CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. 1   Background of the Study

We can not deny that understanding reading materials sometimes could be difficult. However, we all in our daily life are always related to reading activities. For example, a student reads books needed for his/her study or a writer reads useful materials to support his/her writings. We do such activities for gaining information or adding new knowledge of certain topics. Therefore, people who read for intellectual profit or pleasure believe that the content of whatever they have read will be useful for them or will help them to understand the world better, or will also give them a special kind of pleasure (Eskey, 1986: 3). Related to this point of view, reading becomes an essential thing that plays an important role in our life to get the information.

When we read a text, we hope to understand it as a whole in order to reach the sense of what is written in the text (Crystal, 1987: 209). Furthermore, Carrell (1988: 2) states that there is a process that happens indirectly when we are reading, that is decoding process. It is a process of reconstructing the writer's intended meaning through recognizing the printed letters and words, and building up a meaning for a text from the smallest to the largest textual units. This means that the main aim of reading is to know the meanings of a text.

However, it is not a simple thing in understanding a text. To reach comprehension in reading, a reader should note some points. One of the most important points is to get the main idea of the text. Here, the reader should interpret the text to get the information sent by the writer. Moreover, Cziko (cited in Papalia, 1987: 70) says that a reader should be able to catch on contextual information that contains syntactic, semantic, and discourse constraints that will affect his/her interpretation. Consequently, our interpretation over a text will influence our reading comprehension.

Interpretation is the most important thing in reading activity since it is an act of making sense of a text that depends on what the reader brings to the text as what the writer puts in it (Mc Carthy, 1991: 27). There are two processes in interpretation, namely: bottom–up and top–down processing (Carrell, 1988: 4). In *Discourse Analysis*, Brown and Yule (1983: 234) explain that bottom–up processing means a reader tries to arrange the meanings of words and the structure of sentence(s) and build up a combined meaning of the sentence(s). While top–down processing means a reader tries to predict on the basis of the context added by the combined meaning of the sentences already processed to describe what the next sentence is most likely to mean. Shortly, for getting good interpretation in reading, we should understand discourse constraints, particularly textual structure of the text. Discourse constrains derive from the topic of the text and its development based on the language used in the text since each language has its own logical connectives and other elements of cohesion (Papalia, 1987: 70).

In a text, cohesion creates the texture of the text through its cohesive relationships between and within sentence(s). Cohesive relationship within a text shows that the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on another element (Halliday and Hasan cited in Brown and Yule, 1983: 191). To make it clear, there is a simple example: *There are four oranges on the table. Wash and put them into the refrigerator.* In this example, the cohesive relationships are shown by *there* and *them*. Here, *there*, in the first sentence, refers forwards (cataphoric relation) to *four oranges on the table. Them*, in the second sentence, refers back (anaphoric relation) to *four oranges*. Therefore, we may interpret those sentences as below, that is, four oranges that are on the table should be washed before put into the refrigerator. This relationship is called as reference or co–reference. Reference/co–reference is one of cohesive devices. It could be more difficult when we read a longer and complicated text.

Here, the important function of cohesive devices that forms the cohesive relationships within the text is to determine whether a text is a text or not. A text is said as a text if there are semantic relations in any passage of writing to build up the texture in the text. One kind of semantic relations can be formed by cohesive devices (Halliday and Hasan cited in Brown and Yule, 1983: 191). Therefore, the choice of cohesive devices is very important to form the texture of the text (Cook, 1989: 14). Based on the explanation above, the writer in her study attempts to find out whether there is a correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension.

By the way, in our country, English is as a second language that is taught at school from elementary to university. Moreover, English is a must for university students since many textbooks are written in English, so we must have a good interpretation in understanding an English text. In this case, mastering cohesive devices is a tool for reaching good interpretation. However, any person probably has differences in understanding textual structure, especially in understanding cohesive devices. We often experience it when we read a complex text, particularly if our knowledge of the language used in the text is quite little.

