

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the paper. It consists of background of the study, research question, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of study, research methodology, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper. It also presents a brief explanation about research methodology used in this study.

#### 1.1 Background

The definition of literacy is indeed wide. However in this study, literacy has been applied first on the notion of reading and writing. The Indonesia Government has developed several literacy programs since before Indonesia got their independence in 1945 (Jalal & Sardjunani, 2006). The first literacy program in Indonesia was called “ABC Course”. Then there was “10 Year Community Education Plan” program in 1951 but this program has failed to achieve the goal of the program. To decrease illiteracy in 1964 there was “Presidential Decree” which made all the population in aged 13-45 had the ability to write and read such as recognizing letters, reading simple, and writing their own names and addresses (Jalal & Sardjunani, 2006). However, the number illiterate people had increased due to lack of maintaining literacy at that time. Therefore, the Indonesian Government made a well-organized literacy program which focused on introduction to letters, improved reading ability, writing and calculating, and maintenance literacy through books and other reading materials.

According to Jalal and Sardjunani (2006), in 1966-1979 Indonesia adopted a new method introduced by UNESCO entitled “Traditional Literacy” which was finally called as “The Functional of Literacy Program”. Then in 1970-1990 Indonesia adopted the concept of “Spiral Circle” and “Crazy Wheel” which was called “Package A Program”. From this program, the number of

illiterate people had significantly decreased and Indonesia received an award from UNESCO. However, the number of illiterate people in Indonesia is still high. The latest program in 1990-2000 was called “Nine Years Compulsory Basic Education”.

It can be seen that mostly the literacy programs focused on literacy skill, the ability to write and read. Therefore, UNESCO in 2012 released statistical data of the interest in literature in Indonesia was 0,001 which means there only one person who has interest in literature from 1.000 people. Since then, the Indonesian Government has tried to improve the students’ reading interest by making a literacy program in which students’ have to read a book for 15 minutes before the class starts ([badanbahasa.kemdikbud.go.id](http://badanbahasa.kemdikbud.go.id)).

Even though the government had developed new literacy program to improve students’ interest in reading, the new survey from CSSU (2016) which is about The World’s Most Literate Nations (WMLN) shows that Indonesia ranks second to last in reading interest ([webcapp.ccsu.edu](http://webcapp.ccsu.edu)). The survey is in line with Education Philosopher, Anies Baswedan, which stated literacy skill in Indonesia, has increased but there is still problem in relationship between the society and books (Noszlopy, 2016). Prinsloo (cited from Noszlopy, 2016), director of PT Kesaint Blanc Indah Publishing, said that the problem key in Indonesia is the absence of habitual reading, where there is no culture to sit down and reading a book for pleasure. Noszlopy (2016) also claimed in the daily life Indonesians relaxing with a novel are rarely to be seen. She also added some causes for that such as the price of the books, the perception of Indonesian writing has poor quality, and also because of lack investment in the translation funding program.

The new survey from CSSU in 2016 which was led by Professor John Miller is not about the literacy skill rank but for “literate behaviors” and their supporting resources which made Indonesia rank sixtieth from 61 countries ([ccsu.edu](http://ccsu.edu)). The definition of literate behavior is actions related to reading,

writing, and letter concepts (Wayne, 2006). In other words, how people response to literacy. The examples of literate behavior are widely used in early literacy behaviors term. Schickedanz (1999) stated examples of literate behavior such as book handling behaviors, looking and recognizing, picture and story comprehension, and story-reading behaviors.

From the statements, it can be said that Indonesians' literacy level has somewhat increased. However, in terms of literate behaviour, they are still lagging behind. One of the reasons why the two's level differ is because instead of to read out of their own interest, Indonesian reads because they have to. The mandatory reading programme issued by the government cannot guarantee the increase of student's reading interest by a huge number, meanwhile interest in reading is necessary in order to shape students' literate behaviour. A study conducted by Sullivan and Matt (2013) proved that those who read for pleasure made more progress in math, vocabulary, and spelling. Therefore, this literate behaviour relates to the cognitive ability of a reader.

