of XII grade SMA Batik 1 Surakarta. It examines the similarities and differences in techniques used by high and low achiever students.

B. Limitation of The Study

This study investigates the learning strategy used by high achiever students and low achiever students of XII grade in SMA Batik 1 Surakarta in reading comprehension. The similarities and differences of the reading approach were applied by high achiever students and low achiever students. The researcher focuses on the learning strategy because, hopefully, it can help the teacher find out the best way to teach reading based on the students' ability and learning system since the task has become a primary concern in national examination.

C. Research Problem

The problems statements are as follow:

1. What are strategies of learning reading comprehension employed by high achiever and low achiever students of XII grade at SMA Batik 1 Surakarta?
2. What are the similarities and differences of reading comprehension strategies by high achiever students and low achiever students of XII grade at SMA Batik 1 Surakarta?
3. What problems do students face in XII grade students in SMA Batik 1 Surakarta in learning reading comprehension?
4. What are the solutions applied by the teacher for the students of XII grade in SMA Batik 1 Surakarta in learning reading comprehension?

D. The Objective of Study

This study comes with these four objectives of the study. They are:

1. To know the strategies of learning reading comprehension were employed by high achiever students and low achiever students at SMA Batik 1 Surakarta.
2. To know the similarities and differences of learning reading comprehension strategies employed by high achiever students and low achiever students at SMA Batik 1 Surakarta.
3. To know students' problems in learning reading comprehension.
4. To know the teacher's solution for the XII grade of SMA Batik 1 in learning reading comprehension.

E. Benefits of the Study

The study has benefits that are divided into the following:

1. Theoretical Benefit

Hopefully, this study can enlarge the theories of learning strategy specifically in learning reading comprehension in the classroom.

2. Practical Benefit

The result of the study will help people as follows:

- a. For researchers, this study is expected to expand knowledge in the teaching and learning process in the classroom regarding student learning methods to become successful teachers.
- b. For language teachers, this study is expected to contribute and elevate students' language competence in upgrading learning motivation for academics and the community about a study plan.
- c. For other researchers, the results of this study can provide additional references in the same research about learning strategies.
- d. Hopefully, the investigation will be beneficial for students in the future that the information and theories proposed by some experts encourage students to select a precise study plan. So they can get the best achievement in English.

F. Research Paper Organization

The paper has been divided into five parts that are organized based on the following sequence: Chapter I is Introduction; It consists of a background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statement, the study's objective, the benefit of the study, and thesis organization. Chapter II consist of the previous research and underlying theory. Chapter III is about the research method: type of study, type of data and data source, and technique of collecting data. Chapter IV is analysis and discussion, and then the last is chapter V it is the conclusion.