

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Reading is one great habit that can truly change the life forever. Reading can entertain and enrich people with knowledge—the only thing that does not decay with time. In today's world, reading is the key to education so that is why when people read any literatures related to any fields of study, their lives are rewarded by others.

Reading means different for different people. Some people read to get feeling and pleasure while the others read to get ideas, and information. For students, particularly, they read to have general understanding, specific and detailed information (Harmer, 2001). It means that when the students read any texts, they learn to extract meaning from the text. In order to make sense of any texts, they try to understand what the words mean, see the pictures painted by the words, engage with what they are reading to respond to the content, and catch the message conveyed by the writer. Due to those reasons, the students need to be taught by appropriate and suitable teaching strategies to increase their reading comprehension.

Learning reading comprehension, nowadays, is a complicated task to do by the students of Senior High School since Educational Unit Level Curriculum (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan: KTSP*) requires them to know various text genres based on their levels. For example, Recount, Narrative, Procedure, Descriptive, and News Item Genres are exposed to First Grade Students, Report, Exposition, Anecdote, and Spoof/ Recount genres are exposed to Second Grade students, and Explanation, Discussion, and Review genres are exposed to Third Grade Students. By knowing those genres, it is hoped that the students are being informational literate in terms of knowledge elevation in accordance with their needs in their lives as stated in Content Standard (*Standar Isi: SI*, 2006) of KTSP. As the evaluation, Standard Committee of National Education (*Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan: BSNP*)

will formulate genre- based questions to test students' reading comprehension in State Examination (*Ujian Nasional: UN*). Those questions are dominated the questions. From 40 questions tested, only 15 questions are aimed at testing Listening skill while the rests are aimed at testing reading comprehension skill.

Knowledge of text genres, in terms of how texts are organized, how information is signaled and how changes of content might be marked, has long been thought to be of importance in comprehending reading (Alderson, 2000). In other words, knowing where to look for the main idea in a paragraph, being able to find determinant meanings (author intent and implicit meaning of text), and being able to identify how subsidiary ideas are marked really help the students process the information and comprehend the whole text. Being familiar with text genres—taught since the first grade of Senior High School, ideally, the students have good ability on decoding and comprehending the text. But in fact, it is found that only 65.29 % of State students and 64.73 % of Private students are able to reach the score above 4.0—fixed score decided by *Depdikbud* (2012). Further more, in SMA Negeri 1 Tanjungbalai, it is found that the major achievement of students in reading comprehension is still under Minimal Passing Grade Criteria (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal: KKM*). The detailed data can be seen in the following table:

Table 1.1
Mean Score of the Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension of SMA Negeri 1 Tanjungbalai, School Year of 2011/ 2012

Class	Mean	<u>KKM</u>
X	67	70
XI	66	72
XII	67	72

(Source: Mark Collection List (*Daftar Kumpulan Nilai: DKN*) of SMA Negeri 1 Tanjungbalai, School Year of 2011/ 2012)

The result shown by the table above indicates that the students' achievement in reading comprehension is very low. The lowness of students' achievement in comprehending a text is influenced by some factors. Orasanu (1986: 33) identifies two factors that affect reading comprehension: internal and external. Internal factors, called reader variable, refers to everything related to the readers that includes cognitive ability and strategy, background knowledge, and affective characteristics such as self- esteem, self- efficacy, willingness, curiosity, interest, and motivation. External factors, called text variable, context variable, and writer variable, refer to all factors external to the reader. Text variable includes such elements as text modality and text-characteristics such as lexical density and structural complexity, context variable refers to all situational elements such as the time of reading and the place of reading, and writer variable refers to the text-producer. Both factors interact to each other.

The harmonious interaction between internal and external factors that affect reading comprehension achievement will lead the readers to interaction conception regarded meaning as a product of the information encoded in text and the knowledge and experience of the reader. It means that it was acknowledged that the reader's background influenced the perception of the text and the meanings generated (McNeil, 1992). In other words, the closer the match between what the reader already knew and the content and structure of the text, the greater the comprehension.