It can be said that literacy directly related to cognitive ability. It also has been assumed for centuries that literacy gives rise to higher-order cognitive abilities, to more analytic and logical thought that is typical of oral cultures (Gee, 2008). It means that someone's cognitive ability is often directly related to how educated person is, then resulting in how literate they have become. Although, Gee (2008) argues that literacy directly and constantly related to cognitive ability as Gee said that "the role of literacy is always much more complex and contradictory and more deeply intertwined with other factors." But nevertheless literacy is indeed one of components to make someone success or make them look more well-educated. It is in line with Rosenblatt's (2004) theory in reading process. In the reading process, reader uses their past experiences to make meaning or to base expectations of what will come in the story. The meaning will be continually shaped and tested which will train their cognitive ability. In

responding a text, reader can make a conclusion by reading the text a whole or they make their own interpretation by focusing on their senses as one of cognitive ability functions is perception (Michelon, 2006).

In Rosenblatt's transactional theory (1986), there is "reciprocal, mutually defining relationship" between the reader and the literary text. Dillard (1982) showed the relationship in a metaphor as follows "the mind fits the world and shapes it as a river fits and shapes its own banks" which means reader and literary text are working together and affecting each other to create meaning and experience. In other words, reading literary text is not a passive activity. Alberti (2008) stated that reading novel is just like playing a game which requires active participation and hours of work and result in experiences. Therefore, Rosenblatt's transactional theory is one of the foundation keys to understand the relationship between reader and literary text as well as to provide the reasons such responses are significant (Soter, Wilkinson, Connors, Murphy, and Shen, 2010).

In cross-disciplinary field, there are approaches to literary such as cognitive criticism; cognitive poetics, cognitive narratology, and literary cognitivism. This study is conducted under the large umbrella of cognitive poetics research. Cognitive poetics is a hermeneutic theory with an integral poetic dimension to capture the interaction of meaningfulness and felt experience in literary reading (Stockwell, 2007). According to Louwse and Van Peer (in Brone and Vandaele, 2009) cognitive poetics has played an important role either as a facilitator or as the end of the product. As a facilitator, cognitive poetics can be used as an approach to do close analysis of a text, while as the end product it has relations to reader-response criticism. In cognitive poetics, they need background knowledge to comprehend a text. The background knowledge usually called as schema theory. Schema (plural schemata or schemas) is the conceptual structure drawn from memory to assist

in understanding utterances (Stockwell, 2005, p. 77). According to Yang (2008) schemata determine how a person interprets incoming information and then shape how to predict situation or information they will encounter.

Various studies regarding cognitive poetics and schema have been conducted in several countries. Most of the studies were conducted to find out literature and social problem, such as the study cognitive poetics application from Tsur (2003) used poetic structure to find out the way religious ideas turned into verbal imitations of religious experience. In his research, Tsur explored a lot of different aspects of human cognitive processes in a comprehensive and detailed manner to reveal how poets try to depict the ineffable.

Brandt and Brandt (2005) analysed two cases of reprocessed imagery because they stated that imagery is a universal central dimension in poetic meaning production and cognitive poetics is not enough to elucidate its semantic and semiotic. His analysis intended to show how “creative” and “trivial” entrenched constructions interact and compose interconnected aspects of a general human semantic processing. The result said that poetic cognition has privilege to highlight intentional meaning and let them to see about the Truths meaning structure.

Another study related to cognitive poetics and schema has been conducted by Stephens (2011). In his research, Stephens used script and schema as cognitive instruments to how they represent cultural diversity in texts for children. In turn, Stephens sees the possibility of schema and script to map students’ reader responses to reading multicultural text. The result of his research is expected to shed the light in which schemata and scripts play as vital cognitive instruments and that they can be used as strategy to invest normative cultural ideas with richness and subtlety.

