AN ANALYSIS OF READING SPEED OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

Thesis

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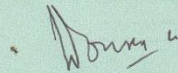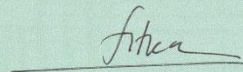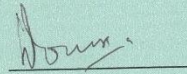Program Studi   : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

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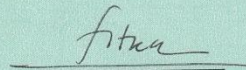
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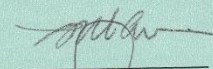
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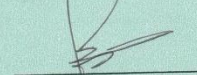
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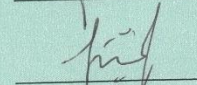5. Anggota   : Leni Marlina, S.S., M.A.

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ABSTRAK

Rahayu, Nancy. 2016. *An Analysis of Reading Speed of English Department Students of Universitas Negeri Padang*. Skripsi. Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Padang.

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif yang bertujuan untuk mengetahui kemampuan membaca cepat dan pemahaman membaca mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Populasi penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa tingkat III Jurusan Bahasa Inggris tahun masuk 2012 Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Padang. Sampel penelitian ini berjumlah 20 orang yang dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik *simple random sampling*. Data ini dikumpulkan melalui dua instrumen yaitu tes membaca cepat dan tes pemahaman membaca. Dalam tes membaca cepat, mahasiswa diberikan dua buah teks yang terdiri dari 840 kata dan 724 kata. Mahasiwa diminta untuk membaca teks yang diberikan dan dengan menggunakan *stopwatch* mahasiswa diminta untuk mencatat berapa waktu yang dihabiskan untuk membaca sebuah teks. Setelah itu, untuk tes pemahaman membaca, mahasiswa diminta untuk menjawab 20 pertanyaan yang berkaitan dengan teks dengan 4 pilihan jawaban yaitu a, b, c dan d. Dari penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa kemampuan membaca cepat mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris adalah 178.06 wpm, ini setara dengan kemampuan anak kelas 6 atau masih *Basic reading speed*. Selain itu, pemahaman membaca mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris berada pada taraf sedang (*Average*).

Kata kunci: *Reading speed*, *reading rate*, *reading comprehension*

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Nancy Rahayu

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Reading is an essential receptive skill for learners of English as a foreign language. It is an important skill to be mastered in order to ensure success. The success is not only in learning English, but also in learning any subject where reading in English is required. Recent research shows that any people who do not learn to read early and well will not easily master other skill and knowledge.

Actually, English as foreign language learners who are basically rely on reading skill to acquire knowledge from English sources are seldom to speak in English outside the classroom. Foreign language students tend to handle reading without enough skill, and this negatively affects their reading efficiency and causes them difficult to understand the text that they read. It shows that reading as language skill has a big role in acquiring language because it gives the amount of language input. For that reason, reading always become a main lesson in any level of English for foreign language students.

Reading is very important for university students, such as to do course work which includes reading textbook, completing assignments, studying for exams, and writing papers and etc. The importance of reading does not just end once the students graduate from the university. When they graduate, there

are many companies and jobs require university graduates to have a good reading skill. Therefore, university students need to be skilled readers who are to able read many materials with efficient time and also with good comprehension.

The ability to read quickly and accurately is the characteristic of a fluent reader or a reader who has good reading fluency. According to Fraser (2004:137) reading fluency is the ability to read text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly and automatically with little attention to mechanics of reading such as decoding. He adds that reading speed is estimated as being an accurate measure of reading fluency.

In general, English as foreign language students have reading difficulties which are mainly caused by the lack of reading fluency. This difficulties known through the amount of time and effort they spend when they read. The majority of students tend to get difficulty at every unknown word and read it word-by-word. This problem makes them more difficult to understand the meaning of what they read and causes them to get stuck on individual words which may not be absolutely essential to the general understanding of a text. Students become more absorbed by the printed text and are not flexible in their reading speed. Normally, readers do not read every book at the same speed; they read a newspaper, for instance, much more

rapidly than an economics or physics textbook. This inflexibility wastes students' capacity and causes their feeling of resentment for reading activity.

