

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

One of the four macro skills taught in learning English is reading. Reading is defined as a thinking process which requires a response from the reader. It may be through making generalizations, drawing new inferences and planning succeeding steps based on what is read. Zintz and Maggart stated that the act of reading is a process which involves steps to achieve and reinforce understanding namely; word perception, comprehension, reaction and integration.¹

Reading can be seen as an interactive process between a reader and a text.² A reader will get information of a text which he reads. To understand and remember what you read, you need to be involved in what you are reading.

In order to comprehend what one reads, one must grasp the relationships among the various aspects of sentence. The effective reading depends upon the ability to sense those aspects of the sentence that best convey meaning. The ability to sense important relationships probably depends upon any factors, including personal characteristics of the reader. Another personal characteristic which should logically be related to reading comprehension is the level of curiosity of the reader. Curiosity is defined as one's drive to learn about a topic of interest

¹ Ralph Blay, Kathleen Ann Mercado, and Jobell Villacorta. The Relationship between Motivation and Second Language Reading Comprehension among Fourth Grade Filipino Students 5, "The Philippine ESL Journal 5, volume 2 (2009),
<http://www.Pdfqueen.com> (accessed April 6, 2012)

² Hesham Suleiman Alyousef. "Teaching Reading Comprehension to ESL/EFL Learners". *The Reading Matrix* Vol. 5, No. 2 (2005): 144

while involvement is the enthusiasm towards reading.³ According to the definition of curiosity, a person high in curiosity scans his environment more thoroughly than does a person of low curiosity.

The high curiosity person also wants to understand and to know more about what he sees. It, therefore, seems that in reading, the high curiosity person is more alert and more actively seeking understanding. The reader, high in curiosity will be more likely to grasp important relationships and to give attention to the most meaningful aspects of sentences than the reader, similar intellectual ability who has less curiosity, is less actively concerned with gaining understanding.

MTs Darul Hikmah is one of the favorite Islamic junior high schools in Pekanbaru. At the MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru, English becomes one of the important lessons. Based on the preliminary observation, teacher usually made English subject to be extracting to grow the students' curiosity. Teacher often used media in teaching the students. Teacher also gave the freedom for them to choose the topic that they like.

The teacher's effort above can increase the students' curiosity and the students to be more interested in studying English. Base on the writer's observation, the students at the second grade of MTs Darul Hikmah had good curiosity in learning English. It was proved when they studied English they often paid attention, and they always did the teacher's assignment.

KTSP is a curriculum used by English teachers in Indonesia in teaching English. KTSP curriculum describes about the integrated language skills; such as

³ Blay et.al, op. cit., p. 11

writing, reading, speaking, and listening. In reading, the students should be able to understand the meaning in the simple short functional written text and easy related to the surrounding environment (descriptive, recount, narrative procedure, and report text). ⁴English is taught twice a week with duration 40 minutes per period. The minimum learning achievement score at the school was 70. Actually, the students of second grade at MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru had good curiosity in learning English, but their ability in understanding text was still low. Some of the students' score were far from the minimum learning achievement score. It can be seen from the phenomena below:

1. Some of the students are not able to identify main idea in reading
2. Some of the students are not able to take message from the text
3. Some of the students are not able to retell about the text
4. Some of the students are unable to make conclusion
5. Some of the students have lack of analyzing sentences in paragraph

Based on the explanation above, the writer is very interested in carrying out the research entitled "**The Correlation between Curiosity and Reading Comprehension in Learning English at Mts Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru**".

B. The Problem

1. The Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the problem that writer explained above, the writer can identify the problem as follows:

- a. How is the students' reading comprehension?

⁴ Department of National Education, School Based Curriculum Syllabus of English (Jakarta: Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan, 2006), 134

- b. What are the factors that influence the students' reading comprehension?
- c. How is the students' curiosity in learning English?
- d. What are the factors that influence the students' curiosity?
- e. Is there any correlation of students' curiosity and reading comprehension in learning English?

2. The Limitation of the Problem

The problem be discussed in this paper is concerned with the correlation between curiosity and reading comprehension in learning English of the second grade students at MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru.

3. The Formulation of the Problem

The problem of this research can be formulated in the following questions:

- a. How is students' reading comprehension in learning English?
- b. How is the students' curiosity in learning English?
- c. Is there any significant correlation between students' curiosity and reading comprehension in learning English?

C. The Objectives and Significance of the Research

1. The Objectives of the Research

- a. To find out the data and information about students' reading comprehension in learning English.
- b. To find out the data and information about students' curiosity in learning English
- c. To find out the significant correlation between students' reading comprehension and students' curiosity in learning English.

2. The Significance of the Research

- a. To contribute useful information to the second grade students at MTs Darul Hikmah Pekanbaru.
- b. To hopefully contribute the writers as a novice researcher in term of research experience.
- c. To give crucial information to the students about the students' curiosity in learning English and it can improve their reading comprehension.

D. The Definition of the Term

In order to avoid misunderstanding in reading this paper it is necessary to define the following terms:

1. Correlation is a statistical test to determine the tendency or pattern for two or more variables or two sets of data to vary consistently.⁵ We use this design when we seek to relate two or more variables to see if they influence each other.
2. Curiosity is evoked by incongruity between something (an event, object, etc.) and a person's existing world view.⁶ When being curious, we are fully aware and receptive to whatever exists and might happen in the present moment. Curiosity motivates people to act and think in new ways

⁵ John W Creswell, eds., *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (New Jersey: Person Education, 2008), www. Library nu.com (accessed January 6th, 2008), 338

⁶ Jonathan Rowson, *The Power of Curiosity: How Linking Inquisitiveness to Innovation Could Help to Address Our Energy Challenges* (London: Rsa Project, 2012), <http://en.bookfi.org> (accessed January 16th, 2013), 11

and investigate, be immersed, and learn about whatever is immediate interesting target of their attention.

3. Reading is extracting information from print.⁷ A reader will get information presented in the newspaper, book, magazine, etc. reading is an interactive process that takes place between the text and the reader's processing strategies and background knowledge.
4. Comprehension is the final goal of reading instruction.⁸ Comprehension refers to the ability to understand what one's reading is. Comprehension is more than just reading or decoding he words aloud. Comprehension skills are able to relate the text they are reading to what they already know while constructing new knowledge and understanding.

⁷ Frank Smith, *Understanding Reading: A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Reading and Learning to Read* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004) www. Library nu.com (accessed October 15th, 2011), 179

⁸ Learning point associates with funds from the U.S. Departement of education ,” *A Closer Look at the Five Essential Components of Effective Reading Instruction: A Review of Scientifically Based Reading Research for Teachers 2004*, ” learning point associates, <http://Learningpt.org/pdfs/literacy/components.pdf> (Accessed April 14th, 2012).