

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

When someone learns a foreign language, he should know that the best way to learn a foreign language is thorough a lot of reading. The more he reads the easier it will be for him to understand a reading text. And nowadays, many scientific books are written in English. So, it is important to learn English, especially SMA students who wants to continue their study to the university. They should be able to read English text, so that they can improve their professional knowledge.

For the reason above, the goal of teaching English in Indonesia is emphasized on reading ability. The following is the direct quotation of the objectives of curriculum 1984 stated in the Garis-garis Besar Program Pengajaran (GBPP):¹

Siswa memiliki minat dan kemampuan berbahasa

¹ Kurikulum Sekolah Menengah Umum Tingkat Atas (SMA), Garis-garis Besar Program Pengajaran (GBPP), Depdikbud, 1986, hal-62.

Inggris terutama membaca, dan disamping itu siswa juga diharapkan dapat menyimak, berbicara dan menulis karangan sederhana dalam bahasa Inggris yang menggunakan pola kalimat lanjutan bahasa Inggris dengan kosa kata dalam tingkatan 4000 kata.

This means that reading has a priority among the four language skills , but it does not mean that the other three language skills are not important or should be neglected. Therefore reading occupies most of the time allocations in "curriculum SMA 1984" which state, ".....pembagian waktu 48 jam efektif per semester untuk kegiatan belajar ditentukan sebagai berikut: 16 jam untuk struktur, 28 jam untuk reading dan vocabulary building, dan 4 jam untuk dialog (pengungkapan makna atau pelaksanaan fungsi bahasa)"². It is clear that reading has strong emphasis in SMA. Most of the time allocations is for reading, but they still have difficulties in comprehending the reading text.

During her observation and teaching practice at SMA, the writer noticed that most students had difficulties in comprehending the reading text. The reason is that the students were usually given explicit

² Kurikulum SMA 1984, Petunjuk Pelaksanaan Materi Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris, Jakarta, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 1984, hal.28.

questions. They rarely got the implicit questions from their teacher, so when they had to answer those questions, they got difficulties.

In fact, questions play a crucial part in reading comprehension, because to know whether the students understand the reading passage or not we ask questions whether explicit or implicit. As Smith and Robinson say that: "Questions are of course 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 understanding³".

However, the fact shows that some students often neglect questions. They consider questions as tasks to be accomplished or to be answered, and sometimes they can not give reason why they give that particular answer.

Considering that questions play an important part in reading comprehension the writer is interested in analyzing the content of reading comprehension questions in "Bahasa Inggris 2a" by "Depdikbud" whose publication is now generally used in SMA.

³ Nila B. Smith & H. Alan Robinson, Reading Instruction for Today's Children, Prentice Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, 1963. p.228.

As far as she knows, Book I semester I and Book III semester 5 and 6 have been analyzed. Therefore the writer here would like to complete the analysis, by analyzing "Bahasa Inggris 2a".

I.2. Statement of The Problem

In line with the background, that questions play an important part in reading comprehension and as a tool to measure student's understanding, this study is meant to analyze the content of reading comprehension questions of Bahasa Inggris 2a (Depdikbud). Thus the problems of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What type of comprehension questions are found in "Bahasa Inggris 2a" (Depdikbud)?
2. How is the proportion of the reading comprehension questions in "Bahasa Inggris 2a" (Depdikbud)?

I.3. Objective of The Study

The objectives of this study, derived directly from the above formulated problems, are to investigate:

1. The type of comprehension questions in "Bahasa Inggris 2a" (Depdikbud)?
2. The proportion of the reading comprehension questions in "Bahasa Inggris 2a" (Depdikbud)?

I.4. Significance of the study.

Since reading is the first language skill to be

achieved in the teaching of English especially in SMA and since it is important to provide the right book for SMA students, it is essential for the teacher to know whether the reading materials found in the textbooks are suitable for the students.

Therefore, the findings of this study are expected:

1. to be used as feedback by English teachers in leading their students to comprehend the text through questions.
2. to make the English teacher creative in constructing the reading comprehension questions based on level of difficulties of the students.

I.5. Scope and Limitation of The Study.

This study is limited only to the analysis of the questions of "Bahasa Inggris 2a" of the second year SMA students, Book II semester III for social sciences (A₃). The analysis would be based on Bloom Taxonomy.

Actually, there are three domains in Bloom's Taxonomy namely Cognitive domain, affective domain, and psychomotor domain. However, in this study, the writer only takes the first domain, that is cognitive domain, for this domain is mostly applied in the work of curriculum development.

I.6. Definition of Key Terms

Before coming to the core of this study, it is necessary for the writer to give explanation of the key terms used in the title of this study. There are two terms to be defined:

Reading, according to Mary Finocchiaro it means getting meaning from printed or written material⁴. While Mary Newton Bruder defines reading as decoding speech written down, a skill which would naturally transfer from a command of the oral skills⁵. But according to William S. Gray, reading is not only recognizing the essential facts or ideas presented in a reading text, but also reflecting on their significance evaluating them critically, discovering relationship between them, and clarifying the understanding of ideas apprehended⁶.

Comprehension Questions are questions which test

⁴ Mary finocchiaro, Reading in English as a Second Language from Theory to Practice, New York, Regent Publishing Co., Inc. Publishers, 1964, p.70

⁵ Christiana Bratt Paulston and Mary Newton Bruder, Teaching English as a second language: Techniques and Procedures, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers, Inc., 1976, p.157.

⁶ Mary M. Dupuis, "Content Area Reading An Individualized Approach", New Jersey, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1982, p.27.

the students' understanding of material read or heard⁷.

⁷ Bruder, op. cit., p.30.