

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter portrays the research background, problem identification, research question, research objectives, research significance, assumption and limitation, research scope as well.

1.1 Research Background

Reading literacy is a paramount importance since it determines the quality of a nation (Donald,2000). The Indonesian young readers failed in the reading assessment compared to students in other countries. In 2015, the result of PISA showed that the Indonesian young readers positioned in 60th out of 72 countries. The Indonesian young readers' reading mean score was 397 compared to 493 of the participating countries (Nugrahanto & Zuchdi, 2019). In 2018, the Indonesian young readers positioned in 72th out of 77 countries. The average Indonesian young readers' reading mean score was 371 compared to 487 of the participating countries (Schleicher,2018). Similarly, the students were observed of having low reading comprehension in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 2 (henceforth: SMPN 2) Sidemen*.

Theoretically, low reading comprehension may be related to reading perception. Carroll (2007) described reading perception as an awareness of the reading's value or importance. In other words, one may perceive reading as a very positive or valuable activity to endeavor. Moreover, Ebbers (2011) added when perception is positive, so the motivational force or interest will be increased. He further explained that reading perception may bring about motivation to read.

Through focused interview to students in SMPN 2 Sidemen, it was found that the students did not believe that reading experience could make them aware of the reading's value or importance. More specifically, they did not conceive reading as to strengthen ability in determining texts' main ideas, specific information, textual references, as well as word meanings. In general, the students were not motivated in reading whatsoever.

The second variable related to reading comprehension is reading interest. Reading interest is a dynamic, active state based on the tangible objects and the desire connected to reading (Walker,2000). Reading interest involves extra attention, better comprehension, and also longer recall. Operationally, reading interest refers to whether or not students like to read in their spare time or at home or whether they like to go to the library (McKool,2007). In the interview, it was found that the students did not like reading. They bored easily because they had to check up dictionary for word or phrase meanings. Moreover, they did not like to read in their spare time or at home or elsewhere. They also admitted that they rarely went to the library to read.

The third variable is reading habit. Reading habits refer to the frequency of behavior, automaticity and expression of one's identity (Verplanken,2003). Moreover, reading habit is defined as the process when people doing something consciously and unconsciously (Shen,2006; McKool,2007; Stansberry,2009). Simply formulated, a reading habit means that the frequency one engages in reading, the amount of time allocated for reading, the materials one reads. In the interview, the students acknowledged that they rarely spent time to read. They

realized that they spent time in reading the students' text book when they had English classes or during the mid-term or final-term examinations.

Empirically, the three variables are related could be traced from previous research accounts. Rajab & Al-Sadi (2015) investigated on the reading habits and interests of Saudi English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) pupils at the university-level preparatory year program (PYP). Newly enrolled, men and women (n=330) participants were learners in the PYP university course with mixed English skills. Data analysis used statistical tools. Variables dealt with reading habits and reading interest. The analysis exposed that the reading in social media environments is more profoundly involved.

Maharsi, Ghali, & Maulani (2019) proposed a study entitled "High School Students' Reading Habits and Perceptions on Reading for Pleasure". 41 pupils of grade XI High School were involved in this study. Distributing the questionnaires, doing observation, and conducting an interview were done to collect the data. The findings presented that almost 50% of the students read occasionally along the holidays, 12% read once a week, 9% once in a month, and 29% never read even though books are accessible. The students admitted that it was nice to read for fun.. However, data exposed that the reading preferences of students are weak. This was assumed to be related to reading culture. In assessing students' interest in reading, the affordability and accessibility of reading content appeared to play roles. Reading materials should also vary in genres, in themes, and in forms of both printed and on-screen regarding students' digital nativity.

A study entitled "Students' Perceptions in Using the Internet to Develop Reading Habits" was carried out by Bana (2020) in which qualitative descriptive

method with survey design was employed in this study. The participants were 43 students in the English Department of *Universitas Kristen Indonesia Jakarta*. A questionnaire composed of 20 items were employed to collect the data. The findings revealed that 43% of the students view their reading patterns favorably on the internet. However, most of them saw reading clearly as an exercise to get knowledge to finish their school exercise. They also saw the Internet as the key intelligence source to complete their task.

During Covid-19 pandemic, many countries have decided to close schools, collages, and university (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020). It makes all learning process use on-line learning platforms, for example Google Classroom, Zoom, Webex, Schoology, and etc. *SMPN 2 Sidemen* was not an exception. EFL classes have been implemented through on-line learning platforms, especially Google Classroom.

Ridho et al. (2019) stated that EFL through Google Classroom provides benefits such as 1) easy-to-learn interface or user friendly device, 2) integrates with lots of applications and websites or data entering conducted once for all and having available across all platforms, 3) seamlessly share or easily moves from one thing to another without any problems, 4) collect and grade varieties of available ready documents, such as Gmail, Calendar, Classroom, Contacts, Drive, Docs, Forms, Groups, Sheets, Series, Slides, Talk/Hangouts, Vault, and Chrome Sync. Aside from the benefits, EFL through Google Classroom may present constraints. EFL through Google Classroom does not 1) provide development of information workflows in the website, and 2) measure student progress relative to specific learning standards.

