CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of the Study

Reading skill is considered an important skill in the process of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia. Reading skill becomes the main part of the national examination for English subject. The purpose is to measure students' reading competence as being targeted by the national content standard. As foreign language, English is also regarded as essential in the global community (see Depdiknas, 2013). In addition, some English tests for entering university or tertiary education require the test takers have a good reading skill and comprehend the text well. Being an effective reader in learning English as a foreign language is beneficial for the learners, not only to pass the national examination but also to improve their knowledge on any disciplines that they study and on their future career. It enables learners to access more knowledge. It is in line with Levine, Ferenz, and Reves (2000) who say that reading skill is important for academic success. It is also essential for daily life as people read to get information about specific topics (Farhady, 2005).

Even though reading skill takes a dominant part in the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language in most schools in Indonesia, it still becomes a question whether the practice of the teacher provides the students more learning opportunities. Reading, as a receptive skill, has an essential contribution as input for productive skills such as speaking and writing. Related to the teacher's role in the classroom as the facilitator, it is suggested for the teachers to be aware of helping the students gain more learning opportunities (Puntambekar & Hubscher, 2005), to reach the students' zone of proximal development (ZPD). This is the area between what the students cannot do and what the students can do without help. It is the area in which the students can do a task or work with an assistance from teachers or peers with a higher skill set (Vygotsky, 1978).

The assistance/help that is provided to lift up learners' process of learning is well-known as scaffolding. Nowadays, this term is familiar among teachers, practitioners, and researchers. The assistance refers to the strategies used by teachers to transform learners from being assisted to the independent ones (Cooper, 2000; Gibbons, 2002, in Sukyadi & Hasanah, 2010). Nevertheless, non-native English language teachers use scaffolding strategies for developing reading comprehension skills intuitively, in a random way (Cheyne & Tarulli, 1999; Koda, 2005; Stuyf, 2002 in Salem, 2017). It should be conducted with reasons and systematically in order to promote cognitive development (Donovan & Smolkin, 2002). Non-native English Language teachers sometimes use scaffolding strategies unconsciously without even being aware of its nature (Salem, 2017). Meanwhile, Birjandi and Jazebi (2014) state that increasing teachers' awareness of different scaffolding strategies and enriching their pedagogical content knowledge can be entirely influential in their practice.

From some studies, scaffolding shows its contributions for teachers and students. Scaffolding is effective to enable a teacher to keep a task whole, while students learn to understand and manage the parts. It helps students to cope with the complexity of tasks in an authentic manner (Pearson, 1996). The results of Bassiri's study (2012) supported the initial predictions that scaffolding has a positive effect on learners' reading comprehension and motivation scores. The findings of Aila's study (2015) show scaffolding has a positive effect on learners' reading comprehension. Aila (2015) also infers that scaffolding strategy proves to be a key feature of effective teaching especially teaching reading comprehension. Thus, teachers are invited to reconsider the ordinary methods and adopt new ones that depend on support and assistance. From those findings, it can also be inferred that studies of scaffolding in education setting, specifically in teaching EFL, have beneficial contributions for both teachers and students.

This study focuses on the analysis of macro and micro scaffolding practices. These terms are introduced by Hammond (2001) in categorizing scaffolding based on its process. According to Hammond (2001), macro scaffolding takes place on the curriculum cycle. It becomes the foundation or major base which influences how the

teacher implements micro scaffolding. There is an interplay between macro and micro scaffolding (Prediger & Pohler, 2015). Hence, it is needed to analyze the teacher's scaffolding practice by breaking down the practice into macro and micro scaffolding. By analyzing the macro scaffolding, we can understand the reason of each decision making that is done by the teacher. On the other hand, by analyzing the micro scaffolding, we can see how the teacher implements the designed task and what kind of strategies that the teacher uses to scaffold the students.

The studies of scaffolding in educational setting are done in various contexts and subjects, such as inclusion education (Silliman, Bahr, Beasman, & Wilkinson, 2000), psychology (Puntambekar & Hubscher, 2005), mathematics education (Prabawanto, 2017), science education (Amelia, Koes, & Muhardjito, 2016), teachers' professional development (Rahman, Abdurrahman, Kadaryanto, & Rusminto, 2015), teacher learning (Engin, 2014), young learners literacy (Ankrum, Genest, & Belcastro, 2014; Mantik & Choi, 2017; Mulia, 2015; Reynolds, 2017), and the analysis of scaffolding to improve students' self-regulated behavior in EFL teaching (Gusrayani, 2017).

