

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research background, problem identification, research questions, research objectives, research significance, and research scope.

1.1 Research Background

Since 2013, the so-called 2013 Curriculum has been implemented in Indonesia (Kemdikbud, 2013). This curriculum is designed with a scientific approach. This is especially meant to replace the communicative approach in the teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL). In general, the 2013 Curriculum is meant to improve the educational quality in Indonesia, including reading literacy.

According to Alyousef (2005) and Gilakjani (2016), reading as an interactive process, in which the readers construct meaningful representation of a text using effective reading strategies. In other words, reading is an interactive process between the readers and texts. Similarly, Takaloo and Ahmadi (2017) specified reading competency as an active and communicative process between readers, the text, the reading activity, and the larger socio-cultural context for reading. However, many EFL's learners have not been very successful in constructing meanings of written texts.

In the Junior and Senior High Schools in Indonesia, reading is geared toward the attainment of competency. According to the 2013 Curriculum,

competency is broadly defined as a set of attitude, knowledge, and skills in comprehending the texts structures and contents (Kemdikbud, 2013). Despite of the new scientific-oriented curriculum deployed since 2013, the EFL students' reading competency has not been attained satisfactorily as expected. Nor the refinement of reading strategies were endeavored since then!

Many EFL students possessed deficiencies in reading. Data have shown clearly, the students' reading scores were declining over the years since 2012 to 2018. When compared to other countries, Indonesia positioned lowest in the rank when they joined the Program for International Students Assessment (PISA) in three consecutive years, they are, 2012, 2015, and 2018.

In 2012, there were 65 countries including Indonesia participated in PISA (PISA, 2012). As reported in PISA, the Indonesian students' reading scores showed deficiencies. The students' reading scores, when compared to other countries, were ranked on 64 out of 65 countries. Moreover, their reading mean score was equal to 396 out a total score of 1000. The PISA's reading performance proofed that the scientific approach was not a better approach than the communicative approach. Simply concluded, the observation-question-exploration-association-and-communication reading approach was not effective as yet for the students' in understanding high-order items (items beyond cognitive level 1, 2 and 3; affective level 1 and 2; psychomotor level 1 and 2). They were not prepared to cope with high order thinking items.

In 2015, there were 70 countries participated in PISA (PISA, 2015). As reported in PISA, the Indonesian students' reading scores still showed deficiencies. The students' reading scores, when compared to other countries,

were ranked on 62 out of 70 countries. Moreover, their reading mean score remained the same as in 2012, that is, 397 out a total score of 1000. The PISA's result proofed that the scientific approach was not a better approach than the communicative approach despite it has been deployed for three years. Simply concluded, the scientific reading approach was not effective as yet for the students' in understanding high-order items.

In 2018, there were 78 countries participated in PISA (PISA, 2018). As reported in PISA, the Indonesian students' reading scores still showed deficiencies. The students' reading scores, when compared to other countries, were ranked on 73 out of 78 countries, (PISA, 2018). Moreover, their reading mean score dropped to 371 despite the new curriculum has been deployed for five years. The PISA's result proofed that the scientific approach was really a failure in developing the students' reading competency, especially in finishing up high-order items.

The present research is geared to find out other variables like reading interest and reading self-efficacy. Fahrurrozi (2017) conducted a study to find out the relationship between reading interest and reading comprehension ability. The method of the study was a descriptive method with correlational technique. The population included all students of class V in Elementary School. The sample recruited 38 students using a random sampling. This study administered a reading interest scale and test for reading comprehension ability to collect the intended data. The study result shows a high significant positive correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension ($r_{xy} = 0.873$; $\alpha=0.01$). This research

confirms when a motivational force exists on the learners, they will focus on the reading which in turn will develop better comprehension (Ebbbers,2011).

Another variable suspected to be related to reading competency is reading self-efficacy. Self-efficacy as a part of self-esteem which means that a person's confidence to perform successfully (Branden,1985; Stevik,1990; Bandura, 1997). He also states that self-efficacy is the ability to maintain high levels of motivation and persistence in the face of difficulties. Rachmajanti and Musthofiyah (2017), conducted a study to understand the relationship between reading self-efficacy, reading attitude and EFL reading comprehension based on gender difference. The study involved 120 female and 88 male students. The relationship between reading self-efficacy and reading comprehension shows that reading self-efficacy of male students brings a more significant relationship on their reading comprehension rather than of female students ($r_{xy}=0.570$; $\alpha=0.02$). This study shows that male students are more affected by reading self-efficacy rather than the female students. In contrast with male students, female students' reading comprehension scores seem less affected by reading self-efficacy.

The fact that scientific approach to reading did not correlate to the students' reading competency, especially in working on high-order thinking items urged the present study to be resurveyed deploying reading interest and reading self-efficacy. Moreover, previous researchers had proven two other variables, they are, reading interest and reading self-efficacy were proven to be significantly related to reading comprehension of written English texts.