The present research was conducted on reading class through Google Classroom, focusing on multiple correlation of two predictor variables, they are: reading perception and reading interest and one criterion variable, that is, reading habit. Reading was studied because it is relevant to the era of technology and information which allows students to participate effectively in society and to develop knowledge and potential (Loh & Kanai,2016). Reading through Google Classroom was investigated as to whether on-line learning platform benefited or hindered the students' reading perception, reading interest, and reading habit in *SMPN 2 Sidemen*.

1.2 Problem Identification

The students' reading perception, interest, and habit are still lacking could be explained as follows.

1.2.1 The students' negative perception to reading might be related to un-familiarity of the reading values in life, for examples, gaining knowledge and widening horizon. Moreover, the students were not accustomed to reading as a lifestyle. They might think that reading was a mental burden for them. Unfamiliarity of the reading values negated their perception to reading.

1.2.2 The students' lack of interest to reading might be related to a number of factors. According to Crawley and Mountain's theory, there are six indicators in reading interest, namely: 1) previous experience which refers to the students' interest in something they have experienced previously, 2) self-concept which refers to the students' rejection on information they feel threatened. Otherwise, the students feel receptive of something they think

useful or helpful for improving their reading skill, 3) valuing which refers to the students' interest when the subject or topic is presented by a good person, 4) understandable subject refers to the students' interest when the subject or topic is presented by a good person, 5) level of pressure involvement which refers to options which present less pressure but higher rate of interest, and 6) complexity of subject material which refers to topics which are intellectually and psychologically attractive. Their lack of interest in reading may be due to those six indicators.

1.2.3 The students' poor habits in reading might be associated with certain factors.

Fluency, automaticity (Morris, 2006), accuracy (Schwanenflugel, 2004), extremely fun reading practice, amount of reading, good proficiency in English (Akyay & Ogeyik, 2009), positive attitude toward reading, conscious and avid reading, self-selection of books, motivation to read, eagerness to receive a book as a present (Jamnik, 2005), and regular reading after school hours (Adetuji & Oladeji, 2007) are signs of good reading.

1.3 Research Question

The present research studied two predictor variables, namely: reading perception and reading interest, with one criterion variable, that is, reading habit; and therefore, the research question was formulated as "Is there significant multiple correlation of reading perception and reading interest with the students' reading habit in *SMPN 2 Sidemen*?".

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

The general purpose of the present study is to correlate the students' reading perception, reading interest, and reading habit during the pandemic Covid-19 in *SMPN 2 Sidemen*. The EFL learning was implemented through on-line platform, especially Google Classroom.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific purposes of the present study are explained as follows.

- 1) Describing the learners' reading perception, reading interest, and reading habit during the pandemic Covid-19 in *SMPN 2 Sidemen*, whereby the EFL reading classes were implemented on-line learning platform, namely Google Classroom.
- 2) Correlating the students' reading perception, reading interest, and reading habit during the pandemic Covid-19 in *SMPN 2 Sidemen*, whereby the EFL reading classes were implemented on-line learning platform, namely Google Classroom.

1.5 Research Significance

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance.

In theory, the research findings used to nurture the students' reading perception, reading interest, and reading habit to enhance the students' reading competency in *SMPN 2 Sidemen*.

1.5.2 Practical Significance.

Practically, the findings are beneficial for :

- 1) Firstly, the learners could nurture themselves in reading perception, reading interest, and reading habit;
- 2) Secondly, the teachers could also gain benefit from the students' positive perception, high interest, and good habit in reading to facilitate effective reading classes;
- 3) Thirdly, in addition to reading perception, reading interest and reading behaviors, potential researchers may investigate other variables to boost learners' reading literacy.

1.6 Research Scope

This study is limited to analyze the multiple correlation of reading perception, reading interest, and reading habit in *SMPN 2 Sidemen*. The reading comprehension indicators are limited to understanding of the text title, main idea, specific information, textual reference, and word meaning. The data were gathered during Covid-19 pandemic or in the first semester of 2020-2021 school academic calendar.

1.7 Assumption and Limitation

In the present research, some factors were not able to control, so that they were assumed and the results were limited.

1.7.1 Reading Perception Scale adopted from Alan & Gary's theory (2011) with its three indicators was assumed to be reliable and valid both theoretically and empirically.

1.7.2 Reading Interest Scale adopted from Crawley and Mountain's theory (1995) with its six indicators was assumed to be reliable and valid both theoretically and empirically.

1.7.3 Reading Habit Scale adopted from Verplanken's theory (2003) with its six indicators was assumed to be reliable and valid both theoretically and empirically.

1.7.4 The students' responses to the three instruments, namely: Reading Perception Scale, Reading Interest Scale, and Reading Habit Scale were assumed to be independent. Response independence referred to all responses answered honestly and truly by all students in *SMPN 2 Sidemen*.

1.7.5 Data collected on Reading Perception, Reading Interest, and Reading Habit were assumed to have underlying interval structure despite they were measured using nominal scales.

