

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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#### 1.1 Background of the Study

In many parts of the world, a reading knowledge of a foreign language is often important to academic studies. The ability to read is undeniable; from reading, the students can meet with new ideas and information about a variety of subjects so that the students' knowledge will increase. Dubin (1982:16) in her article , "*What Every EFL Teacher Should Know About Reading*" states that many teachers realize that reading is the most important skill students need. And until recently, few high school teachers have been aware of the need to teach reading. General knowledge depends on reading. The more the students read, the more knowledge they acquire of other ways of life, behavior, ideas, and the more books they find they can understand (Shang:1984,37).

This idea goes in line with the concept of 1994 Curriculum that English in SMU includes four skills: Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing that might be taught integratedly, however, it still emphasizes on Reading, as quoted:

“Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris di Sekolah Menengah Umum mencakup ketrampilan membaca, menyimak, berbicara, dan menulis dalam bahasa Inggris yang sedapat mungkin disajikan secara terpadu;

namun demikian, penekanannya terutama pada ketrampilan membaca”.

As translated into:

“English lesson in Senior High School includes Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing skills in English that might be presented integratedly; nevertheless, the emphasizing is on Reading skill”.

Indeed, students reading in a foreign language seem to read with less understanding than one might expect them to have, and to read considerably slower than they reportedly read in their first language.

Realizing that reading skill is needed by the students in their effort to develop their knowledge, it is necessary for all the SMU English teachers to find out the appropriate techniques of how to teach reading comprehension to the students.

As the writer has observed during her PPL program, in teaching reading comprehension, it was found that the students of English as a foreign language have some difficulties in comprehending English texts when reading them for the first time. Not only do these texts contain unfamiliar contents but also unfamiliar vocabulary. As Taglieber (1988:455-472) points out that reading in a second language is different from reading in one's native language. These difficulties are usually caused by the students' lack of vocabulary knowledge, difficulty in using

language cues to meaning, and lack of conceptual knowledge. Furthermore, some English teachers seem to use the same techniques that make students bored and passive. Generally, the techniques are as follow:

1. the teacher reads from paragraph to paragraph
2. the teacher gives the meaning of difficult words
3. the teacher asks some students to read the text aloud
4. the teacher asks the whole class to answer the comprehension questions.

Seeing this fact, the writer tries to suggest a technique that the teachers can use to improve students' reading comprehension. This technique, called prereading activities, is a way to familiarize the students quickly with the content of the material. By giving prereading activities, it is hoped to be a technique that can activate the students' prior knowledge relevant to understanding the new text (Mayer, in Taglieber's article, 1984:456). The text-relevant background knowledge which students bring with them has a significant effect on their ability to process and derive information from the text (Carrell&Eisterhold, 1983, in Tudor's article). With prereading activities, the students can have the ideas of what lies ahead and they will be able to read faster and understand more about the text.

According to Taglieber (1988:456), there are three kinds of techniques in prereading activities that seem most practical for second language learners, called

pictorial context, prequestioning, and vocabulary preteaching. In this study, the writer will combine the two former techniques as one technique compared with the last technique. So, there will be two techniques that are going to be compared and used in this study:

**1. pictorial context + prequestioning**

**2. vocabulary preteaching**

Based on the statements above, the writer would like to know which one of the two techniques has a better effect on students' reading comprehension achievement, with the hope that the result will give some contributions to the teaching-learning of English.

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In this study, the writer wants to know whether the pictorial context + prequestioning have more determinant effect than vocabulary preteaching.

From the statement above, the question to be examined in this study is:

“Do the pictorial context + prequestioning have a better effect than the vocabulary preteaching on students' reading comprehension achievement?”

### **1.3 The Objective of the Study**

Derived directly from the above formulated problem, the objective of this study is to know which one between the pictorial context + prequestioning and the vocabulary preteaching has greater determinant effect on students' reading comprehension achievement.

### **1.4 Research Hypothesis**

To answer the problem that has been mentioned, the following hypotheses are set up:

#### ***The Null Hypothesis***

There is no significant difference in the reading achievement of students who get the pictorial context + prequestioning and who get the vocabulary preteaching.

#### ***The Alternative Hypothesis***

There is a significant difference in the reading achievement of students who get the pictorial context + prequestioning and who get the vocabulary preteaching.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is intended to promote the two techniques in prereading activities as methods in teaching reading comprehension.

The teaching of reading comprehension through the two techniques of prereading activities are supposed to be as a means to facilitate the students to comprehend the passage better, easier, and faster and the result of this study is expected to enable the English teachers to have a clear picture of the importance of prereading activities in teaching reading comprehension.

### **1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

Being aware of how broad the topic of this study would be, the subjects and the materials are necessary to be limited.

In this study, the writer conducts the two techniques in prereading activities; pictorial context + prequestioning and vocabulary preteaching that are given before the real reading activities begin.

Besides that, the pictures and the subjects are limited too. The pictures used in this study are situational pictures. And the subjects of this study are the students of the second-year students of SMU DAPENA I Surabaya.

## **1.7 Definition of Key Terms**

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

### ***Prior Knowledge or Schemata:***

Schemata (the plural form of schema) are previously acquired knowledge structures or the reader's background knowledge (Bartlett 1932, Adams&Collins 1979, Rummelhart 1980, in Carrell&Eisterhold's article: 1983, 556).

### ***Prereading Activities***

According to Tudor (1988:72-73, in Irawati Setio's thesis), the term prereading activities refers to any-related activities in which learners are engaged prior to the main text reading.

### ***Pictorial Context***

Pictorial Context is a context which is provided with pictures, so that the meaning of the words in those contexts can be interpreted by the students clearly and exactly (in Helen Gondosetio's thesis).

### ***Situational Pictures***

Finnochiaro(1974:100-102) states that situational pictures are pictures of situation in which persons are doing something with objects and in which the relationship of objects or people can be seen.

### ***Prequestioning***

Prequestioning is a technique of giving questions that are given before the formal reading instruction begins.

### ***Vocabulary Preteaching***

Vocabulary Preteaching is a technique of giving vocabulary lists that are given before the actual reading instruction begins; it is to help the students to recognize the words which carry the ideas of the passage.

## **1.8 Organization of the Study**

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter One discusses the Introduction of this study: the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the research hypothesis, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, the definition of key terms, and the organization of the study. Chapter Two deals with some related literatures that

scope and limitation of the study, the definition of key terms, and the organization of the study. Chapter Two deals with some related literatures that support this study: the theory of reading comprehension, the schema theory, the technique used in this study, the theory of prereading activities and the applications of prereading activities in reading comprehension. In Chapter Three, the writer presents methodology of the study: the research design, the population and sample of this study, the research instrument, and the procedure of collecting and analyzing the data. While in Chapter Four, the writer presents the data analysis and the findings. And as a conclusion in Chapter Five, the writer gives summary, suggestions for teachers, and recommendation for further research.