CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the research, research questions, objective of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, and clarification of the key terms.

1.1   Background of the Study

Reading seems to be fundamental to any and all learning, both general learning and literacy skills. Firm reading literacy is important for most students because it is required for successful achievement in any school subject. It comes as no surprise that the ability to read in a foreign or second language is one of the necessary abilities. Reading, however, is frequently the most difficult of the four macro skills of English for learners to achieve (Haider & Akhter, 2012). Reading is an activity that requires interaction wherein readers use a successful reading strategy to build a meaningful textual representation. Reading a range of books in enormous quantities exposes readers to many languages, early and current terminology occurring in various settings, and grammatical structures mixed in various patterns (Kirin, Poolsap, & Plongthong, 2012). This is why one of the most important skills in any language class is reading. Since it is not only a great activity and a source of information, it is also a method of combining and broadening specific understanding of the language (Insuasty Cárdenas, 2020). Therefore, reading is an ongoing activity that may be honed with much practice.

Effective reading strategy is thought to be the critical ability that has been given specific attention in the setting of students' reading comprehension proficiency because every reader's goal is to fully understand what they have read (Edy, 2014). Without solid reading comprehension, comprehending information nowadays can be rather challenging. Another factor supporting the importance of having strong reading comprehension is how they positively impact academic achievement (Al-Nafisah, 2015).

Two reading strategies are commonly used in schools to improve students' reading comprehension: extensive reading (henceforth ER) and intensive reading (IR). ER activities entail students reading materials for pleasure and to improve their general reading abilities. Thus, according to Carrell and Carson (1997: 49-50), ER frequently involves the rapid reading of huge amounts of material or longer readings (e.g., entire books) for general comprehension, with the primary focus on the meaning of what is being read rather than the language itself. While similar to Carrel and Carson, Davis (1995) stated the concept of ER: "Students are given the time, incentive, and materials to read as many books as they like, at their own pace, without the demands of testing or grades." On the other hand, IR is the rapid reading of a brief text in the process of extracting comprehensive interpretation from that as well. It improves readers' abilities, such as detecting central ideas, detailed information, or text connections, and improving learners' vocabulary and grammar (Haider & Akhter, 2012). While according to Neisi et al. (2019), IR as a worldview is a teacher-centered technique, which means that the instructor considers the great majority of what happens in class, such as what to read, what jargon, and language structure, content association, or perceptual focuses are to be studied.

In this current situation, L2 educators are paying more and more attention to ER, one of the techniques for teaching reading, as a successful method of L2 reading education (Yamashita, 2008). Numerous research has been completed in the past decade showing how ER helped students' reading comprehension (Haider & Akhter, 2012). However, the practice of ER was not widely practiced in Indonesia, and the curriculum makes no specific mention of it. The qualities and methods of performing ER in the school context were not specifically mentioned in the document. As a result, the principles of ER at the tertiary level of EFL were not implemented as they should have been implemented (Martina, Syafryadin, & Utama, 2020). As stated in Yu (1993; cited in Lituanas, Jacobs, & Renandya, 1999), there are certain advantages of ER: an enhanced knowledge of the world, vocabulary, and word structure must have improved, language acquisition in grammar, enhanced reading and writing abilities, reading for enjoyment has risen, and building reading habit. Therefore, by being exposed to a wide variety of reading

materials, students can overcome long-standing common misspelled words, develop their language skills, and better comprehend grammar and word structure. As a result, ER is thought to improve students' reading comprehension and motivation to read.

This study was conducted since previous research found that just a few studies engaged middle- and high-school students, the majority were carried out in universities, and no current research was done in primary schools (Ng, Renandya, & Chong, 2019), which reflects on Jeon and Day's (2016), the suggestion that more children should be involved in research. How and when children start to read is a significant educational milestone. Millions of EFL children now study reading as part of their English studies, and thousands of EFL instructors are looking for the most efficient method of teaching reading (Suganda, 2016).

Therefore, considering the benefits of ER above, this study aims to determine how ER implementation occurred and affected the reading comprehension of seventh-grade students in Bandung. This research is conducted in a grade seven junior high school in Bandung because seventh-grade students are transitioning from elementary to junior high school and are still considered young learners. In this case, ER is necessary to practice the skills that they need for successful reading comprehension. Hence, according to all of the aspects mentioned above, this study is entitled "The Implementation of Extensive Reading and How it Affects Students' Reading Comprehension."

1.2 Research Questions

The current study investigated:

1. How was the implementation of ER occurring in the seventh-grade reading classroom in Bandung?
2. How does ER affect reading comprehension of the seventh-grade students in Bandung?

1.3 Objective of the Study

This research aimed to determine how the implementation of ER occurred and affected the reading comprehension of seventh-grade students in Bandung.

1.4 Scope of the Study

ER was the approach used in this study to develop reading skills. This study focused on how ER was used in one of Bandung's junior high schools to improve students' reading comprehension. Seventh-grade students participated in this study, which used qualitative research methods during the PPLSP (*Program Pengenalan Lapangan Satuan Pendidikan*) program.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide theoretical and practical benefits for reading methods, especially ER research. Theoretically, this study is expected to add empirical support to the existing theories and literature on ER as a method to improve students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, practically, this study is expected to provide a reference for teachers who want to use ER to enhance the student's reading comprehension.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

In this study, several words were used to avoid confusion. The following definitions were provided:

1. Reading

   In this study, reading refers to Day and Bamford (1998) as constructing meaning from printed or written text. It indicates that creating meaning requires the reader to correlate information from written messages with prior knowledge to gain sense and comprehension.

2. Reading Comprehension

   The activity of creating meaning from words (Kintsch, 1992). The capacity to grasp a text, evaluate the content, and accurately interpret what the writer is saying (McKee, 2012).

3. Extensive Reading

   According to Carrell and Carson (1997: 49-50), ER is an activity that comprises rapid reading of large amounts of content or more extended

readings for broad knowledge. In short, ER is a strategy where students do not feel under pressure in reading activities.

1.7   Organization of the Paper

The organization of the paper is comprised of five chapters. Each chapter has sub-topics that present detailed information. The paper is organized as follows.

The first chapter is the Introduction. This chapter describes the background of the research, research questions, the objective of the research, the scope of the research, the significance of the study, clarification of related terms, and the organization of the paper.

The second chapter is Literature Review. This chapter elaborates on the theories that are relevant to the research topic.

The third chapter is Research Methodology. This chapter describes the research methodology, which addresses research design, participants, procedure, data collection, and analysis.

The fourth chapter is Findings and Discussion. This chapter will discuss the findings of the study based on observation, questionnaire, and interview data.

The fifth chapter is Conclusions and Suggestions. This chapter will discuss the conclusions of the study and suggestions for English teachers, students, and other researchers.