CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Reading is one of the most important academic skills, thus reading is the door for acquiring knowledge. By learning how to read, you can learn just about anything at any written form. Furthermore, most of the materials of teaching and learning process are in written form. As shown by Fitria (2014) who stated that 55% materials in the textbooks, midterm test, final test or National examination on SMA consists of reading materials. That is why we should keep improving our reading skills, not only to pass various tests but also to enrich our knowledge more easily.

But in reality, the level of reading skill and comprehension in Indonesia is still low. This phenomenon can be proven by various situations such as shown by The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IAE) in 2003. The result of IAE showed that Indonesian students are just capable of mastering 30 % reading material, and find difficulties in reading items that are in the form of commentary requiring cognitive process. In addition, the result of PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) 2013 that was recorded on some newspaper such as Jakarta Post, The Establishment Post, The Guardians, etc. showed that Indonesian students' score was below the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's) average and has the second lowest

ability of reading from 65 countries. Indonesia was ranked 64th which was worse than the last PISA in 2009, where Indonesia ranked 57th. PISA is conducted on 15 years old students which are usually learning in grade X High School. These show that Indonesian high school students have low ability in reading.

Furthermore, particularly in Medan this low ability of SMA students in reading is shown by the previous studies in various private schools in Medan, such as the study done by Sormin (2012), Tinambunan (2013), and Siregar (2014). Their study found that the result of students' score in reading have mean value of 50, far below the specified KKM in English which is 75.

The researcher believes that most students can read well and comprehend the reading passage, but why did they have low ability in reading? The concern is whether they could understand the text critically like "reading between the lines" or "reading for deeper meaning". It concern with not only the information explicitly stated, but also the information which implicitly stated. Also whether the students evaluate and appreciate the text they read.

Reading comprehension skill can be affected due to various reasons. According to Wolley (2011) there are four main variables that affect the efficiency of reading comprehension for any individual, namely the text, the task, the reader characteristics, and the purpose of the activity. Task, in this case is the questions and commands given to the students as a mean of evaluation and also exercise, which has always been an important factor in learning for both teachers and students. For the teacher, it helps them in assessing their students and in

making appropriate changes. For the students, it can help them in expanding their curiosity and thinking critically.

Unfortunately, the level of reading exercise in our textbook which was analysed base on Barrett's taxonomy in previous study showed that it mostly contains low level exercise (literal and reorganization questions) that didn't stimulate student critical thinking as shown by the study done by Listianingsih (2013). She found that the *Scaffolding* textbooks was dominated by literal comprehension and reorganization exercises, and supplemented with low numbers of inferential comprehension and evaluation exercises. Similar results of the domination of low level exercise can also be seen in the study by Fitria (2014) and Sirait (2014). Their study found that the largest portion of the textbook *English Texts in Use* and *Look Ahead* was literal questions, while there are only few higher-order thinking exercises presented. According to these studies low level exercise cannot effectively stimulate student critical thinking, which is why more exercise in higher level is needed.

Moreover, the English competences of reading in the curriculum and syllabus 2013 for grade X ask the student to have a good reading comprehension. This was shown by the main and standard competences which are to grasp the meaning, the information, the aim, and the structure of texts to acquire full understanding of the texts. The text learned both functional and genre texts. The functional texts are about announcement and song. The genre texts learned are descriptive, recount, and narrative text. To understand a text fully all level of Barrett's taxonomy question is needed. That is including the evaluation and

appreciation exercise that low in number in Indonesians' textbook. That is why Indonesians' textbook as stated before are still lacking in regard of its exercises and in need of higher level questions.

Furthermore, the study done by Sunggingwati and Nguyen (2013) found that Indonesian's teachers relied deeply on the textbooks for teaching reading and for the kinds of questions they asked to assist in reading comprehension and were exposed mainly to low-level questions. This caused the teachers to often neglect improving their teaching learning activities. The teacher will often teach low level thinking content and questions base on the book without giving the student high level questions to increase their critical thinking. The researcher observed this behaviour when conducting teaching practice on September until November 2015 and the teachers indeed show such inclination. They use only their textbook *Look Ahead* without other sources to teach and have the students finish the exercises in the book without adding higher level question that need deeper thinking.

There are some taxonomies that tried to describe the level of reading questions. Among those, the most applicable and widely used are Bloom's Taxonomy and Barret's Taxonomy. For this study the researcher intend to use Barrett's Taxonomy because it was developed form Bloom Taxonomy specifically for reading and it has more detailed taxonomy of reading comprehension than other taxonomy. This notion also supported by Hutchens (2005) that advised the use of Barrett's taxonomy because it has a detailed system regarding reading. For this purpose the writer intends to develop a reading

comprehension workbook of reading base on Barrett's Taxonomy to cover the lack of higher level questions.

The process of development of this workbook will be based on various books and also the study by Richard R. D. about the development of reading comprehension questions. The stages of development are: need analysis, rough draft, dissemination, first revision, try out, validity and reliability check, and the last was final revision.

B. The Problems of the Study

The problems of the study will be formulated as the following:

How to supplement the reading comprehension questions in the textbook *Contextual English for Grade X of Senior High Schools* in Semester 1 base on the analysis of its dominant categories of Barrett's Taxonomy?

C. The Objectives of the Study

In the line with the problems of the study, the objectives of the study are:

To develop a reading comprehension workbook for grade X Senior High School that contain all level of Barret's Taxonomy

D. The Scope of The study

The scope of the study was to develop a reading comprehension workbook for the students in grade X of high school and the answer sheet for the teachers. This workbook was developed for general class and not for specialization class. This workbook will be constructed based on Barret's Taxonomy. The curriculum

used for this study was K13 and the skill that will be concerned was reading comprehension.

E. Limitation and Delimitation

Although this study was carefully prepared, the researcher still conscious of its limitations and shortcomings. This study focused on developing only reading comprehension workbook and lack in other reading skills, namely writing, speaking, and listening. This may cause the use of this workbook to be limited. Therefore the researcher suggests further development of workbook for the other skills.

F. The Significances of The Studies

1. The study is expected to be able to point out the strengths of reading comprehension questions in reading exercises as to verify their soundness and to develop a workbook. It is believed that the developed workbook can be used to enhance the students' reading skill.

2. The developed workbook is also believed to be used to teachers in teaching and improving their strategy on teaching learning teaching process