The same phenomenon may be found among English Department students of Airlangga University, particularly those who are in the first semester because the writer assumes that their mastering cohesive devices is still low, so it will influence their reading comprehension. Since there are two levels of English Department, namely: Strata I (S1) and Diploma III (D3), in this study, the writer takes the Diploma III students as the respondents. It is because there have been many studies involving S1 students as their respondents.

I. 2   Statement of the Problem

Given the background above, the writer tries to find out the answer of the following problems:

1. Is there any correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension of Diploma III students of the English Department of Airlangga University?

2. To what extent is the correlation between mastering cohesive devices and reading comprehension?

I. 3   Hypothesis of the Study

The hypothesis of this study are:

Ho : There is no correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension.

Hi : There is a correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension.

I. 4   Objective of the Study

Concerning with the problem above, the objective of this study is to find out whether there is a correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension. Furthermore, if there is a correlation, the writer intends to find out the extent of the correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension.

I. 5   Significance of the Study

Hopefully, the result of the study may be able to give positive contribution to the process of learning a language that concerns Discourse Analysis to reach good interpretation. For other English students who are interested in the same topic, it may also give contributions to see the correlation between mastering cohesive devices and reading comprehension.

I. 6   Scope and Limitation

This study is restricted to find out the correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and the reading comprehension. Besides, the writer did not attempt to explain the factors that influence reading strategy choice since this study concerns the mastering on cohesive devices to see the relations within a text for getting good interpretation and its correlation with reading comprehension.

I. 7   Theoretical Framework

To find out the correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension, the writer uses some theories that may support her study. The explanation of the theories is as follows.

Talking about reading, there are two kinds of complementary reading skills, namely: simple identification skills and higher–level cognitive skills. Simple identification skills depend on knowledge of the language, especially, the language form written in a text. Whereas the higher–level cognitive skills relate to the interpretation of text, and of the way that information is organized in discourse (Eskey, 1986: 9). This explains that good interpretation is a way to get comprehension in reading.

The main goal in reading a text is to get the point from it, so having good interpretation is necessary. As stated by Brown and Yule (1983: 223), interpretation means that we understand the meaning of a linguistic message based on the words and structures of the sentence(s) used to send that message. In

another way, Mc Carthy, in *Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers*, states that interpretation is an act in making sense of a text. It depends on reader's ability to understand a text as similar as the writer puts into the text (1991: 27).

In interpreting a text, it is important to know the relationships within and between the sentences in the text. One of these relationships is cohesive relationship created by some cohesive devices used in the text. Here, Halliday and Hasan define that the concept of cohesion explains that the interpretation of parts of text depends on something else represented by particular features in the text to form the texture of a text (cited in Brown and Yule, 1983: 191–195). Furthermore, Halliday and Hasan explain that the choice of the types of cohesive markers (or cohesive devices) is very important since it can affect the texture of a text (as being "loose" or "dense") as well as the style and meaning of the text (cited in Blum–Kulka, 2000: 302).

According to Cook (1989: 14), cohesive devices or formal links are used to see a particular stretch of language that **hangs together, or has unity** in a discourse. Cohesive devices can show facts inside language written in the text. It is a way to understand the relationships that are formed in a text. There are several cohesive devices, namely: verb form, parallelism, reference/co–reference, repetition, lexical chains, ellipsis, substitution, and lastly conjunction that build up the relationship within the text.

Related to the explanation above, it is assumed that the mastering cohesive devices will influence reading comprehension. Therefore, this study tries to find out the correlation between the mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading

comprehension. To calculate the value of correlation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is used to analyze the data obtained.

I. 8   Method of the Study

In this study, the writer uses a descriptive quantitative analysis since the data obtained from the research are in the form of number (Punch, 1998: 192). In conducting this research, the writer did not give any treatments toward the respondents.

I. 8. 1 Population and Sample

As stated by Anderson (cited in Arikunto, 1989: 102), a population is a set (or correlation) of all elements possessing one or more attributes of interest. The population of this study is Diploma III students of English Department of Airlangga University who were in the first semester, in academic year 2003/2004.

