

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the research, research problem, objective of the research, research uses, and scope of the research.

1.1 Background of The Research

In 2006 Senior High School Curriculum (KTSP), there are four language skills in language learning, i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading is one of language skills that plays important roles in many aspects of life. Since much of information or literature is still written in English so that reading skill is very important and it is needed in comprehending the texts. It is not only important to those who are studying in school or college, but also for people who are not studying there anymore. It is more than just assigning foreign language sounds to written words. It requires the comprehension of what is written in the text as a process to gain information. So, mastering reading skill becomes a must for all of the students who are studying English as a foreign language.

In the classroom context of reading comprehension, the students take a role as a reader of the text. It means that they must be able to comprehend the reading materials which are shown as the written texts. Furthermore, the students are also purposed to pass the final examinations which are related to reading comprehension achievement. In order to achieve those important goals, the

teacher should be successful enough in making the students comprehend the text well. Actually reading is a skill which must be developed. Obviously, the students must know the process of developing reading skill to the extent that they use the process as they read and study on what they have earned. Relevance of the skill must be apparent. This means that the students must be aware of what the reading skills are (Simanjuntak 1988:13).

In reality during pre observation, most of the students of SMAN 1 Punggur have problems in acquiring the reading skill. They were not able to perform their English subject well. Most of them got low mark in comprehending a text. They failed to comprehend the reading text well that was indicated with the fact that they did not pass the standard quality of the school (KKM). There are some factors affecting this condition. According to Purwanto (1986), there are some factors that can influence learning achievement i.e.:

1. Internal factor that is the factor which comes from the students' inherent condition for instance: interest, intelligent, attention, motivation and attitude.
2. External factor that is the factor which comes from outside, for instance: family, school, friends, teacher and society. For the school itself there are some factors which also influence the learning activity, such as curriculum teachers, motivation, education material of text book, etc.

The researcher only limits one factor that is interest. This factor cannot be ignored in teaching reading comprehension. Interest is one of the learner's internal factors. It may have a significant influence on the student's reading skill.

From the description above, it can be seen that interest is one of internal factor that influences learning achievement. Interest as an affective domain in learning process affects psychomotor and cognitive domain. Students who have interest and positive attitude toward subject matter may enjoy the learning process. When students read a text, the affective element of interest comes into play. Interest plays a role in the decision to read, in the level of engagement with the text during reading, and thus also in the product the reader creates in terms of comprehension of the text and learning from the text (McKenna, 1994).

Gardner and Lambert (1972) the pioneering work of social psychologists, state that motivation and attitude affect general second language learning. There is correlation between attitudes, motivations, and orientations to the achievement in second language. However, it seems that little researcher exist on specific role of interest in English Foreign Language, although this issue is obviously links to motivation. Some studies in the effect of motivation and suggest that students' interest in learning second language is a significant factor in acquisition of language.

Henning (in Brantmeier, 2006) surveys the Egyptian ESL students and concludes that interest is one of factor that affects in acquisition of language. Dönyei (2003) offers a review research on motivation to learn second language and includes interest as a factor involves in situational conception of second language a motivation. Keller (in Brantmeier, 2006) connects interest to motivation and asserted that interest is a positive response to stimuli based on existing cognitive structures (background knowledge) in such a way that the learner's curiosity is aroused and sustained. Keller concludes that interest is one of the main elements

of motivation in second language learning. So far, there is no conclusive evidence about the effect of interest on foreign language reading comprehension.

In line with the descriptions above, the researcher is interested in investigating the correlation between students' interest and their achievement in reading comprehension. This research is intended to find out whether students' interest positively correlates with students' achievement especially in reading comprehension. The research will be conducted in SMAN 1 Punggur.

1.2 Research Problem

The problem of this research is formulated in the following question:

Is there any correlation between students' reading interest with students' reading comprehension at the second year of SMAN 1 Punggur?

1.3 Objective of the Research

The objective of the research is to find out whether students' interest positively correlates with students' reading comprehension.

1.4 Research Uses

The findings of the researchers were expected to be beneficial whether theoretically and practically:

1. Theoretically, the result of this research may be used as a reference for the next researcher and the conclusion of this research may strengthen the previous theory. The result of this research can give contribution to the next researches and can verify the previous theory.

2. Practically, the uses of this research are:

- To be a consideration for English teacher in selecting the material that being taught to the students.
- To make English teachers aware of the importance of students' interest in their reading process.
- To build students' interest toward reading.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research focuses on students' reading comprehension. The main objective of this research is to find out the correlation between students' interest and students' reading comprehension that is identified through the use of Students' Interest Questionnaire (SIQ) and reading tests are made based on materials that have been taught.

The participant of this research will be intended in second year of SMAN 1 Punggur and XI science 2 will be taken as the sample of the research by using *simple random probably sampling*.