

CHAPTER I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

1.1 Back ground of the study

The fact that the teaching of reading in English is very important in our formal school has been acknowledged by most people in our country. By important here is meant that the result of the teaching of reading in English will directly influence the continuation of the students education. James Ward says that,

Reading is the most fruitful skills to teach because the majority of students of English as a foreign language may never speak much English, but most of them will have to read English in order to complete their university studies. 1

1
James Ward, "Techniques for Teaching Reading",
English Teaching Forum, April, 1984, Vol. XVIII, no. 2,
page 2

This implies that reading ability is very important for Indonesian University students to learn and improve in their academic studies. It is also supported by Ned D. Marksheffel who says :

Reading may be defined as a highly complex purposeful, thinking process engaged in by the entire organism while acquiring knowledge, involving new ideas, solving problems or relaxing and recuperating through the interpretation of printed symbols. 2

These opinions have reminded us of how important the reading skill is. All of us know that many text-books are written in a foreign language especially in English; therefore, in order that the students can take full advantage of them, they have to develop their reading skills first.

But the reality shows that most University students still find difficulties in comprehending English written texts. When they read a text, they often miss the main points as well as most of the details of the texts.

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Ned D. Marksheffel, Better Reading in the secondary school, New York, Ronald Press Company, 1966, p. 12

Once when the writer observed a reading class of semester 2 in the English Department of Widya Mandala, the writer found that when the teacher asked the students to do the exercises concerning the whole passage, they faced difficulties, such as many students could not answer the questions correctly. By interviewing them, the writer concluded that there were two reasons that caused bad result.

The first one was the teacher's boring way of teaching. As far as the writer observed, in teaching reading, most SMTA and University teachers usually use the following procedures :

1. Distribute the reading passage.
2. Ask about the difficult words they found in the passage.
3. Ask the students to read the passage in turn.
4. Give time to the students to ask questions.
5. Discuss the content of the passage.
6. Ask questions concerning the whole passage.

The second one was about the passage itself. Why ? It is because the teacher sometimes gives a passage which is not suitable for the students.

Due to limited time and ability, the writer will only

discuss the first factor, that is the teacher's boring way of teaching.

Being interest in the first factor mentioned by the students, and realizing that many English teachers tend to use the same way when teaching reading, the writer wants to propose a way of teaching reading which can help teachers vary their technique. One of the ways to make teaching interesting is the use of games.

Playing games is an obvious and easy way of ensuring that learning is enjoyable. In her thesis, Narsisca Sriwigati says that games are an activity that can heighten the students interest and that will help the students look forward to their English lesson.
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Narsisca Sriwigati Solaiman, Teaching Reading Comprehension Through Games in tie Second Year of Junior High School, Surabaya, Fakultas Keguruan da Ilmu Pendidikan Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala, 1989, p. 4

In his book, W.R. Lee said that "Games are enjoyable. Enjoyable also is the active co-operation with one fellows. In group or team activity, rivalry and co-operation go hand in hand".⁴

It is also supported by Françoise Grellet, Alan Maley and Wim Welsing. They said that "co-operation in the completion of a common task leads to more effective learning"⁵

While Simon F.E. Haines says that discussions are a useful and absorbing way of practising the language of the theme and of express-ing your personal view.⁶

Teaching Reading Comprehension by means of games is beneficial. There are so many kinds of games that can avoid the students' boredom and they can learn more enthusiastically. Games also help them to be active in the classroom.

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W.R. Lee, Language Teaching Games and Contests, London, Oxford University Press, 1984, p. 1

5

Françoise Grellet, Alan Maley and Wim Welsing, Quartet, London, Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 7

6

Simon F.E. Haines, Contemporary Themes for Reading and Discussion, Oxford, Pergamon Press, 1984, p. 2

1.2 Statement of The Problem

Reading materials for the University students of the English Department should be varied so that they will be able to read various types of reading materials. A game is one of those useful sources aids that can be used to vary the reading materials in class.

Therefore, the problems posed in this study are :

1. What kinds of games are useful in improving students' reading comprehension ?
2. What are the advantages of games in the teaching of reading ?

1.3 The objective of the study

Taking into consideration that language games can be very useful in maintaining students' motivation and interest in learning a language, the writer would like to suggest some appropriate language games which are useful for the teaching of reading in the English Department.

To be more specific, the objectives of this study are formulated as follows :

1. To propose some kinds of games which are useful in improving students' reading comprehension.
2. To give some advantages of reading games in the classroom.

1.4 Significance of The Study

The teaching of reading comprehension is supposed to be a means to faster and better understanding of the passage. The information obtained from this thesis is expected to enable English teachers to help their students to comprehend reading texts better. Based on this explanation, the teachers are expected to be able to utilize the technique of games in their efforts to enhance the students' reading comprehension ability.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

This study is planned to be based on the following theories :

1.5.1 Theory of Communicative Language Teaching

This theory is needed to help the learners to work in pairs or groups in problem - solving tasks. In communicative activities, the learner has to be active and use his prior knowledge and skills in order to communication his thoughts.

1.5.2 Theory of Reading Comprehension

Christine Nuttall says that reading is not just a linguistic exercise, but it involved with the getting out of meaning of a text. Reading is not just an active process, but an interactive one.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The writer finds it necessary to limit the scope of this study.

It will only concern the teaching of reading comprehension of English Department's Students at Widya Mandala University.

In this study, the writer focuses her discussion on what games are, the advantages of

games, how to use them in the classroom and the kinds of games to be used for the English Department's students.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation and / or misunderstanding, it is necessary to define to the following key - terms :

1.7.1 Reading :

Is an active attempt, on the part of a reader, to understand a writer's message.⁷

1.7.2 Technique :

Is a particular trick, strategem, or contrivance used to accomplish an objective.⁸

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Nila Banton Smith and H. Alan Robinson, Reading Instruction For Today's Children, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1980, p. 6

⁸
Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers, Approaches and method in Language Teaching, London, Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 15

1.7.3. Game :

As for the term of game. Clark C. Abt describe it is as any contest (play) among adversaries (players) operating under constraints (rules) for an objective (winning).

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Gretchen E. Weed, "Using Games in Teaching Children" in English Teaching Forum, April 1972, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 23