At English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP), reading course has been taken seriously by the first, second and third year students. It is proven by the fact that each student is required to attend four reading courses which are meant to improve the reading skill of the students. The first course is Reading 1 in the second semester which gives opportunity to the students to learn and improve their reading ability. The second and the third courses are Reading 2 and Reading 3 in the third and fourth semester. The fourth course is Extensive Reading in the fifth semester. Ideally, the existence of four reading courses gives the students more opportunities to have good reading ability. So, they should have improved their reading ability after taking those courses. Reading 1, Reading 2, Reading 3 are skills that English Department students have to mastered, and Extensive Reading is the development of Reading 1, Reading 2, and Reading 3.

The expectation for university students is to be good reader and have high quality of reading ability. One of the characteristics of the good reader is skillful in reading speed. However, the fact contradicts that expectation. Based on writer's preliminary research, there are many English Department students still having low reading rate. According to Nation (2009:133) the average college student reading rate is 250 to 300 words per minute (wpm).

The college student is expected to have this reading rate to qualified as a good reader.

When the students take much time to read the text, this problem can affect their comprehension or they do not catch the information in the text effectively, since good readers not only read faster but also can comprehend the text. Wainwright (2007:34) says that reading speed and comprehension are not two separate elements in the reading process, but they are the same thing. Reading speed clearly refers to the reading comprehension, not only the whole process of reading but also more specifically to the quality of reading comprehension.

The slow reading can be caused by several problems. The first problem is regressive eye movement or the re-read material. According to Badrawi (1992: 19), moving the eyes back to check previous words instead of sweeping steadily forward can slows reading down. Even though, making regression is a sign of active reading where readers go back to check their predictions or to confirm their understanding of a text, but if they do it excessively, it will lead to a very slow reading.

The second problem is vocalization. This is the process of putting sounds to words, it means pronouncing the words to oneself when read or reading aloud. Reading aloud is much slower than silent reading (because our eyes move faster than our tongue), and vocalization takes almost as long as

reading aloud. Cramer (1998:9) states that when readers vocalize, they tend to read word by word instead of reading through chunks. This habit is easily eliminated through conscious effort.

The next problem is pointing at words with a finger, a pencil, or a ruler to concentrate on the words when reading. This process slows students' reading speed down into a word-by-word reading. Last, some students are not aware of the importance of reading speed, and reading speed is not the focus of reading courses in the university. Besides, it is not included in the syllabus of the required courses (Reading 1, 2, 3 and Extensive Reading) as the syllabus mostly focuses on reading comprehension.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background problem mention above, it shows that there are several problems related to reading speed. Firstly, referring to the writer's preliminary research shows that English Department students still have low reading rate, although they have a better ability in reading comprehension. The low reading rate can cause by several factors such as regressive eye movements, reading the text word-by-word, vocalization and pointing at words. Secondly, not many students are aware of the importance of reading speed and not become the focus of reading courses. The syllabus focus in reading comprehension.

C. Limitation of the Problem

This research will focus on analyzing the reading speed of English Department students of Universitas Negeri Padang.

D. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the identification and the limitation of the problem above, the problem of this research is formulated in this following question: "How is the reading speed of English Department students of Universitas Negeri Padang?"

E. Research Questions

The research questions include:

1. How is the reading speed level of English Department students of Universitas Negeri Padang?

2. How is the reading comprehension of English Department students of Universitas Negeri Padang?

F. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to analyze and explain:

1. The reading speed of the English Department students.

2. The reading comprehension of the English Department students.

G. Significance of the Research

  This research is expected to give information about the reading speed and reading comprehension of English Department students. Furthermore, it is hoped that this research can be a reference for further research on teaching reading speed for EFL learners.

  The finding of this research is expected to make the lecturers to put the reading speed in the syllabus and become more focus in reading courses.

H. Definition of Key Terms

1. Reading speed   : A technique for reading texts at an extremely rapid rate with adequate comprehension.

2. Reading comprehension : The ability to understand information in a text and interpret it appropriately.