# CHAPTER I

# I N T R O D U C T I O N

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is very important for all of us. We can obtain information, knowledge, pleasure, and broaden our horizon by reading. Reading, especially for students of junior high schools, is very useful to understand all the lessons taught at school because the more they read, the better they get. Reading, related to reading the English texts, also has a positive effect on students' vocabulary knowledge, on their spelling and on their writing (Harmer, 2007).

As stated in the standard competence of English in international standard schools (Depdiknas, 2007), there are four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The skills must be learned by students of secondary schools to develop their English. In the reading skill, the students are expected to be able to deduce meaning from simple transactional and interpersonal written texts, in formal and informal situations, in different text types such as: recount, narrative, procedure, descriptive, report, in daily life contexts (Depdiknas, 2007 in Emilia, 2010).

However, the problem with reading skill exists to the students who learn English as a foreign language and read the English reading texts for the first time, for example: the Indonesian seventh grade junior high school students. They will face difficulties in mastering English vocabularies, reading fluency and comprehending the English reading texts. Another problem is that the students have their own local languages or Bahasa Indonesia and English is a foreign language.

The English subject will not be taught in elementary school starting from the academic year 2013-2014 as stated by Deputy Minister of Education and Culture saying that English subject is eliminated for elementary students to give time for the students to strengthen the mastery of Indonesian prior to learning a

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foreign language (Kasim, 2012 in Afifah, 2012). This makes the students, who continue their study to junior high school, become unfamiliar with English language yet and the English teachers in seventh grade will have to deal with the difficulty in teaching them English. Here, the teachers should be well-informed, creative, and innovative (Depdiknas, 2007) in understanding and implementing theories, approaches, methods, models, media, or findings in teaching students. Therefore, the teachers are required to have opportunities to experiment the various approaches, models or methods (Arends and Kilcher, 2010 in Suarman, 2013). One of them is shared reading strategy.

Shared reading is a teaching strategy and has its bases in learning experiences similar to the bedtime story situation (Holdaway, 1979) wherein the students join in the reading of a big book or other enlarged text as guided by a teacher or other experienced reader (Holdaway, 1979; Tierney, Readence, & Dishner, 1990; Dahl, et al., 2001). The teacher exemplifies the students how to read the words by reading the text aloud by using a pointer to track the text (Tompkins, 2006 in Reading, 2008) and uses illustrations to support the English vocabulary development, to integrate verbal interactions (Gibbons, 1993) and to build background knowledge and experiences to support students' reading comprehension (Herrell & Jordan, 2004).

Some studies have been conducted to investigate shared reading strategy to solve the reading problems and to prove that shared reading positively affects student achievement. The first is the positive impact that shared readings held on kindergarten students' and children's vocabulary (Coyne, Simmons, Kame'enui, & Stoolmiller, 2004; Farrant & Zubrick, 2011, 2013). The second is that shared readings could be used to improve students' and children's phonemic awareness (Ukrainetz, Cooney, Dyer, Kysar, and Harris, 2000) and phonological awareness (Justice, Kaderavek, Bowles, & Grimm, 2005; Ziolkowski & Goldstein, 2008; Leyva, Sparks, & Reese, 2012). The third is that shared reading can engage young readers with text through shared reading experiences (Honchell & Schulz, 2012).

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Shared reading is also suitable for older readers, to support fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (Herrell & Jordan, 2004).

Although the previous studies above described the success of shared reading strategy for beginning readers, most of the studies were conducted in other countries. There were only some essays related to shared reading strategy from Indonesia. They are about the influence of the shared reading towards inside-out domain in emergent literacy (Kusumaningtyas, 2007), shared reading strategy based on multimedia in relation to reading comprehension in elementary school (Safitri, 2012), and the implementation of shared reading in reading the story text for children (Munggaran 2013). They were not conducted in English lesson class, written in Bahasa Indonesia, and conducted in elementary schools. So, the researcher thinks it is still important to conduct a study on shared reading strategy in a higher level. It is expected that this strategy would be suitable for the seventh grade students of junior high schools in Indonesia because it can support the students' reading fluency, vocabulary mastery, and reading comprehension in English reading texts (Gibbons, 1993; Herrell & Jordan, 2004).

Therefore, considering the benefits of shared reading strategy, this study attempts to explain the effects of shared reading strategy on students' reading comprehension and their responses towards its implementation.

## 1.2 Research Questions

Based on the explanation above, the study was intended to answer the following research questions.

1. Can shared reading strategy improve students' reading comprehension?
2. What are the students' responses towards the implementation of shared reading strategy?

## 1.3 Purpose of the Study

In order to answer the questions above, the purpose of the study was to find out:

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1. whether shared reading strategy can improve students' reading comprehension; and
2. the students' responses towards the implementation of shared reading strategy.

## 1.4 Scope of the Study

The study was focused on the use of shared reading strategy to improve the students' reading comprehension. The subjects of the study consist of two classes of seventh grade students of a junior high school in Arjawinangun, Cirebon, West Java, and they were divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group.

## 1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide its significance, at least in three points of view, as suggested by Creswell (2003).

Theoretically, this study is expected to enhance empirical support to the existing theories, literature, and scientific research findings of shared reading strategy in teaching reading especially to improve students' reading comprehension.

Practically, by looking at the result of the study, it is expected that it can support to explain the benefits of the application of shared reading strategy in teaching reading. It is hoped that the teachers are able to replicate the study and apply shared reading strategy in their daily teaching learning process to improve students' reading comprehension.

Professionally, this study is expected to be able to motivate the teachers, especially English teachers in the research site to apply shared reading strategy in their teaching activities; introduce it to other teachers and promote the theory-based teaching in classrooms of all schools around the research site.

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## 1.6 Definition of Key Terms

The key terms used in this study were shared reading strategy and reading comprehension. First is shared reading strategy. It is a kind of strategy in teaching reading for young learners by reading books, charts, poetry, song lyrics, and other texts between teachers and students (Holdaway, 1979, Depree & Iverson, 1996, Tompkins, 1997). In this study, the shared reading strategy will be implemented in the selected class of seventh grade students of one of the junior high schools in Cirebon Regency as an experimental group in the teaching and learning process. A computer or laptop and a projector were used display the text on the screen in front of the students. It is to support and facilitate the teacher and students to read the text in big fonts on the screen so that they could see and read it easily and clearly. .

Secondly, reading comprehension is related to the students' ability in understanding the English texts given. In this study, the texts are in the types of descriptive and procedure and followed by a number of questions for each text.

## 1.7 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter I is Introduction. It consists of background of the study, research questions, the purpose of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis. Chapter II is Literature Review. It consists of theoretical reviews on reading comprehension and shared reading strategy with their research findings. Chapter III is Research Methodology. It describes the methodology for collecting and analyzing the data, including the design, participants, data collection techniques, and analyzing data. Chapter IV is Teaching Programs. It discusses the teaching programs as the implementation of shared reading strategy and non-shared reading strategy. Chapter V is Findings and Discussions. It presents the findings and discussions of the obtained data from tests, questionnaire and interview. And the last, Chapter VI presents the

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conclusions, the limitations of the study, and followed by suggestions for further research.