The present research was endeavored to correlate the two predictor variables, namely: reading interest, reading self-efficacy, and one criterion

variable, that is, reading competency. The reading competency was measured using high-order items, they are, cognitive domain of levels C4, C5, and C6; affective domain of levels A3 and A4; psychomotor domain of levels P3, P4, and P5.

The text genres used were of two types, namely: descriptive texts about a person, an animal, a movie, a procedure, and recount texts about a personal experience and an accident. The text indicators measured consisted of four aspects, namely the main idea, the specific ideas, the textual references, and the word meanings. The research was conducted in the State Junior High Schools in the District of Singaraja, focused especially in the *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri (SMPN) 8 Singaraja*.

1.2 Problems Identification

The students' reading deficiency on high-order-thinking items was speculated on several factors.

Firstly, the students were not really trained to deal with high-order - thinking items like cognitive domain of levels C4 (analyzing), C5 (evaluating), and C6 (creating); affective domain of levels A3 (valuing) and A4 (organizing); psychomotor domain of levels P3 (mechanizing), P4 (complex overt responding), and P5 (adapting). In schools, they were expected to comprehend lower-order-thinking items like cognitive domain of levels C1 (remembering), C2 (understanding), and C3 (applying); affective domain of levels A1 (accepting) and A2 (responding); psychomotor domain of levels P1 (perceiving), P2 (setting), and P3 (guided responding);

Secondly, the EFL teachers were not really competent to exercise with high-order-thinking items like cognitive domain of levels C4 (analyzing), C5 (evaluating), and C6 (creating); affective domain of levels A3 (valuing) and A4 (organizing); psychomotor domain of levels P3 (mechanizing), P4 (complex overt responding), and P5 (adapting). In schools, they were expected to comprehend lower-order-thinking items like cognitive domain of levels C1 (remembering), C2 (understanding), and C3 (applying); affective domain of levels A1 (accepting) and A2 (responding); psychomotor domain of levels P1 (perceiving), P2 (setting), and P3 (guided responding). They all stick to the curricular learning objectives as set forth in the 2013 Curriculum;

Thirdly, higher-order-thinking items in reading may not only require a scientific approach, nor a communicative approach alone. Both the teachers and students need to be trained in millennial learning styles involving 4 Cs, namely: creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.

Fourthly, both the teachers and students were not acquitted with descriptive texts dealing with a person, an animal, a movie, a procedure, and recount texts about a personal experience and an accident. The text indicators were not discussed thoroughly during the reading classes, so that the students had less exposures to the indicators and descriptors as well.

1.3 Research Scope

The present research was delimited on the descriptive texts about a person, an animal, a movie, a procedure, and recount texts about a personal

experience and an accident in the first semester of the eighth-grade students in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 8 Singaraja* in academic year 2019/2020.

Furthermore, there are several things that is uncontrollable in this presents research: 1) unfortunately, the present research only has two variables that is considered related to reading competency test, 2) when the students answer the scales, they did it honestly according to their feelings, and 3) students also answered 25 items reading competency test honestly based on their true ability.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How are the students' reading interest, reading self-efficacy, and their reading competency on high-order-thinking items of the English descriptive and recount text types in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 8 Singaraja*?
2. Are there any significant relationships of the students' reading interest, reading self-efficacy, and reading competency pair-wisely on high-order-thinking items of the English descriptive and recount text types in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 8 Singaraja*?
3. Is there any significant relationship of the students' reading interest, reading self-efficacy, and reading competency multiply on high-order-thinking items of the English descriptive and recount text types in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 8 Singaraja*?

1.5 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions mentioned previously, the research objectives could be formulated as follows.

1.5.1 General Objective.

The general research objective is to describe and correlate the students' reading interest, reading self-efficacy and reading competency on various English descriptive and recount text types in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 8 Singaraja*.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives.

The specific research objectives are as follows.

- (1) Describing the students' reading interest, reading self-efficacy, and their reading competency on various English descriptive and recount text types in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 8 Singaraja*.
- (2) Relating the students' reading interest, reading self-efficacy, and reading competency pair-wisely and multiply on various English descriptive and recount text types in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 8 Singaraja*.

1.6 Research Significance

The general and specific research objectives would benefit the following stakeholders.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

In theory, the research findings should be used to nurture the students' reading interest, reading self-efficacy so as to enhance the students' reading competency in the *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri* 8 Singaraja.

1.6.2 Practical Significance.

In practice, the results are useful for the following individuals.

- (1) Firstly, the students could nurture themselves in the interest and self-efficacy on reading any written texts regularly and enthusiastically;
- (2) Secondly, the result of the present research will also be useful for headmaster to know how English teachers in school improve students' reading competency. That information can be used as a reflection of what method that is the best used to improve students' reading competency.
- (3) Thirdly, the teachers will also be benefitted since their students' have prior knowledge in vocabulary, grammar, and contents which could facilitate EFL teachers in assisting students to read efficiently and effectively;
- (4) Fourthly, future researchers may explore other variables aside from reading interest and reading self-efficacy as to enhance the students' reading literacy.