CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

The 2013 Curriculum has been implemented in all the Indonesian schools since 2013. The 2013 Curriculum is designed with scientific approach. The 2013 Curriculum is implemented to improve students' ability in the learning process such as productive skills (writing and speaking) and receptive skills (reading and listening) (Ahmad, 2014). Reading is the one of four skills in EFL that should be mastered. The learning goal of reading is understanding various English text types such as descriptive and recount text types (Kebudayaan, 2013). Reading is important as it is used to access alternative explanations and informations (Rusmanayanti & Hanafi, 2018).

Reading is an important skill for the students in order to be able to understand written texts which involves active and complex processes (Gupta & Ahuja, 2014; Olsson, 2009; Zarei & Keshavarz, 2011). According to (Huang & Yang, 2015), reading is a complex skill since it requires students to extract meanings textually through cognitive skills. The complexity of reading processes often hindered students to comprehend the contents as well as the structures successfully.

Previous research has showed factors related to the students' poor reading comprehension of written texts. (Putri, Suparman, and Supriadi (2017) conducted a comparative study of the senior high school in Lampung Tengah, students' reading comprehension achievement in two classes using two techniques namely Numbered Heads Together and Predictive Reading Techniques. Aside from the differences in achievements across classes, they analyzed that poor reading comprehension was due mainly to lack of vocabulary and text complexity.

Mariana (2017) conducted a study to compare the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Gemolong and SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Gemolong. She studied all the eleventh grade students of *SMA Negeri 1 Gemolong and SMA Muhammadiyah* 2 Gemolong. She found out that the students' low comprehension was due to the students' limited vocabulary and complex text structures.

Kumari (2017) studied reading competency beyond texts, namely reading habits and confidence. He studied students at Narsipatnam Mandal of Visakhapatnam District. He concluded that bad reading habit lowered the students' reading motivation and self-confidence in reading. These two factors were affected the students' low reading competency at Narsipatnam Mandal of Visakhapatnam District.

Finally, Sholihah (2018) conducted a study to compare students in the junior high school in the city and rural area. The population of this study was all the third year students at SMPN 1 Cilegon, SMPN 1 Serang and SMPN 1 Picung, SMPN 3 Banjarsari. She found out that student' poor reading competency in the rural area was due to the students' low motivation in reading, inappropriate the EFL teachers' method in reading as well as the students' lack of vocabulary.

The present research was based on the results of prior observation conducted at *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 2 Sawan* (henceforth: SMPN 2 Sawan). To ascertain the students' reading competency, a reading test was administered to a class of the seventh grade students at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja. In general, the results showed that many students' reading abilities were below the '*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM)' or Minimum Mastery Criteria* set forth by the school as high as 70%. When analyzed in detail, they failed to understand texts' main ideas, specific ideas, word meanings as well as textual references.

The observed students' test results urged to observe a bigger number of the seventh grade students' reading competency at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja. The significance of studying the seventh grade students' reading competency on a

wider scale was to ascertain the quality of EFL reading at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja. The present research was conducted to describe and analyze the students' reading competency based on the 2013 Curriculum at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja. The focus was laid on describing and analyzing the students' reading comprehension on text main idea, specific ideas, word meanings, and textual references. The analysis was conducted based on class, text genre, and reading indicators in order to discover deficiency of the learning processes and outcomes in each class, text genre, and reading indicators. Through such an analysis further learning strategies could be implemented in reading at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja.

1.2 Problem Identification

Summarized from previous research some variables were related to low reading comprehension, they are, lack of vocabulary (Putri, Suparman, and Supriadi (2017), complex text structures (Mariana, 2017), poor reading habits (Kumari, 2017), low reading motivation (Kumari, 2017), low self-confidence (Sholihah, 2018), inappropriate teachers' methods of reading (Sholihah, 2018).

Kharaghani and Ghonsooly (2015) discovered the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and the level of motivation in reading comprehension skill of Iranian EFL learners. When the students found many words not known their lexical meanings, text contents' comprehension would be difficult for them to grasp. They had to check for all the difficult words' meanings in the dictionary. They argued that frequent checking up for meanings would lower the students' reading motivation.

Theoretically, text complexity refers to the level of challenge a text provides based on, qualitative features, and reader/text factors (Poonpon, 2010). When a text contains many unfamiliar content words, it may seriously hinder comprehension. Contrastingly, when a text contains many familiar running words,

it may facilitate higher comprehension. Grammatical complexity may also lower text comprehension.

1.3 Research Scope

The present research was delimited on the seventh grade students at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja. This research was focused on surveying the students' reading competency of the English descriptive texts about a person, an animal, a place, a procedure, and recount texts about a personal experience at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja. The students reading competencies were discussed based on classes, text genres, and indicators.

1.4 **Research Questions**

    1.4.1 Major Problem: How are the students' reading competencies at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja?

    1.4.2 Minor Problem: How are the students' reading competencies based on class, text genre, and reading indicator at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja?

1.5 **Research Objectives**

    1.5.1 **General Objective**. The general research objective was to describe the students' reading competency at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja.

    1.5.2 **Specific Objective.** The specific objective was to describe the students' reading competency based on class, text genre, and reading indicator at SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja.

1.6 Research Significance

    1.6.1 **Theoretical Significance.**

        The results of the present research would be used to design and develop reading modular instructions with explicit reading strategies at SMPN 2

Sawan, Singaraja in particular. Reading strategies would provide EFL learners with the tools needed to become aware of their thinking, provide confidence in their ability to think and analyze text, and most importantly, makes thinking visible and audible.

1.6.2 **Practical Significance.**

1) The EFL students could be benefitted from this research since they could use effective reading strategy to think and analyze English written texts;

2) The EFL teachers could also be benefitted from this research as they could design and develop proper teaching methods, reading materials, reading resources, and media;

3) Future researchers could also be inspired in conducting a deeper study on reading comprehension in the Junior High School by including other variables aside from text genres.

1.7 Assumption and Limitation

The present research was a quantitative research which was dependent on reliable and accurate measurement on the students' reading competency in SMPN 2 Sawan, Singaraja. Therefore, the students' responses on the multiple choice items in the reading competency test were assumed to be independent. The students' reading competencies were truly reflecting their reading abilities. The present research has a limitation its generalizability