

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

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#### 1.1 Background

Scientific and technological information written in English are available in large number nowadays. To access such information, the students need to be able to read and understand written sources.

Realizing the fact that to be able to access the world's scientific and technological information, the teaching of English in Indonesia has been started by giving much more attention to the implementation of developing reading comprehension. However, one of the greatest problems is that reading comprehension of junior, senior, and university students in Indonesia are still poor (Soejoto, 2002), this indicates that the improvement of the teaching of reading comprehension is very essential. Consequently, there are several factors affecting reading comprehension. According to schema theory (Rumelhart, 1980), reading comprehension implies an interaction between the readers and text itself. Poor readers relate their schemata knowledge with the new information present in text. Similarly, Carrel (1983) identifies that the failure of readers to understand a text is affected by the lack of knowledge of formal schemata (the knowledge about the text such as vocabulary, sentence, grammatical, cohesion, coherent organization, etc.) and content schemata (knowledge about the subject matter of text).

In relation to the knowledge of schemata, cohesion is one of the important functions finding in the field of formal schemata. The term 'cohesion' in this sense

lies on the text connectives, which refer to cohesive ties, and help readers recognize how text are organized, and how different parts of text are connected to each other functionally or semantically, but the students frequently fail to interpret the message in a text because of their disability to identify the content of cohesive ties.

In line with the above consideration, the improvement of teaching reading comprehension has long been a challenge to the teachers of English and researchers as well. Hoey (1991) for example, pointed out that lexical repetition especially when forming cohesive ties over large spans of text. Similarly, a research on a short unit on using repetition with functional connectives in writing was conducted by Ruetten (1997). The recent researcher Liu (2000) also conducted a research about lexical ties in writing.

In addition, Gurning, Ownie, and Purba (1993) carried out a research dealing with cohesion. They found that there is a significant correlation between cohesion ability and reading comprehension. However, in relation to the improvement of teaching reading comprehension, many teachers continue to focus mostly on manipulating the teaching of reading comprehension through vocabulary development, recognizing grammar, syntax, enrichment the background knowledge, etc., but dealing with identifying and classifying the content of either grammatical or lexical cohesion are unfortunately frequent absent from the teaching and learning activities. Since the students are expected to be able to comprehend the reading text, their ability to recognize cohesion is very crucial; otherwise, it is difficult for them to comprehend a text. Thus, in order to achieve such purpose, it is really assumed that it



can be started by teaching grammatical and lexical cohesion by identifying and classifying the content of cohesive ties through exercises.

In line with this background, this study will be carried out in two major types of cohesion. The first type is grammatical cohesion (includes reference, ellipsis and substitution, and conjunction) and the second type is lexical cohesion (includes repetition, synonymy, and collocation).

## 1.2 Research Problems

The research problems of this study are formulated as follows:

- a. Do teaching techniques with grammatical and lexical cohesion exercises significantly affect reading comprehension?
- b. Which of these techniques is the most significantly effective?

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

Related to the research problem specified before, this study attempts to investigate:

- a. Whether teaching techniques with grammatical and lexical cohesion exercises significantly affect reading comprehension?
- b. Which of these techniques the most significantly effective is.

## 1.4 Hypothesis

In this study, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

$H_{01}$ : Teaching techniques with grammatical and lexical cohesion exercises do not significantly affect reading comprehension.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: None of these techniques is more significantly effective than the others.

Ha<sub>1</sub>: Teaching techniques with grammatical and lexical cohesion exercises significantly affect reading comprehension.

Ha<sub>2</sub>: One of these techniques is more significantly effective than the others.

### 1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to be useful for teachers of English in overcoming the students' problem when reading the English text. This study is also expected to be useful as a trigger and as the grounds for further research in conducting a research related to the improvement of the students' reading comprehension.

### 1.6 Scope of the Study

Beside the knowledge of schemata as it has been mentioned in the previous background, there are other factors that enable the readers to comprehend a reading text. Word recognition, syntactic processing, and semantic processing are considered as the potential sources of difficulties in comprehending reading text (Adams, 1974 : 90). Attitudes and assumption toward reading are also enable to perform readers' competence toward reading (Davine, 1988:115). Similarly, Sibarani (2002) also identifies background knowledge, language abilities, thinking abilities, purpose for reading and affection can be cited the factors that affect reading comprehension. However, Liu (2000) also indicates that lack of ability related to cohesion can also be considered as one of the sources of difficulties in comprehending reading text.

Considering the fact that reading comprehension is affected by many factors, the researcher should limit the scope of the study. Hence, and in line with the background, this study is focused only the cohesion.