In conclusion, after looking at previous studies that has been stated and conducted, schema is rarely conducted in the reading activity with multicultural literature furthermore in Indonesia context. Therefore, this study is aimed to describe the students' schemata shapes their reading comprehension of the multicultural literature.

## **1.2 Research Question**

In accordance with the background discussed above, the problems of this study is "What are students' schemata underlying their reading comprehension of the selected multicultural literary text?"

## **1.3 Aims of the Study**

In line with the research questions, the present research attempts to describe the students' schemata which shapes their reading comprehension of the selected multicultural literature.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits, as follows:

1. The theoretical significance of this study is that the result will give theoretical information about student's literacy and cognitive ability play role in text comprehension.
2. Practically, the result of the present study are useful for:
  - The English teacher in applying teaching and learning in EFL or ESL classroom.
  - Encouraging English teacher to do more real reading practice in EFL or ESL classroom.
  - Encouraging English teacher to use multicultural text in EFL or ESL classroom.
  - Encouraging English teaching to teach students how to make meaning in reading multicultural text.

- It is good to activate students' schema before reading activity.
- Improving students' reading comprehension.
- Motivating students to read English book.
- Motivating students to make meaning out of texts.
- Improving the writer's perception and understanding on the important of students' schemata in reading comprehension.

### **1.5 The Scope of the Study**

Limitation is needed in this study in order to make the discussion more specific, and to specify the problems that will be analyzed. This study is under a large umbrella of cognitive criticism. It focuses on how the students' cognitive performance in reading multicultural literary text. The study only attempts to describe cognitive instrument which is schemata. It does not focus on other cognitive instruments.

### **1.6 Research Methodology**

This research employed qualitative method. The subject of this study is a class in one of the public junior high school in Bandung with 30 students is involved in this study. The text that is used in this study was multicultural text. The instruments that are used for data collection in this study were observation, semi-structured interview, and questionnaire.

### **1.7 Clarification of Terms**

In order to guide the analysis, particular terms need to be clarified in the context of this study as follows.

#### **- Literacy**

Literacy has been traditionally defined as the ability of reading and writing (UN, 2008). In this study, literacy is defined as a widening set of knowledge, skills, and strategies to build on throughout life in various contexts, through interaction with society (PISA, 2013). This study also

uses the term reading literacy from PISA which is more likely to “reading” because it includes wide range of cognitive competencies (pisa.tum.de).

- **Cognitive Poetics**

Cognitive poetics is a hermeneutic theory with an integral poetic dimension to capture the interaction of meaningfulness and felt experience in literary reading (Stockwell, 2007).

- **Schema**

Schema is knowledge structures, or patterns, which provide the framework of understanding (Stephens, 2011).

- **Multicultural Literature**

Culture is the way people do things in daily life, people’s attitude, goals, values, thoughts, and expectations which are rules their society (Government of South Australia, n.d.).

Multicultural is covering the societies as comprising distinct but related to cultural traditions and practices which also often associated with different ethnic components of the overall social formation (Sullivan, et. al., 1994). Meanwhile, Multicultural literature is literature covering the multitude of cultural groups in the world (Kass, 2007).

- **Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension is the ability of the reader to make meaning from what has been read (SERUpdate, 2008).

### **1.8 Organization of the Paper**

This research paper is delivered into five chapters that explained below.

Chapter I is Introduction. This chapter consists of background of the study that introduces a brief explanation about the framework of this study, research questions that cover the statements of problem, aims of the study, significance of the study, the scope of the study, research methodology, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II is Literature Review. This chapter presents some literature review related to the study.



Chapter III is Research Methodology. In this chapter, there are explanations about the method and research design used in this study, site and respondent, research procedures, data collection techniques and the data analysis of this study.

Chapter IV is Finding and Discussion. This chapter elaborates the results and the discussions of the study, got from the data collections which are observation, students' documents, and semi-structured interview.

Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion. This chapter presents the conclusion of the study and some suggestion for the teacher and also for other researchers.