

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

There are many languages in the world that we used to communicate each other. Language is the most important thing for communication in daily life. Language as a communication instrument is used by human being for their interaction in their daily activities. Human beings are social creatures that cannot live alone in fulfilling their daily necessities. They need to interact with others in their life. In other word, a language is needed for human beings in communication and interaction in daily life.

Language becomes an important thing and all people need to use it. It is a gift of God to human beings as stated in the Holy Koran in Al-Hujurat verse 13 as follows:

The verse says that people have to know and to help each other. The varieties of languages force people to learn language. Nowadays, to communicate with each other countries is a necessity. Then, the used of English help more than a million people in some countries that giving many beneficial in daily life.

As it is known, English is the first foreign language in Indonesia. The use of English becomes widely considered as an urgent need. This possibly happens due to some realities. The first, English is as an international language, so it often plays its role as the officer language. The second, because of its role, English becomes the language that most frequently used in modern science and technology. So many books, journals, movies and other modern technologies and materials, which are internationally circulated, are written in English. The third, English has the largest number of users all over the world.

Some research findings indicate that English reading of most Indonesian students is still far from being sufficient. In other words, they have poor English reading skills. However, reading skill is the basic form to facilitate the absorption and development advanced science.

Reading is a process of thinking. Burn and Roe state that reading is a very complex and complicated process that involves some factors influential upon each other. The writer has an opinion that reading supports are important for the students to be able to comprehend the text.

Despitefully, the importance of reading elaborated above, it is often found that many students have problems in reading especially in comprehending reading text or passage. In other words, they often find difficult to understand the reading texts or passages.

In general, to understand the context of the texts and to find their meanings, most students look up dictionary. As the previous explanation, it is recommended for the students when they have difficulties with the new words, they can guess the meaning based on the context, or try to find out its derivation. So they will get easier and faster to understand the paragraph or even the reading texts.

Reading is not only an activity of transferring the printed symbol from page to the brain but also a process of comprehending the content of a text. Reading comprehension is a process to understand the text content and to get information. Comprehension in reading becomes important because it makes the readers get something meaningful from what they read. Reading without comprehending is a useless activity. If the reader reads something without knowing the meaning and the idea or without a purpose, the reader will get nothing.

Dole, Duffy, Roehler, & Pearson (1991) emphasizes the point that making an inference in reading is the process of combining the current text information with one's own experience in order to create meaning that is not directly stated in the text. It means creating connections and making educated guesses that go beyond the author's exact words or images. Inference might be seen as taking little "thinking steps" off the safe path of the literal and seeing if they lead to

where the author intends. It means making educated guesses and filling in the blanks that are not in the text.

If the inference is correct, then someone has learned something new and will have that learning better anchored in his/her own brain. If it is wrong, then he/she still learns something new—to make a different inference in a similar situation in future texts.

An inference about future information in a text is a prediction. Students should use the text clues and their background knowledge to predict what will happen next in a story or what they will learn later in a text. They then go through the text to confirm, discard, change, or make new predictions, based on new evidence that comes up. Prediction provides the readers with motivation and purpose for reading. It also helps the mind prepare itself to understand the upcoming ideas in the text. Thus, it is needed to reflect on the main idea in order to make a logical prediction. This necessitates a certain amount of focus on text details and an ongoing handle on the main idea.

Teacher also must teach students to effectively and automatically mix the text and their background knowledge to make good inferences and predictions. If students rely too heavily on the text, they will miss a large amount of deeper meaning; if they rely too heavily on background knowledge, they will lose the direction of the text.

From the description above, many students still have problems in reading to comprehend the text or passage after taking intensive reading material at the fifth semester, especially to infer the texts. The difficulty to infer the texts in

reading comprehension is to create meaning by combining the current text information with one's own experience that is not directly stated in the text. The writer takes at the sixth semester in English Department Banjarmasin of *Antasari* State Institute for Islamic Studies because they still difficult to infer the texts.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested in getting a research entitled: "The Students' Ability to Infer the Texts in Reading Comprehension at The Sixth Semester of English Department Academic Year 2013/2014".

B. Problem Formulation

Based on the rational above, the problem of this research can be formulated as follows:

1. How is students' ability at the sixth semester of English Department to infer the texts in Reading Comprehension?
2. What is the most difficult text for the students' to infer in reading comprehension?

C. Limitation of Study

This research is limited only about students' ability and difficulty to infer the texts at the sixth semester in reading comprehension of English Department.

D. Objectives of Study

Based on the problem formulation above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To know students' ability to infer the texts in reading comprehension at the sixth semester of English Department.
2. To know the most difficult text for the students' to infer in reading comprehension at the sixth semester of English Department.

E. Significance of Study

The results that are going to be achieved in this research expected to:

1. Give the writer information about the students' ability to infer the texts in reading comprehension at the sixth semester of English Department.
2. Give the writer information about level of the students' difficulty to infer the texts in reading comprehension at the sixth semester of English Department.
3. Give information for English Department and Institution about student's ability to infer the texts in reading comprehension at the sixth semester of English Department.
4. Give information to other readers about students' ability to infer the texts in reading comprehension at the sixth semester of English Department.
5. Increase the writer's experience and knowledge about inferences "to infer the texts" in reading comprehension.
6. Give information to other researchers who would like to study other aspects relating to the problem in different perspectives ways.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Ability

“Ability is the mental or physical capacity, power or skill required to do something” (Hornby, 1995, p. 2). In this research, ability means the power or skill required to understand English text.

2. Infer

Infer is a verb form of inference. Inference is the process of creating a personal meaning based on specific evidence from written materials. It involves a mental process of combining what is read with relevant prior knowledge. Inference is also called unstated information but can be *inferred* (concluded) from the information given.

3. Text

It is reading materials that the students learn in classroom.

4. Reading comprehension

According to Oxford dictionary, Reading is the action of person who reads (Jonathan Crowther, 1995, p. 968). Reading comprehension is the act of understanding what that is read. While the definition can be simply stated the act is not simple to teach, learn or practice. Reading comprehension is an international, active, interactive process that occurs before, during and after a person reads a particular piece of writing (Nunan, 2003, p. 68). Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from text.

G. Writing Organization

This research is divided into five chapters as follow:

Chapter one is introduction, which consist of background of study, problem formulation, limitation of problem, objectives of study, significance of study, definition of key terms and writing organization.

Chapter two is theoretical review, which consists of definitions of reading and reading comprehension, reading styles, and definition of making inferences.

Chapter three is method of research, which consist of subject and object research, data and source data, techniques of data collecting, design measurement, techniques of data processing and analysis, and research procedure.

Chapter four is report of the research, which consists of findings and discussion.

Chapter five is closure, which consists of conclusions and suggestions.