CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Language is one of life aspects that humans cannot avoid. Clark (2003) states that language is quintessentially human. We use spoken language every day, face-to-face, as a means of communication, and written language allows us to record and hold on to our history across generations. Everyday people have communication by using language. As stated by Fulwiler (2003), language is used all the time for many reasons. Clark and Clark (1997) also stated that language is fundamental instrument of communication. In communication, people share their thoughts and ideas to the others. There are meanings in the ideas they share in communication. The meanings need to be realized in order to make them sensible, which can be perceived through the senses.

A language is created to deliver meanings – what people intend to say. Languages are sensible because they have symbols that are called letters, combined into the form of words which contain particular meanings. From words, we can make a phrase, a sentence, even a paragraph. A sentence, for example, has a function of its structure. The function of the structure is meaning. Clark and Clark (1997) explains that in sentences, structure has to be studied in relation to function, and function in relation to structure.

Language has been the main way to connect people in society. But, not all societies are the same. What makes language unique is because they are different.

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Every country in the world has their own language to unify its people. However, people from different countries are still able to communicate because English is an international language. English has become a language that connects all people around the world. In fact, not all people in the world can speak English because it is not their native language. In the case of native language, According to Fromkin and Rodman (1998), human in their younger age acquire their first language, not learning on it explicitly. That is why English is very important to be learned.

Learning English starts from early ages. This causes English involved in education. Most of the schools in non-English-speaking countries, including Indonesia have included English as one of the main subjects to be taught. The reasons why English is included are because: 1) English is an international language and 2) English is a foreign language. As a foreign language, English is still considered difficult by many students in Indonesia. That is why English needs to be taught continuously to make them able to use it naturally.

One of difficulties students find in learning English is the reading skill. Alyousef (2006) defines reading as an "interactive" process between a reader and a text which leads to automaticity or (reading fluency). The problem is most of the students do not realize that there is actually some interaction in the reading process.

In Indonesia, most of the teachers use textbooks in the teaching/learning process. Textbooks prominently play an important role in English teaching and learning. Pamungkas (2010) mentions that a textbook is one of many kinds of instructional materials used in learning and it is usually written, tightly organized,

and greatly condensed. Brown (2002) also states that the most obvious and most common form of material support for language instruction comes through textbooks. Textbooks provide sufficient materials which are well-organized so teachers can perform their teaching in a more well-structured way. It is also to make teachers easier in the teaching process and students can learn English very well.

Besides, the other reason why teachers tend to be interested in employing textbook as a medium of teaching is because they provide texts. Reading text is one of devices of transferring message and information. According to Harmer (2001), reading text provides opportunities to study vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and the way to construct paragraph, sentence and text. Tiedemann (2011) says that reading text is a tool of reading, because it is an instrument that is used to read.

In education, texts are made to share new knowledge to the students. There is so much information contained in a text. The question is: how much information can the reader grasp from the text? It will be nonsense that there is a text containing a lot of information but not useful to the students. A set of questions related to the information in a certain text is made to test how much information the students get from the text and to assess how far they understand it. If the students do not understand the text, they will not get the information from the text. That is why questions are provided for the text.

Meanwhile, questions are not merely created to make the students understand the text. There is another function why questions are made: to make

students able to think critically. Students need to have critical thinking to give them opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and abilities. Questions in textbook must have different levels of thinking order. Levels of thinking order are needed to implement on school textbook in order to help students develop their critical thinking step by step.

Bloom's Taxonomy is the most commonly used in implementing the levels of difficulty on reading questions. Originally, there were six levels of thinking in Bloom's taxonomy: *knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis,* and *evaluation*. But Bloom's taxonomy has been revised in 2001 by Krathwohl with a change on the name from noun to verb: *remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating* and *creating*. *Remembering, understanding, and applying* are categorized as lower order thinking skills (LOTS), while *analyzing, evaluating* and *creating* are categorized as higher order thinking skills (HOTS).

However, based on a phenomenon, there are still a number of books which do not implement the six levels wisely. Questions that are categorized as the questions that contain *remembering* features is still dominant among the reading questions of the textbooks. Students need to develop their critical thinking by using a textbook that provides an enough portion of questions which are based on not only *remembering,* but also the other five levels.

The writer found some questions, including the text that they are based on on page 152-153 in an English textbook *English in Use* for twelfth grade of senior high school published by Platinum in 2018, which implemented *Kurikulum 2013.*

The textbook is one of the most updated school textbooks because it has been revised. The following is the text and the questions:

Are Social Networking Sites Good for Our Society?

47% of American adults used social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Classmates.com in 2011, up from 26% in 2008. On social media sites like these, users may develop biographical profiles, communicate with friends and strangers, do research, and share thoughts, photos, music, links, and more.

Proponents of social networking sites say that the online communities promote increased interaction with friends and family; offer teachers, librarians, and students valuable access to educational support and materials; facilitate social and political change; and disseminate useful information rapidly.

Opponents of social networking say that the sites prevent face-to-face communication; waste time on frivolous activity; alter children's brains and behavior making them more prone to ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder); expose users to predators like pedophiles and burglars; and spread false and potentially dangerous information.

There are both advantages and disadvantages of social networking. Many people, however, use social networking for the social interaction.

1. Give examples of social networking sites
2. What do users of social networking do in social networking sites?
3. What advantages do social networking users get from social networking sites?
4. Do all people agree to social networking?
5. What do opponents of social networking think about social networking sites?
6. Mention benefits of social networking
7. Mention disadvantages of social networking

The answer of the questions above can be found on the text as almost all of them are clearly visible on it. For example, a questions like *Give examples of social networking sites* is categorized as Remember (C1) question because it's explicitly and easily can be found in the text. Those questions are closely related to the text, do not help the students to explore their knowledge and think beyond the text. There are also two questions on page 159 that are categorized as Understand (C2) and Apply (C3) questions, respectively: *What are the reasons of people who think football as a stupid* game and *What paragraph is the argument against football?* The questions are still considered as LOTS questions.

The motivation for building students' critical thinking was the reason why this research needed to be conducted. Critical thinking is required to face the fast-growing global phenomenon and to immerse with the society. A textbook should implement a well-standardized portion of cognitive domain in reading questions so that the students will get help in building their critical thinking.

English in Use is a textbook for English subject made to guide twelfth grade students of senior high school. That the textbook implements *Kurikulum 2013* and is the 2018-revised edition was the reason why this study needed to be conducted. This study was intended to find out if a most updated English school textbook has also updated the portion of higher order thinking skills in its reading questions.

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on the things discussed in the background of the study, the problem of this research was formulated as: how are higher order thinking skills applied in the reading comprehension exercises in *English in Use* for twelfth grade of senior high school?

C. The Objectives of the Study

As stated in the title and the problem of the study, this research was conducted to describe the higher order thinking skills of the reading exercises in *English in Use* for twelfth grade of senior high school

C. The Scope of the Study

Reading questions were found below almost all reading texts. Questions that was analyzed in this study are questions of genre-based reading texts. In accordance with the background and the objectives of the study, the researcher figured out how was the higher order thinking skills of the genre-based questions.

D. The Significance of the Study

The reasearch findings were expected to be useful for:

1. The teachers to select an English school textbook with a well-standardized higher order thinking skills

2. The researcher and those who are interested to conduct further researches of reading questions analysis