

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the introductory part of the thesis. It describes the background of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study and organization of the thesis.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Educators face a serious situation because many second or foreign language learners are struggling to read well. In elementary classroom, students may have different educational backgrounds, language proficiency levels, cultures and prior experiences (Ediger, 2001). In Indonesia, English is taught and learned in a non-native environment, with this regard, reading is not only an important means to gain knowledge but also a means by which further study takes place. Carrell (1984:1) says that reading is the most important of the four macro skills of language, particularly in English as a second or a foreign language. This is also true to the students at junior high school since reading offers them a wide range of interesting information as well as a variety of language expressions and structures which are of great usefulness for developing other language skills.

Research into reading has found that effective readers are aware of the strategies they use flexibly and efficiently (Garner, 1987; Presley, Beard El, Dinary & Brown, 1992). Furthermore, researchers believed that reading strategies could be taught to make the students more successful in language learning. As it is said by Lessard-Clouston (1997:3) that teaching students learning strategies specifically reading strategies is an important duty of the language teachers since it can help students monitor and take charge of their own learning. In addition, he emphasizes that helping students understand good language learning strategies and training them to develop and use such good language learning strategies can be considered to be appreciated characteristics of a good language teacher.

Furthermore, Harste and Burke (1997) note that teachers make decisions about classroom instruction in light of theoretical beliefs they hold about teaching and learning. Also teachers' beliefs influence their goals, procedures, materials, classroom interaction patterns, their roles, their students, and the school they work in. Similarly, Richards and Rodgers (2001) affirmed that teachers possess the assumptions about language and language learning, and that these provide the basis for a particular approach to language instruction. Moreover, Borg (2006:275) notes that language teaching can be seen as a process which is defined by dynamic interactions among cognition, context and experience.

The study of language teachers' cognition has made a significant contribution to our understandings of how teachers learn, what teachers do, and the cognitive bases for their actions (Borg, 2003: 271). Researchers have paid more attention to the study of teachers' cognition about teaching, learning, learners, and the impact it has on teaching practices, activities, and learning outcomes (Tillman, 2000; Shavelson, and Stern, 1981; Burns, 2009; Eisenhart et al., 1998; Fang, 1996; Richardson, 1996; Kagan, 1992; Reynold, 1992). Moreover, the impact of teachers' cognition on their teaching is being studied across disciplines and educational setting as diverse as general education, mathematics (Ernest, 1989; Shuck, 1997; Karaagac and Threlfall, 2004; Raymond, 1997), second or foreign language learning (Farrell & Patricia, 2005), reading (Beach, 1994), and chemistry (Brisco, 1991). It has been studied in pre-service and in-service contexts, different educational levels: primary, secondary and tertiary level.

For all of these reasons, it would be necessary to have an investigation into teachers' cognition about teaching reading strategies and their classroom practice, and the researcher tries to investigate the issue to experienced EFL teachers who has been teaching for about fifteen years. By doing so, we could recognize the relationship between teachers' cognition and practice and student learning. Moreover, teachers' cognition are related to student learning through some event or sequences of events, mediated by the teachers that happen in the classroom. It is hoped that this study will reveal issues concerning teaching reading strategies and provide classroom English teachers with an in-depth understanding about reading strategies to make decisions on

how and what they should do to keep their students much more involved in the reading process.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the description above, the researcher processes the questions to be investigated which are formulated as follows:

1. What are teachers' knowledge about reading strategies and teaching reading strategies in a model junior high school?
2. To what extent do their classroom practices reflect their knowledge?

### **1.3 Purposes of the Study**

1. To investigate teachers' knowledge about reading strategies and teaching reading strategies in junior high School?
2. To examine the extent to which their knowledge are reflected in their classroom practices.

### **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

Learners' success or failure in acquiring a language can be affected by many intertwining factors. Among these factors, teaching reading strategies should be taken into consideration. However, this study only focuses on the teaching of reading strategies by teachers at a Model Junior High School in Bandung and some implications for handling these strategies in their classrooms.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study provide information about what teachers' knowledge about reading strategies and teaching reading strategies in a Model Junior High School in Bandung and to what extent do their classroom practices reflect their cognition.

From theoretical aspect, this study is required to give contribution to the knowledge of teaching and learning reading strategies and research about cognition in teaching EFL context.

From practical aspect, the findings are expected to have some practical implications in future instruction to offer the theoretical basis for the application of teaching reading strategies in the classroom.

Then, from professional aspect, the study is expected to develop the awareness of reading strategies to enhance them in comprehending reading materials. Next, the findings can be useful for students who want to improve their reading comprehension by helping them to select effective reading strategies.

## **1.6 Organization of the Thesis**

The thesis is organized into five systematized chapters. Chapter One presents the introduction which covers the background of the study, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the scope of the study and the significance of the study.

Chapter Two reviews the relevant literature on teachers' cognition, the nature of reading, models of reading processes and issues related with reading strategies and teaching reading strategies.

Chapter Three reports the methodology used in the research which covers research design, research setting and participants, data collection procedure, instruments and data analysis.

Chapter Four illustrates and analyzes the data collected, in an attempt to provide an answer to the research questions.

Chapter Five summarizes the findings, specifies how these answer the research questions, points out the main limitations of the study and provides suggestions for further research.

