

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Research

Reading is one of the four skills in learning English that should be mastered by the students. Reading is an important factor in learning subjects especially English. Reading is a key to the students' success in learning English since most material students get the instruction are in the form of texts. It means that learning English is started with reading. By reading students can get vocabulary and grammar. Reading also brings the students to understand and how to comprehend the content of passage that has been read. To comprehend the reading material the students need vocabulary knowledge to solve possible ambiguities that may appear. Laufer (1997: 20) states that no text comprehension is possible, either in one's native language or in a foreign language without understanding the meaning of the text's vocabulary. Therefore without understanding the meaning of the words, students may have difficulties in developing comprehension. It means that vocabulary knowledge becomes an important factor in reading comprehension.

Related to that, one factor of vocabulary knowledge that affects reading comprehension refers to vocabulary knowledge breadth. Breadth of vocabulary knowledge is the longitudinal dimension of vocabulary knowledge, which refers to the size of vocabulary or the number of words the

meaning of which one has at least some superficial knowledge (Qian, 2002: 515). It is a dimension defined by how many words have meaning for the individual (Anderson & Freebody, 1981). It is related to what students of senior high school need where the students should have more vocabulary than when students were in junior high school. In 1994 English curriculum it is explained the purpose of teaching English is that students will be able to master 1000 vocabularies for junior high school and 2500 vocabularies for senior high school. While, in 2013 English curriculum is not explained how many vocabularies that should be mastered by the students in every level (Astaman, 2006). According to Mecarty (2002), the stronger the vocabulary knowledge the students have, the better reading comprehension the reader will achieve. It means that the higher size of vocabulary that the students have, the easier they will comprehend the text.

Nowadays, many students in senior high school face the difficulties when the students comprehend the text. The problem happened in SMA Negeri Baturraden. Based on the interview with the English teacher, that problem has impact for the student's score. Lack of sufficient vocabulary become one of the major factors in reading comprehension. The more vocabulary students know, the better students can decode and understand what is read (Qian, 2002). Students with high levels of vocabulary knowledge will be able to decode and understand the reading passage better than students with low levels of vocabulary (Nation, Clarke, Marshall, & Durand, 2004). Comprehension also decreases when students read the text which contains

words that are difficult, in other word the text is one level above the students' ability. This indicates that having vocabulary knowledge breadth influence reading comprehension.

This study was motivated by the condition above. This research was interested to find out whether vocabulary knowledge breadth has influence on reading comprehension at second grade students in SMA Negeri Baturraden in academic year 2013/2014.

B. Reason for Choosing the Topic

Vocabulary is the most important language component in learning English. It is hard for the student to learn English without having enough vocabulary knowledge. It is closely related to reading that is an important skill to be mastered by student. Reading brings the students to understand and how to comprehend the content of passage that has been read. Furthermore, without knowledge of words, understanding sentences in form of text is impossible. It was interested to investigate whether the vocabulary knowledge breadth influence reading comprehension.

C. Statements of the Problem

Based on the background of study above, there were some problems that had been raised as follows;

1. What is the level of students' vocabulary knowledge breadth of the second year students of SMA Negeri Baturraden in academic year 2013/2014?

2. What is the level of students' reading comprehension of the second year students of SMA Negeri Baturraden in academic year 2013/2014?
3. Is there any influence of students' vocabulary breadth on their reading comprehension?

D. The Aim of Research

The aims of this study was to find out;

1. The level of students' vocabulary knowledge breadth of the second year students of SMA Negeri Baturraden in academic year 2013/2014.
2. The level of students' reading comprehension of the second year students of SMA Negeri Baturraden in academic year 2013/2014 is.
3. Whether there is any influence of students' vocabulary knowledge breadth on their reading comprehension at second grade students of SMA Negeri Baturraden in academic year 2013/2014.

E. Clarification of Terms

The title of this research is "The Influence of Students' Vocabulary Knowledge Breadth on Reading Comprehension (A study at Second Grade Students of SMA Negeri Baturraden in Academic Year 2013/2014)".

To avoid misunderstanding and make the topic understandable, however the writer clarifies some terms of the topic as follows:

1. Influence

Influence is the effect that something has on the way a person thinks or behaves or on the way that something works or develops (Oxford Dictionary, 2010:769)

2. Vocabulary Knowledge Breadth

Breadth of vocabulary knowledge is the longitudinal dimension of vocabulary knowledge, which refers to “the size of vocabulary or the number of words the meaning of which one has atleast some superficial knowledge” (Qian, 2002, p. 515).

3. Reading Comprehension

Snow (2002: xiii) thinking about reading comprehension was informed by a vision of proficient readers who are capable of acquiring new knowledge and understanding new concepts, are capable of applying textual information appropriately, and are capable of being engaged in the reading process and reflecting on what is being read.

F. Contribution of Research

1. For teachers

This research gives information about the influence of students' vocabulary knowledge breadth on reading comprehension. So that, the teachers can be motivated to anticipate the problems that maybe arise when they teach vocabulary and reading in the class, through good methods and strategies.

2. For the students

This research gives contribution to motivate the students to study English vocabulary that has important role in learning English in order to have vocabulary knowledge breadth, so they will comprehend four basic skills of learning English especially in reading.

3. For other researcher

It is hoped that the result of the study can be used as the reference for other researcher.

