

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

In today's globalization era, it will not be enough if someone only has speaking skill while the flow of information and communication taking place requires us to be able to master reading skills. Studies reveal that people with better reading comprehension skills also obtain more excellent opportunities for brighter career promotion (Wei, Cromwell, & McClarty, 2016; Bhatia & Bremner, 2012). The reason for this as Akbaşlı, Şahin, & Yaykiran (2016) state that the better reading comprehension students possess, the better the students achieve in their learning achievement. Thus, understanding the meaning of written text becomes an essential thing to the education and personal development which can be carried out with proper strategy (Cameron 2001).

Unfortunately, even though reading is essential but the rate of literacy in Indonesia is still at a low level and moderately left behind by other developing countries. Research which was conducted by Central Connecticut State University in March 2016 states that Indonesia was ranked 60th of 61 countries on literacy level (Miller and McKenna, 2016). The finding is probably caused by the low motivation and enjoyment as Gardner (2002) argues that the students who do not enjoy reading fail in the comprehension of reading eventually. It is in line with what Seitz (2010) who proposes that the students who do not like a text to read

often fail to engage in reading. This condition pulls up the students' practice that might improve their reading comprehension because enjoyment in reading is related to reading attainment (Clark & Douglas, 2011). At hand, associating literacy with reading skills is acceptable because the concepts of literacy primarily refer to the capabilities to absorb information and knowledge through reading activities (Suryanto, 2017).

As a result, based on the limited observation of pre-research in the 2nd-grade students of class A in SMP Al Amanah Cileunyi, Bandung. The researcher indicates that 16 of 33 students had a problem with reading that was the students' reading comprehension was still low. It could be seen from the students' achievement in reading the score. Some facts indicated the problems. First, students' interest in reading was still low. Although they liked to read, they did not try to discuss the text. Hence, it made them face their difficulties. Second, they are still having a problem in the reading process and inferential comprehension. The students had a little allotment of time to read English text. Sixteen students still did not use the chance to read English text either at school or in the English lesson itself. Third, students had difficulties in understanding the text, especially in drawing an inference to make a logical conclusion. According to Barret (1972), a logical conclusion is derived from the inferential level of reading comprehension. In maintaining the problem, this study offers Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) as a solution. It is a low-stress approach which is set to give the students relaxed and uninterrupted reading time (Chow and Chou, 2002).

Over the years, recent studies from some researchers (Day & Bamford, 2004; Garan DeVoogd, 2008; Rosseau, 2012) found that Sustained Silent Reading had a positive effect when it is launched, such as a close connection between strategy and students' attitude toward reading, improvement of comprehension and vocabulary growth. It is supported by another researcher who stated that this reading strategy could engage the students to read with their own passion, and the resulting extended period of practice improves their reading achievement (Karweit & Slavin, 1981; Marliave, Fisher, & Dishaw, 1978).

However, there are no specific comprehension levels that conduct in the previous studies above. This study attempts to investigate whether Sustained Silent Reading may help students in understanding a text inferentially or not. To prove the assumption, research entitled: *“Promoting Inferential Comprehension through Sustained Silent Reading”* is conducted.

B. Research Questions

The researcher formulates the problems of this study as follows :

1. How is the process of Sustained Silent Reading implemented?
2. Does Sustained Silent Reading enhance students' Inferential Comprehension?
3. What are the responses from the students to Sustained Silent Reading?

C. Research Objective

This study refers to the research questions are intended to find out:

1. The process of implementing Sustained Silent Reading in the classroom

2. The result of whether Sustained Silent Reading enhances the students' Inferential Comprehension.
3. The responses of the students to Sustained Silent Reading.

D. Significant Research

Theoretically, the study is significant in providing useful information that Sustained Silent Reading could be a solution to promote student interest and inferential comprehension.

Practically, the study could be useful in providing alternative material in teaching English. Also, by the use of Sustained Silent Reading, it would enhance student's ability toward reading.

Professionally, this study is expected for English practitioner to foster interest in reading which is faced by the student. Notably, a teacher is the utilizer so that besides helping students to become highly engaged readers, teachers themselves also need to be highly engaged.

E. Research Framework

Survey results by PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy) in 2011 states that Indonesia ranks 42 of 45 countries in reading literacy. A similar survey conducted by EGRA (Early Grade Reading Assessment) in 2012 in seven USAID partner provinces in Indonesia shows that 50% of that 3rd-grade primary school students can read, but half can only read without understanding what they read. Another research which is conducted by Central Connecticut State University in March 2016 also states that Indonesia was ranked 60th of 61

countries in reading interest (Miller and McKenna, 2016). These findings are a dilemma for literacy learning in Indonesia because the data indicate that the problem of literacy in Indonesia is a critical issue that must be solved.

