

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This present study aims to find out the correlation between students' curiosity and their reading comprehension ability on news item texts. Therefore, this chapter discusses some aspects related with the topic of the research. Those are the background of the research, problem of the research, objective of the research, significance of the research, assumption of the research, scope of the research, and operational definition of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Reading plays an essential role in the students' English development. It allows readers to acquire vocabularies, understand information, and many other benefits. According to Gurning and Siregar (2017, p.191), reading has varied meanings for different people. Some people read for ideas and knowledge, while others read for feelings and pleasure. Particularly for students, reading is done to obtain a general comprehension. It implies that while the students read the text, they make an effort to understand how the words are organized and actively participate in the text in order to respond to the information and understand the meaning being delivered.

Most students learn languages through reading. Learners can never learn anything if they do not read. In order children to succeed in school and in life, Akabuike (2012, p.247) asserts that children must first acquire the skill of reading. Reading cannot be separated from thinking; hence it is an active process as

opposed to being passive. This is supported by Qushoy (2022, p.2), who asserts that reading is a thought-full activity.

In reading, EFL students are expected to be able to comprehend about what they read. Thus, it requires a good reading comprehension. Reading and comprehension are interconnected. According to Veeravagu, et.al (2010, p.206), reading comprehension is defined as “a thinking process by which a reader selects facts, information, or ideas from printed materials; determines the meanings the author intended to transmit; decides how they relate to previous knowledge; and judges their appropriateness and worth for meeting the reader’s own objectives”. In other words, reading comprehension is the process through which readers interact with literature to make sense of it using a combination of information from the text, their own opinions about it, and their prior knowledge and experiences.

There are some factors that contribute in achieving reading comprehension, such as students’ motivation, vocabulary knowledge, prior knowledge, curiosity and many more (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016, p.180). From the factors mentioned, curiosity is the factors that will direct the readers whether they will activate all of their abilities to comprehend the text or vice versa. Curiosity is defined as a person’s desire to learn about a subject of interest (Nurhayati, 2021, p.780). According to the definition of curiosity, someone with a high level of curiosity will study their surroundings more thoroughly than someone with a low level of curiosity. The high-curiosity person will pay more attention, careful, and actively seek for understanding. In contrast with those who have less curiosity, they will

less actively seek an understanding of the text that being read (Jirout & Klahr, 2012, p.142).

Reading comprehension maybe varied due to several reasons or factors. Several factors that have been mentioned before, including curiosity can become the factor that impacts students' reading comprehension. Over the past few years, there have been a lot of studies which have investigated the impact of a certain factor to students' reading comprehension, or how it correlates each other. For instance, factors relate to reading habit, students' motivation, English proficiency level, anxiety, self-efficacy, and many more. However, study that has focused on students' curiosity is still relatively few, especially on how the correlation between students' curiosity and their reading comprehension. Below are several previous studies which have investigated a certain factor such correlates or impacts students' reading comprehension.

The first study is from Sartika et.al (2020) entitled "The Correlation Between Students' Reading Habit and Their Reading Comprehension". The study aimed to find out its correlation whether reading habit has significant correlation with reading comprehension. There were 64 students of eleventh grade of SMA Negeri 1 Madang Suku 3 OKU Timur participated in this study. The researcher employed a questionnaire and test to obtained the research data. The results of the study revealed that there was significant correlation between students reading habit and their reading comprehension. However, the researcher asserted that reading habit is not the main factor influenced students reading comprehension.

The next study is from Aulia (2021) entitled “The Correlation between Students Curiosity and their Reading Comprehension at the Tenth Grade of SMA Negeri 11 Jenepono”. The study was correlational research. 34 tenth-grade students of SMA Negeri 11 Jenepono were the sample of the study. The researcher used reading comprehension test in the form an essay and a questionnaire. The results of this showed that there was significant correlation between students’ curiosity and students' reading comprehension. So, it can be concluded that the higher students’ curiosity, the higher their literal reading comprehension ability.

Based on those study, the researcher is interested to conduct research entitled “The Correlation Between Students’ Curiosity and Their Reading Comprehension ability on News Item Texts”. This present study differ from the previous studies above, where this study use a specific text “news item text”. While the previous research above was used reading test from English book and narrative text. Based on the results of the observations, twelve grade Pondok Modern Darul Istiqomah teachers stated that news item text was one of the materials that most students considered difficult, so that sometimes students have less curiosity on it. Therefore, students have lack understanding about the text and affect to their reading comprehension. Furthermore, the present study employ a reading comprehension test in the form of multiple choice, since the research participant of this study is senior high school students who may not have sufficient knowledge in answering questions in the form of essay.

1.2 Problem of the Research

Based on the research background presented, this study proposes the following research questions “Is there any significant correlation between students’ curiosity and their reading comprehension ability on News Item texts?”

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the research questions formulated above, this present study therefore aims “To find out whether there is any significant correlation between students’ curiosity and their reading comprehension ability on News item texts”.

1.4 Operational Definition

Below are several terms that are defined to make it clear and prevent misunderstanding in this study:

1. Curiosity refers to individual’s desire to explore and learn about a subject of interest.
 - a. Desire to learn new objects.
 - b. Enthusiastic in participating in learning.
 - c. Coordinate existing cognitive structures (known) with existing reality.
2. Reading comprehension refers to the ability to read a text, process it and understand its meaning. The reading comprehension covers:
 - a. Ability to identify the main idea.
 - b. Ability to sequence a passage into an ordinal series.
 - c. Ability to answer direct recall questions.

News Item text is English news which inform readers about events that are considered newsworthy or important.

Generic structures

- a. Main events
- b. Elaboration
- c. Resource of information

Language features

- a. Using saying verbs.
- b. Using action verbs.
- c. Using adverbs of time, place and manner.
- d. Using past tense and simple present tense.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The findings of this study are expected to give contribution to the English teaching and learning. There are two major significances; those are theoretical and practical significances:

1. Theoretical Significance

In term of theoretical significance, this study is expected to contribute to the related theories. Moreover, this can be additional reference for future studies, as well as supporting the existing study and theories related to the topic of this study.

2. Practical Significance

The results of this research are expected to give teachers an overview about students' curiosity, their reading comprehension, and how curiosity

correlate with reading comprehension. In addition, teachers can make an evaluation based on the results of this study later.

1.6 Scope of the Research

The scope of this research is being limited, starting from the variables studied, research participants, and location of the research. Twelfth grade students of Pondok Modern Darul Istiqomah will become the research participants of this study. Furthermore, this study will only focus on how students' curiosity and reading comprehension ability on the news item text, and its correlation.