Due to the concepts above, there are two teaching strategies which encounter interactive perspective of students' achievement in reading comprehension, namely KWL (Know, Want to know, Learnt) and QARs (Question-Answer Relationships). KWL is a three-phase strategy that develops students' independent skill in comprehending a text. It helps the students engage with texts in deliberate and purposeful ways. In the first phase (Know), students activate prior knowledge. Then, in the second phase (Want to know) they predict what additional information they are likely to need and develop a plan to gather that

information. In the final phase (Learnt), students reflect on the new knowledge generated or retrieved as the plan is implemented. In KWL, the teacher functions as facilitator for this teaching strategy is student- centered (Ogle, 1986). So, it is inferred that KWL is a strategy that trains students to be active readers (Hyde, 2006).

Meanwhile, Question- Answer Relationships (QARs) is a teacher- centered strategy. It requires three levels of reading comprehension; reading the lines, by which students obtain information explicitly, reading between the lines, by which the students discover implicit meaning of text, and reading beyond the lines, whereby students interpret text in terms of their own personal values (Dale, 1966). QARs has three kinds of questions; Right There, Think and Search, and On My Own. In Right There, the answer is explicitly found in the text and it is easy to find. It means that the words used to make the question and the words that make the answer are Right There, in the same sentence. In Think and Search, the answer is in the story, but a little harder to find. The students would never find the words in the questions and words in the answer in the same sentence, but they would have to Think and Search for the answer. In on My Own, the answer would not be found in the text. The students must find the answer in their heads. In QARs, the teachers control the process of students' reading comprehension. The students only answer the question proposed by the teachers. There is no need for them to read the passages beyond the questions given (Hyde, 2006).

Both KWL and QARs acquire the concepts of meta-cognition theory. The theory emphasizes the importance of two components in facilitating reading comprehension; knowledge and regulation. Meta-cognitive knowledge include knowledge about oneself as a learner and the factors that might impact performance, knowledge about reading strategies, and knowledge about when and why to use the strategies while meta-cognitive regulation is the monitoring of students' cognition. It includes planning activities, awareness of comprehension and task performance, and evaluation of the efficacy of monitoring processes

and strategies (Lai, 2011). In other words, when the students are taught reading comprehension by using KWL and QARs strategies, they are regarded as self-regulated learners who set goals for extending knowledge and sustaining motivation. One of personal factors that provide motivational fuel for learning reading comprehension is curiosity.

Curiosity, undoubtedly, is a personal factor that really affects the success of teaching and learning in the classroom. When learner's curiosity is well-provoked, they will have great wander through the tasks given by the teachers, new sensation directed towards the process of learning, positive behavior and better concentration and attention while teaching and learning processes occur. Those attitudes, of course, are considered as strong motivators to facilitate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor developments in teaching and learning any skills, including reading comprehension.

Moreover, curiosity is considered to be an information-seeking process that directs and motivates learning (Loewenstein, 1994). When the students are exposed to KWL and QARs strategies in comprehending a text, they, actually, are treated to be information-seekers since they must be aware of what they know and what they believe by self-questioning and they must confront what they know and believe with the information conveyed by the writers in a text by self-clarifying. So, it is undeniable that KWL and QARs can provoke curiosity in comprehending a text for the students.

In short, although KWL and QARs have numerous similarities, they have basic differences; QARs is teacher-centered, while KWL is student-centered, QARs is convergent (it focuses on the answer) while KWL is divergent (It focuses on the process of getting the answer), and QARs treats the students to be passive and dependent learners while KWL treats the students to be active and independent learners (Hyde, 2006)

Based on the explanation above, it is believed that teaching strategies and the level of students' curiosity significantly affect reading comprehension achievement of students.

That is why in this research, KWL and QARs strategies will be associated with high and low levels of students' curiosity.

1.2 Problems of the Study

In accordance with the background of the study above, the problem of the study can be formulated as follow:

1. Is the students' achievement in reading comprehension taught by using KWL strategy higher than taught by QARs strategy?
2. Is the students' achievement in reading comprehension having high curiosity higher than having low curiosity?
3. Is there any significant interaction between teaching strategies and curiosity on students' achievement in reading comprehension?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study are to answer the questions posed in the problem of the study. The objectives are:

1. to know whether the students' achievement in reading comprehension taught by KWL is significantly higher than taught by QARs.
2. to know whether the students' achievement in reading comprehension having high curiosity is higher than having low curiosity.
3. to know whether there is significant interaction between teaching strategies and curiosity on students' achievement in reading comprehension.