CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This section presents the background of the study, research questions, aims of the research, significance of the research, clarification of key terms and organization of the thesis.

1.1. Background of the research

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) developed by OECD has been used as one of the assessment tools used to measure students' ability in literacy. In 2018 PISA Reading Assessment, Indonesia's literacy performance fell below average (Argina et al., 2017; Avvisati et al., 2019; OECD, 2019b), which calls for more action on the matter though attempts in improving students' reading comprehension and literacy have continuously been made.

One effort was made by a collaborative research project and training program of three state universities in Bandung which aimed to conduct research and develop a long-term teacher development program that can help teachers to teach reading and improve students' literacy skills through the use of SFL's text-based instruction. This collaborative research project is a joint study that is planned to be conducted for six years. In the first year, the project organized a professional development program for approximately four months from late March until early July in 2021. It intended to introduce the teachers to the knowledge of PISA Reading, how to create PISA-like reading materials, as well as how to teach them using text-based instructions for ten Indonesian teachers and fourteen English teachers. The teachers' enhanced knowledge gained in the training program is then expected to eventually help them in enhancing students' literacy (more on the training program will be elaborated in Chapter III, Section 3.3.1).

Previously, the other results of this collaborative research project has been reported to have resulted in a positive note, especially in the way the teachers develop the ability in creating PISA-like reading materials (Emilia et al., 2022). Nevertheless,

the change in the teacher's practice in teaching the PISA-like reading materials has not yet been explored. This research aimed to extend the result of the study conducted by (Emilia et al., 2022) and to explore the way the program supported the teachers in teaching the PISA-like reading materials through the use of text-based instructions introduced in the first year of the training program. To conduct the research, the researcher looked back to all of the data recorded throughout the finished training program conducted in the first year and explored its attempt in helping the teachers to foster their ability to teach reading that adheres to the PISA Reading demands.

This study centers around professional development program and teachers' professional learning. The terms professional development and professional learning have been interchangeably used and their essential features are similar (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001; Ingvarson et al., 2003, 2005; Kennedy, 2016; Labone & Long, 2016; Wells, 2014). They are different in a way that professional development is often associated with the implementation of educational change by doing something *to* the teachers in which the responsibility of change is on the developer (in this case, the training program), while professional learning works on the basis that change is 'as a result of work *with* and or *by* teachers' (Gustine, 2014; Loughran, 2010) where the teacher becomes an active participant who is responsible for their own learning (Labone & Long, 2016). This research took the definitions discussed above into consideration, and use the terms professional development and professional learning separately. The term professional development is used in the discourse about the training program, while professional learning will confer a more complex relationship between the training program and the teachers' learning process in their way of achieving change and better educational outcomes.

Studies on professional development have emerged in the past years, highlighting the importance of good quality professional development programs for achieving quality teaching and better student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001; Guskey, 2002; Ingvarson et al., 2005). Focusing on professional development program on teaching reading, most of the studies highlight professional development program on cognitive and comprehension

instruction (Pratt & Martin, 2017; Reed, 2009; Sailors & Price, 2010), and explicit teaching of the strategies (Brevik, 2014, 2019). Specifically on professional development and PISA, only a few studies have been conducted (see Tonga et al. (2022), Emilia et al. (2022)).

Thus, to fill the gap on PISA Reading research, this study aimed to contribute to the literature by offering findings on one part of the collaborative research project by Emilia et al. (2022) that has not been fully explored, which is to do with training teachers to teach reading and the teachers' change in that particular aspect. This were done by exploring activities and features of the training program and the changes in the three selected English teachers. By doing so, this study provides a particularly new insight in the field of both professional development programs, and teaching reading through the use of text-based instruction, especially in relation to PISA reading in the Indonesian EFL context.

1.2. Research Questions

This study is aimed to address the following research question:

1. How does the training support teachers to improve their ability in teaching PISA-like reading?
2. What changes can be seen in teachers teaching practices as the results of the training program?

