

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

In Indonesia, the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language is emphasized on the reading skill. It is clearly stated in the English teaching curriculum from Junior to the Senior High Schools and even in University especially for those whose major subject is English. The reason to make reading mastery becomes a more urgent skill reached by the society in general and in the academic community in particular is because by mastering reading well, the students will be able to learn, and master the other skill theoretically and practically well. By this reason, reading proficiency is established as a major objective in English teaching in Indonesia. This condition is natural since mastery of reading skill may facilitate the mastery of other language skills. Through reading, basic grammar patterns and contextual vocabulary items are also introduced. Also through reading, the students may learn ideas, concepts and attitudes and may get benefits from them. Therefore, it is understandable if English teaching puts the emphasis on the reading lesson.

Bright and McGregor (1970:52) state that "someone's general knowledge depends much on reading". It means that by reading, people can obtain a lot of information from various resources such as books, magazines, newspapers, etc, both written in Indonesian or in other foreign language such as English. They also add that by reading the learner can acquire the skills needed for practical purposes

when they leave school. In our literate society, it is hard to imagine any skills that do not require the ability to read.

Some subjects which are carried out by the students of English Education Study Program of FKIP Simalungun University Pematangsiantar, for their S1 thesis focused on the reading comprehension ability of the students of junior and senior high school, and even university students, especially for those majoring in English. Their study revealed that although the students have good proficiency in English but they also read slowly with poor understanding (Tampubolon, 1988).

Accordingly, a pilot project was carried out by interviewing the reading teachers and students of English education study program of FKIP of Simalungun University Pematangsiantar, asking them some questions focusing on how reading is taught. The students were asked classically. The pilot study was done early in August 2005. The purpose was to gain prior input or data about the problems, identify the students' needs in order to find out how to overcome the problems.

The pilot project results indicated that the most prominent problems were approach, method, strategy or technique used by both the teachers and the students in teaching and learning reading. Besides, the reading materials (texts) used was sometimes very difficult for the students to understand, because of the different students' educational background. So, most comprehension exercises were done individually.

It is also assumed that the most important issue which needs to be improved is how reading is learnt or taught using as an appropriate model. This issue is due to what explained before that reading should be taught or learnt in easy way so that the students can follow the lesson eagerly. To fulfill these tasks,

this study is intended to design a model for reading program that might help the students to learn reading in an easy way and eventually improve their reading comprehension.

Concerning with the model of reading, Jack Richards (1992) states that “in language teaching, a model means something that is used as a standard or goal for the learner.” From this meaning it may be said that a model shows the ways that learner makes use it in learning to achieve the goal. Since this study focuses on reading as one of the important skills that should be mastered by the students and it is based on the result of the study, this study is intended to design a model of reading by using *Constructive Reading Model* (CRM). This model (CRM) will be used in learning reading for the students of English Education Study Program of FKIP of Simalungun University Pematangsiantar. The Constructive Reading Model (CRM) is an approach, strategy, method or model in learning reading that informs the learners/students how to comprehend a text using four units namely: (1) *Background Knowledge Activation and Stimulus*, (2) *Comprehension*, and (3) *Enabling Tasks and Wrap Up* which will help them to improve their reading comprehension. More over this model is expected to help the students to learn reading, which will be integrated with other skills.

Based on the Syllabus of English Education Study Program of FKIP Simalungun University Pematangsiantar, reading is taught in semester I and II namely Reading I and Reading II. These reading I and II are given to the first and second semester students. In reading I the students practice how to pronounce words and sentences correctly as well as to understand their meanings. In fact, the syllabus did not require reading comprehension because the students just read the

text aloud in the class. This idea implies that reading is still viewed as one of the language skills that is learnt or taught apart from other skills. While in Reading II, the students practice how to comprehend and to catch the idea of the reading text.

Considering the importance of reading as the core skill that contributes to other language skills, many efforts are made by experts. One of them is by doing research in the education field, to find out the possible constrains of problems, which may hinder the teaching and learning process of English in general and reading in particular.

1.2 The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems of this study are formulated as follows: “Does Constructive Reading Model (CRM) significantly affect on students’ reading comprehension achievement at FKIP of Simalungun University Pematangsiantar?”

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Related to the problem the objective of the study is to find out whether Constructive Reading Model (CRM) affects students’ reading comprehension achievement.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

This study is limited to cover reading comprehension and its relevance to the usage of CRM, and this model is applied only for the students of FKIP of Simalungun University Pematangsiantar.

English Education Program of FKIP of Simalungun University of Pematangsiantar. Furthermore, it is expected that the future investigations will be helpful in promoting more learning processes of reading for the students. This is due to what is explained before reading and it should be taught in easy way so that the students can follow the lesson eagerly.