The studies of scaffolding in EFL teaching are mostly done in the area of productive skills such as speaking/oral skill (Englishtina, 2015; Nguyen, 2013; Tersta, 2017) and writing skill (Faraj, 2015; Laksmi, 2006; Kurnia, 2011; Prabandini, 2016; Santoso, 2010; Syarifah & Gunawan, 2015). There are several studies of scaffolding in teaching reading with quantitative approach that discuss the effectiveness and the impact of scaffolding (Abdul-majeed & Muhammad, 2017; Aila, 2015; Khosravi, 2017; Poorahmadi, 2009; Rahimi & Ghanbari, 2011; Salem, 2017), think aloud as scaffolding (Sukyadi & Hasanah, 2010), and the effects of scaffolding to students' motivation (Bassiri, 2012). The studies of scaffolding in teaching reading with qualitative approach recently discuss classroom scaffolding in teaching reading and writing (Resdiana, 2013), and the process how reciprocal teaching scaffolds students' reading comprehension of non-fiction text in the context of the young learner (Delaney-Beane, 2017).

The studies of scaffolding in teaching reading are dominated by the quantitative ones which discuss the effectiveness and impacts of scaffolding on the teaching and learning process. It shows that qualitative studies of scaffolding in teaching reading are needed to explore, specifically related to macro and micro scaffolding process which portray the scaffolding process. Therefore, to fill the gap, this study which analyses an EFL teacher's scaffolding strategies in students' reading activity with qualitative approach is conducted and also to draw how an EFL teacher scaffolds the students and gain more learning opportunities.

1.2. The Statements of the Problems

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates the research questions as follows:

1. How are the elements of macro scaffolding manifested in the process of teaching and learning by an EFL teacher in students' reading activities?
2. How are micro scaffolding strategies implemented by an EFL teacher in the process of teaching and learning by an EFL teacher in students' reading activities?

1.3. The Purposes of the Study

This study portrayed how an English teacher scaffolds her students' learning process in reading activities and her concern in choosing the scaffolding techniques that she did. Specifically, this study is aimed to analyze how the elements of macro scaffolding are manifested in an EFL teacher's practice and how the teacher implements the micro scaffolding strategies in teaching reading.

1.4. The scope of the Study

This study focuses on the analysis of an EFL teacher's scaffolding practice in students' reading activities in four classes of a senior high school in Bandung, West Java. The scaffolding practice which was analyzed was only the verbal scaffolding. In

other words, this study only focuses on how an EFL teacher provides scaffolding through interaction with the students in reading activities.

1.5. The Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute two layers of benefits; theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this study possibly enriches the literature review on scaffolding in teaching EFL reading to the students of secondary level in Indonesia. Practically, it provides insights into the use of scaffolding in teaching EFL for reading to students, teachers, and readers who are interested in scaffolding and teaching reading. For the practitioners, the findings of this study can give information on how teachers implementing scaffolding in teaching reading and this information can be a base to help teachers in improving their knowledge and capability.

1.5. Definition of Terms

There are some terms in this study that are needed to be clarified to avoid misinterpretation, as follows:

1. Scaffolding refers to a temporary help/support used by teachers to enhance students' learning opportunities and extend their understanding (Hammond, 2001).

2. Macro scaffolding refers to program goals and the selection and sequencing of tasks with five key elements such as the teacher's goal, the teacher's understanding of linguistics demands of the associated tasks, knowledge of the students and their current abilities and understandings, careful sequencing of tasks designed to develop the practices required to achieve the goal, and a gradual but constant shift of responsibility for task completion from teacher to student (Hammond, 2001).

3. Micro scaffolding refers to teacher's support which occur in the ongoing interaction in the macro scaffolding (Hammond, 2001) with five types such as offering explanation, inviting students' participation, verifying and clarifying students' understanding, modeling of desired behavior, and inviting students to contribute clues (Roehler & Cantlon, 1997).