1.3. Aims of the Research

In relation to the research questions above, this present study is projected to reveal the ways in which the program helped the teachers to teach PISA-like reading through text-based instruction. This were done by identifying:

1. The features of the training program to is to do with supporting teachers to teach PISA-like reading through text-based instruction
2. The process of change in the teachers' knowledge, practice and beliefs.

1.4.   Significance of the research

This study offers contributions in three aspects: theoretically, practically and policy. Theoretically, the result of the study could be used as a reference for research in the topic of professional development program and PISA Reading in the context of Indonesia, as well as measurement of professional development impact in teachers. Future research could refer to the result presented in this study or extend the result of the study by contributing to what was limited in this study.

Practically, the result of this study could be used as a guidance by trainers, instructors, and lecturers for training teachers to teach reading, especially related to PISA Reading in Indonesia. This study has outlined the process of training and activities that the program has provided, which were seen successful in enhancing the teachers' basic knowledge and practice in teaching PISA-like reading. This could be used as a blueprint for training teachers to teach PISA-like reading that can be used as is or adapted to the characteristics and needs of the teachers in the other training site. Developers of training programs could make use of the result of this study to provide better training on teaching reading for the teachers.

Policy makers could also use the insights of professional development program on teaching PISA-like reading provided in the study as a foundation for future policy on teacher trainings and the curriculum in EFL context.

Furthermore, it has been mentioned that this study was a part of a joint study conducted to train teachers to teach PISA-like reading conducted in the first year. Hence, the result of the study could also inform the research and practice on the next stage of the training program, especially related to the kind of support the training could give in improving the teacher's pedagogical ability in teaching PISA-like reading in the Indonesian context.

1.5.   Clarification of the Key Terms

The terms below will be frequently used in this study. Therefore, to avoid misconceptions and misunderstandings, below are the clarifications of terms used in the study.

1. *Teacher Professional Development (TPD):* efforts to improve teachers' capacity to function as effective professionals by having them learn new knowledge (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). In the context of this study, TPD refers to the efforts provided by the trainers to help the teachers gain more knowledge in teaching PISA-like reading through the use of text-based instruction.

2. *Professional Learning:* teacher's learning that occurs through the process of gaining new knowledge and how that learning is then able to be applied in practice so that their teaching practice is critically informed and up-to-date (Labone & Long, 2016; Wells, 2014). In the context of this study, professional learning refers to the process of gaining new knowledge on teaching PISA-like reading through the use of text-based instruction.

3. *Systemic Functional Linguistic-Genre Based Approach (SFL GBA)*: is a text-based instruction that was developed around the 1970s by systemic functional linguists in Australia. This instructional approach stands with the principle that there should be interaction between the teacher and the students in order for knowledge transfer to occur (Emilia, 2005, 2011; Macken-Horarik, 2002).

4. *Reading to Learn (R2L)*: a set of strategies that enable teachers to support all students in their classes to read and write at the levels they need to succeed (Damayanti, 2017; Rose, 2011, 2018; Rose & Martin, 2012). In this study, the program focuses on the 'prepare for reading' stage which enables the students to understand the text in general terms, explaining what the text is about and the background knowledge needed to understand its field and also the 'detailed reading' stage. where the teacher guides students through the passage by paying close attention sentence by sentence, having the students identify and highlight groups of words as they go through the text.

1.6.   Organization of the Research

The paper was delivered into five chapters. Each chapter has subtopics that elaborate issues.

Chapter I is introduction of the thesis. It presents the background of the study, research questions, research aims, scope of study, significance of study, and clarification of terms.

Chapter II focuses on the theories related to teacher professional development, professional learning, PISA Reading and SFL's text-based instruction. These theories were used as theoretical framework to explore the training program in this thesis.

Chapter III discusses research methodology. This chapter consists of participants and methods of selection, techniques of collecting data, research design, research procedure and data analysis.

Chapter IV delivers the discussion and findings of data obtained. This chapter provides the answers to the research question posed in Chapter I and Chapter III. It discusses features of professional development program in the training and the process of change resulted in the teachers.

Chapter V presents the conclusions of the study and suggestions for policy makers, teacher educators and other researchers.