

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is the process of using written material as a medium. Readers must decode and interpret the text in this exercise in order to understand its meaning. According to Grabe (2009), reading is the act of obtaining and deciphering language encoded information via print media. According to Berardo (2006), reading can mean different things to different people. For some people, reading is only about identifying written words, while for others, it's a chance to practice speaking and learn pronunciation. It is clear from these definitions that every reader has a unique definition of what reading is. The intent of the reader determines this.

One of the most important language skills that is taught in every classroom is reading, which may be done through a variety of materials including newspapers, articles, and most importantly, English textbooks. Reading is like all other talent. According to Longan (2001) students get better the more they practice. Students need to read a lot if they want to get better at the language. On the other hand, teachers will utilize the textbook comprehension questions to encourage students to think more deeply about the reading. A major component of reading objectives to improve student comprehension is reading comprehension questions. In this situation, teachers can assess students' understanding of the read material by using reading comprehension questions.

Students have demonstrated understanding of the material they have read if they are able to respond to the reading comprehension questions. These inquiries ought to be explicit, pertinent, logical, and unambiguous. Unclear or misleading questions are more likely to frustrate and discourage students than improve their thinking skills (Day & Park, 2005). Because of this, the author believes that questions are crucial to understanding what they're reading.

During the writer's experience in classroom, students often made mistakes in reading. It was found that some students did not understand the text. When they independently answered some questions related to the text, students liked to copy the answers from the text, using exactly the same sentences. If there were questions that were implicitly stated in the text, students often gave wrong answers. Based on these cases, it can be said that their reading comprehension was low. Vacca (2005) stated that questions are important when used effectively in lessons that require reading. Oral or written questions stimulate thinking and creativity towards productive learning and retention of written materials.

According to Richards and Lockhart (2007), there are two types of questions. They are convergent and divergent questions. Lower-level or factual questions involve convergent thinking in which students remember previously presented information. The answer will be a correct answer. On the other hand, higher-level questions promote divergent thinking that requires students to engage in deeper reflection on what they have learned. It cannot be answered with a single word or phrase. Asking higher level questions will promote the students' high thinking skills rather than asking for simple recall question. By asking appropriate comprehension questions, students will practice higher-order thinking skills.

Day and Park (2005) assert that appropriate comprehension questions will lead students to understanding and well-designed questions will help students create and construct meaning and begin to think critically and intelligently.

Have a good textbook with appropriate comprehension questions taxonomy for students as a means of learning, will help them to practice in a high way thinking ability. To achieve this goal, the teacher needs adequate reading comprehension questions. Appropriate reading comprehension questions should be organized by taxonomy (Dupuis and Askov, 1982). In the world of education, there are two popular taxonomies used. They are Bloom's taxonomy and Barrett's taxonomy. Bloom taxonomy is a Bloom et al. 1956. The main goal of taxonomy is to classify them education objectives. In Bloom taxonomy, there are six categories of cognitive questions domain that (1) Knowledge, (2) Understanding, (3) Application, (4) Analysis, (5) Synthesis and (6) evaluation. This taxonomy can be used for other subjects, such as: Mathematics, natural sciences, physical and others. Therefore, Bloom's taxonomy is not used for reading specifically and purposefully.

Barrett taxonomy is representative of a comprehension taxonomy that can be used to develop instructional activities, identify problems, and identify reading instruction (Blair et al, 1981). Barrett taxonomy (Dupuis and Askov, 1982) uses different task with four levels of questions. These questions are designed to facilitate students' thinking processes and comprehension skills by asking different types of questions. They are (1) literal recognition or recall, (2) inference, (3) evaluation, and (4) appreciation. These levels are divided according to difficulty; according to Dupuis and Askov (1982), students should be given problems at all **Barret Taxonomy.**

To improve their reading ability, their English textbooks have an important role as medium to support their reading comprehension. According to Dupuis and Askov (1982), students should be given questions from four levels of Barrett's taxonomy. By having a good textbook as a medium for learning, high school students can definitely improve their learning, especially with textbooks that have many readings and the right number of reading comprehension questions from each level of questions made based on comprehension taxonomy. To find out whether the English textbooks used in senior high school can support reading ability by having various levels and the right number of reading comprehension questions, Therefore, this research will be conducted under the title "Levels of Reading Comprehension Questions in English Textbooks for Grade XII Students"

1.2 The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the research question formulated as :

1. What levels of reading comprehension questions are found in the English textbooks for grade XII Students?
2. What are the underlying reasons of using levels of reading comprehension questions?

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1.3 The Objective of the Study

In line with the problem of the study, the objective of this study can be formulated as follows:

1. To investigate the levels of reading comprehension questions in the English textbooks for grade XII students
2. To know the underlying reason of using levels of reading comprehension questions

1.4 The Scope of the Study

This study is limited only on reading comprehension questions in English textbooks for the 3rd grade, “Bahasa Inggris” Published by Kemendikbud and “Talk Active” Published by Yudhistira based on the theory of Barrett Taxonomy Levels and analyze levels of reading comprehension questions are used the way they are.

1.5 The Significances of the Study

The writer hopes that this research will be used theoretically and practically for :

a. Theoretically

1. The results of this study can be used as a reference for those who want to conduct research on Barrett’s Taxonomy in the reading section of student textbook

b. Practically

1. It helps students to understand levels of reading comprehension question
2. This research will give broader insight about textbook selection and to develop students thinking skill in reading comprehension