Literacy has a vital role in society in the 21st century as one way to deal with the challenges that exist. A study discussing Indonesia literacy rate conducted by PIRLS (2001) reveals that two factors influencing Indonesia students to have low literacy level are school climate on reading and the students' factor. Also, according to OECD (2010), students' factors are related to comprehension, and supportive reading attitudes or interest.

Based on the studies above, it has been known that the literacy level is influenced by reading comprehension and reading interest. According to Suyanto (2010), reading comprehension is a reading activity which aims to get information from a text or reading material. Other defines reading comprehension as the process of extracting meaning from text to gain an other overall understanding of what is described (Woolley, 2011). Furthermore, *Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan* (2016) clearly states that the purpose of English learning on the aspect of reading for junior high school level is to understand comprehensively from particular written text.

Barnes and Dennis (1996) introduced two types of inferential reading: Coherent inferential and elaborative inferential. Furthermore, they define that inferential consist of a coherent text where readers are required to use their linguistic knowledge to draw connections within the text while Elaborative Inferential integrates prior information or knowledge that got in the text to

expand on explicit information knowledge of the text. The researcher asserts that the inferential issue in coherence aspect to be focused in this paper. Moreover, the principal comprehension of inferential is loaded in *Standard Kompetensi Bahasa Indonesia Kurikulum* (2013). However, it is not directly mentioned in the curriculum for English subject. But, the principals of the comprehension are still loaded in *Standar Kompetensi Bahasa Inggris* (2013). According to Burns (1996), the principals of inferential comprehension include: creating a summary, inferring the main idea, recognizing causal relationships, as well as the analysis of texts such as finding the purpose of the author and interpreting implied meaning of the text. Then, Burns (1996) defines Inferential Comprehension as reading between the lines to make the inference. Moreover, it is the process of tracking the idea conveyed indirectly.

The rate of literacy in Indonesia is backward. It is caused by negative reading attitude such as lack of reading interest, and it also influences their comprehension toward a text. Therefore, it is needed a system of habituation designed to foster reading comprehension and reading interest of junior high school students. In Indonesia, 2006 schools including elementary and high schools in West Java through *Gerakan Literasi Sekolah* applied solutions. One of them provided Sustained Silent Reading (Disdik Jabar, 2016). The researcher thinks that is an effective solution because Rubin (1982) supports it by saying one of the programs that could improve reading skills and enjoyment or interest in reading is Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) or also known as Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). Sustained Silent Reading is about self-selection.

It motivates students to read with interest, and the resulting extended period of practice improves their reading achievement (Karweit & Slavin, 1981; Marliave, Fisher, & Dishaw, 1978). Hence, Sustained Silent Reading gains students a positive reading attitude that contrives contribution to amount in reading (Bastug & Akyol, 2012).

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), according to Proepper (2016), is the practice of having students their independent and uninterrupted reading time from self-selected texts. It is almost the same as Chow and Chou (2012) statement that Sustained Silent Reading is a low-stress approachment which is set to give the student a relaxed and uninterrupted reading time.

There are some different names to this practice, Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is also referred to as Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), Super Quiet Reading Time (SQUIRT), Wonderfully Exciting Books (WEB), and Daily Independent Reading Time (DIRT) (Jones, Newman, & Reutzler, 2010). Each program is different from the others, but all share the same ideas, have uninterrupted time to read, be able to decide not to finish a book, observe teacher modeling good reading habits (Hopkins, 1997; Kornelly & Smith, 1993; Trelease, 1995; Valeri-Gold, 1995). It is also supported by Yoon (2002) who states that it does not matter what terms have been used for Sustained Silent Reading. It is an in-classroom reading activity wherein students are given a fixed period to read a self-selected material either for pleasure or information silently.

F. Previous Research

There are several research results regarding the use of Sustained Silent Reading. One of them is concerned about the improvement in students' reading comprehension and their achievement through silent reading (Ali, 2012). The result of the research demonstrates that the use of silent reading has a significant and positive influence toward improving students' reading comprehension and their achievement in TOEFL Score on the study object.

The research is also conducted by Dina, Vincenza, Tania, Rosita, Daniela, Rosella, Pierpaolo (2012) that provide the Influence of Sustained Silent Reading which is supported by adaptive learning technology in the children outcomes, the other research investigated whether Sustained Silent Reading encourages college students to increase their reading rate (Dwyer & West,1994).

In the local area, the studies of Sustained Silent Reading also concerned with reading comprehension only (Novarina, Satrijono, Ningsih, 2013). It could be stated that previous researchers focused only on achievement comprehension. Hence, this paper aims to investigate not only on the progress of Sustain Silent Reading but also the specific problem of inferential comprehension among the students, and their response as an evaluation does Sustained Silent Reading affect their motivation and the comprehension or not. Hopefully, this study also might be a barometer to raise the reading interests in Indonesia.