Furthermore, taking sample in doing a research is necessary. Sample is the part of a population which represent the characteristics of the population (Arikunto, 1989: 104). In this study, the writer took 60 students randomly as the sample of the study.

I. 8. 2 Instruments and Measurement

This study uses two instruments, namely: test I and test II. Test I consists of several questions concerning the mastering cohesive devices to know the relationships within and between sentence(s) in the text. Whereas test II consists
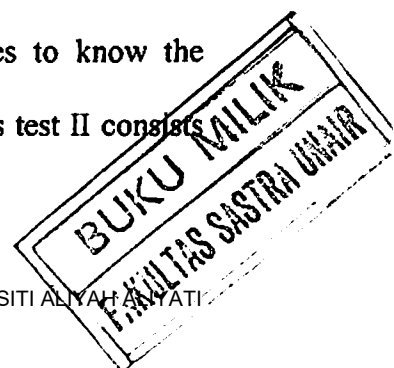
of several questions dealing with the content of the text or related to reading comprehension. Both tests are reading test and have the same texts that consist of 250 to 500 words.

In a quantitative study, measurement is also important. Measurement is the process of using numbers to link concepts to indicators, when a continuum is involved (Punch, 1998: 90). Here, the writer gave 25 multiple choice questions for each reading comprehension test. To measure the result of the tests, the writer assigned score 4 to a correct answer and score 0 to an incorrect answer. Thus, the total score of each test is 100 for all correct answers.

I. 8. 3 Technique of Data Collection

In finding out the correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension, there are two variables in this study, namely: mastering cohesive devices in a text (as the independent variable or X) and reading comprehension (as the dependent variable or Y).

To obtain the data, the writer did some steps. For the early step, the writer prepared materials of test I and II. Then, the first test was held to measure the knowledge of respondents about cohesive devices.

Later, test II was held to measure their reading comprehension. It was held a week after test I. For these both tests, the time was allocated about 30 minutes. Below are some procedures used in collecting the data, namely:

1.   Choosing the population,

2.   Preparing the materials of test I and II,

3.   Performing the first test,

4.   Performing the second test, and

5.   Scoring the test I and II.

I. 8. 4 Technique of Data Analysis

The data obtained were calculated by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Then, the data were analyzed to find out the correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension and further to explain the extent in this correlation. In short, the procedures of data analysis are as follow:

1.   There are some steps in statistical computation, namely:

   • Computing the correlation coefficient (r) to know the direction and strength of the relationship between variables, namely: mastering cohesive devices and reading comprehension;

   • Computing the regression ($\tilde{Y}$) to know the general relationship between two variables computed.

2.   Interpreting the data,

3.   Giving an explanation concerning the finding,

4.   Drawing conclusion.

I. 9   Definition of Key Terms

There are some terms that frequently appear in this paper, namely:

1. **Reading Comprehension** : an adequate ability to get the sense of the overall meaning, then to segment the passage into smaller units of specific information, and finally to reach a level of language knowledge used in the text.

2. **Interpretation** : an act in making the sense of a text.

3. **Cohesion** : relationship within and between the sentence(s) in a text to form the texture of the text.

4. **Cohesive Devices** : linguistic markers that form relationships in a text to give continuity and then create the semantic unity of the text.

5. **Correlation** : a positive or negative relationship between two variables.

I. 10   Organization of the Thesis

The writer divided this study into four chapters. Each of them is specified as follows: Chapter I is Introduction. This chapter consists of ten subchapters, namely: background of the study, statement of the problem, hypothesis of the study, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, method of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.

Chapter II is the Literature Review. The writer includes some theories used to analyze the data as well as some opinions that support the analysis process concerning with the study, that is the correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension.

Chapter III is the Presentation and Analysis of the Data. This chapter present and analyze the data obtained from the research by giving a brief explanation.

Chapter IV is the Conclusion. In this part, the writer present the resume of the whole study concerning with the correlation between mastering cohesive devices in a text and reading comprehension of Diploma III of English Department Students, Airlangga University.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW