CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates on an overview of the research. It covers the background of the research, research questions, research purposes, research significances, conceptual framework, and the previous research related to the concerns of this research.

A. Background of the Research

This research investigates the teachers' strategies in teaching reading using authentic materials. According to the 2018 PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) report, Indonesia's reading scores are declining to the 74th out of 80 countries. One solution is to evaluate teachers' performances based on their media, methods, and strategies (Sari, Hafifah & Mayasari, 2020). It should be noted that reading assists students in learning and acquiring English (Harmer, 2015). When recognizing the main concepts and supporting details in their reading, authentic texts can help students understand what they have read more clearly and make teaching activities more varied (Kusumawardani, Santosa, & Roschsantiningsih, 2018). As a result, it will aid Indonesian students in improving their reading abilities.

At the same time, authentic materials provide a wide vocabulary and phrases suitable for the learners' levels. It gives students reading experiences in real-life situations and exposes them to English (Alzarga, 2021). Therefore, teachers can confidently choose authentic materials as teaching materials in class. However, it can be challenging for EFL teachers to find, select, and modify authentic reading materials for providing classroom lessons, and it takes time (Rusmawaty, Atmowardoyo, Hamra, & Noni, 2018). In other words, authentic materials have challenges teachers should face despite their advantages in learning English.

Furthermore, EFL teachers find challenges in the process of preparing and applying authentic materials in teaching reading. In the research site at junior high school, the EFL teachers often use materials that only exist in textbooks. It happened because the EFL teacher thought the materials were enough. In addition, because of the varied English materials for the seventh grade, EFL teachers only

use authentic materials on some materials. However, in this situation, it is important for teachers to prepare effective teaching materials to improve students' understanding and English ability. Therefore, EFL teachers must be able to apply teaching strategies in dealing with these challenges.

The material is quite varied at the secondary level, especially in seventh grade. Authentic materials give a real picture of what is being taught and what exists in real-life situations. For example, in procedure text material, teachers can use recipes as authentic materials, which give students language and an overview of using procedure text in life. This advantage can also improve students' understanding and reading ability.

To teach reading using authentic materials, teachers can use varied strategies. According to Brown (2015), teaching strategies are designed to develop learning settings to make them more attractive and to make teaching methods easier to apply in the classroom. With the teachers' help, teaching strategies become a series of learning activities planned and geared toward meeting goals and objectives (Guevara, León, Diaz, Zapata, Luy-Montejo, & Lira, 2020). To achieve it in teaching, teachers need contributions from students to be interested in learning, using various strategies, methods, media, and materials.

To implement strategies for teaching reading using authentic materials, teachers can follow several key steps (Guevara et al., 2020). First, they should select appropriate authentic materials relevant to their student's interests and provide opportunities for authentic language use. Next, they should preview the materials, establish clear objectives, and plan engaging activities and tasks that scaffold learning and support student success. It might include pre-reading activities, during-reading activities, and assessments such as quizzes or reading logs. By creating a supportive and engaging learning environment, teachers can help students develop their language skills and achieve success in reading.

Overall, the key to successfully implementing strategies for teaching reading using authentic materials is to focus on student engagement, language development, and skill-building. Teachers should carefully select and scaffold authentic materials, establish clear objectives, and provide a range of engaging activities and

assessments to support learning. By fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment, teachers can help students develop the skills they need to succeed in reading and beyond.

There are some previous research relevant to the current research. The previous research conducted by Sari et al. (2020), Orooq and Hussein (2022), and Mayarega (2023) has significantly contributed to the understanding of using authentic materials in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading skills. Sari et al. (2020) conducted a literature review and highlighted the importance of using authentic classroom materials, emphasizing the positive impact on students' reading comprehension and interest. Orooq and Hussein (2022) delved into teachers' attitudes and challenges when incorporating authentic materials in their EFL classrooms, revealing a majority's support despite encountering difficulties. Mayarega (2023) focused on students' perceptions, motivations, and anxieties related to authentic texts, shedding light on the dual nature of responses - positive perceptions due to benefits and negative responses due to comprehension difficulties.

The current research builds upon these previous studies by specifically investigating teaching strategies using authentic materials in EFL reading instruction and exploring students' perceptions of these strategies. In contrast to the earlier works that predominantly centered on teachers' attitudes or students' perceptions of the use of authentic materials, the present study adopts a case study approach to delve into the strategies employed by two English teachers and their impact on seventh-grade students. Hopefully, the results of this study can help teachers overcome the challenges they face in choosing and using authentic English materials in reading classes and significantly improve students' English reading skills.

B. Research Questions

The research is developed into the following questions based on the preliminary information:

1. What are EFL teachers' strategies for teaching reading using authentic materials?

2. What are the students' perspectives of the teachers' strategies for teaching reading using authentic materials?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the research questions mentioned above, the purposes of this research are:

1. To explore EFL teachers' strategies for teaching reading using authentic materials.

2. To find the students' perspectives of the teachers' strategies for teaching reading using authentic materials.

D. Research Significance

This research has two main significances. The research outcomes are anticipated to be both theoretically and practically applicable.

a. Theoretical Significance

This research is intended to provide helpful information about the strategies English teachers use when teaching reading with authentic reading materials. It would aid teachers in selecting appropriate reading teaching strategies and materials relevant to students' real-world experiences. In addition, this research becomes a reference for future researchers on related topics.

b. Practical Significance

The research is expected to provide valuable and significant insights for EFL teachers. The significance is intended to be an evaluation of the application of strategies for teaching reading with authentic reading materials.

E. Research Scope

This research focuses on the teachers' strategies in teaching reading using authentic materials and its implementation in the class. The research was implemented in seventh-grade English teachers at a Junior High School in Garut. Two different teachers teach nine classes of seventh grade. They were chosen because grade seven has a variety of learning materials that can use authentic materials in teaching reading, such as procedure text and descriptive text.

F. Conceptual Framework

In teaching reading, Harmer (2015) states that teachers are responsible for motivating reading by selecting or creating appropriate tasks, establishing effective classroom procedures, encouraging critical reading, and creating a supportive environment for practicing reading in the classroom. Furthermore, teaching reading should be divided into three stages: Pre-reading activity, While-reading activity and Post-reading activity (Duke, 2016). As a result, the teacher must have the appropriate principles and strategies in the class to assist children in increasing their reading skills.

When planning the strategy, teachers should consider strategy for teaching reading they plan to employ. The strategy used must be suitable for the context of the classroom. There are numerous strategies for teaching reading. Vacca et al. (2021) classify teaching reading strategies into cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-cultural categories. Furthermore, Mickulecky (2018) argues that various strategies can be used to teach reading to EFL learners. Bottom-up processing, top-down processing and interactive processing are some of the most strategies commonly used.

Engaging students' interest and motivation is a critical aspect of effective pedagogy, particularly in the realm of teaching reading. To achieve this, teachers are encouraged to use suitable and contextually relevant materials. Akbari (2020) categorizes authentic materials into written, audio, visual, audiovisual, and realia, offering teachers a means to create immersive learning experiences closely tied to students' real-world interactions.

Students' perceptions of reading teaching strategies involve their subjective evaluations of how effectively educators employ methods to impart reading skills (Niu & Zhao, 2019). Muhammad (2017) and Halim et al. (2018) highlight the diverse student attitudes. Muhammad (2017) highlights students' perspectives of teaching strategies, while Halim et al.'s (2018) study reveals varied perspectives on integrating authentic materials. This complexity emphasizes the need for teachers to comprehend and accommodate diverse viewpoints, tailoring strategies to align with students' cognitive and emotional tendencies.

G. Previous Research

There are some previous research found relevant to the current research. Dwiningtyas et al. (2020) focused on EFL teachers' strategies in teaching reading. This research was designed as a qualitative descriptive study, with two teachers as participants. The instruments of the research are observation checklists and interviews. The investigation revealed that both teachers employed a variety of teaching reading strategies. The first teacher used three strategies: brainstorming, reading aloud, and asking for specific information. At the same time, the second teacher employed nine strategies: encouraging dictionaries, reading aloud, rereading to check comprehension, evaluating comprehension in particular tasks, and asking questions for specific information. The strategies used to teach reading comprehension were highly effective. It was demonstrated by the students' motivation, attention, and the teachers' ability to facilitate the teaching and learning process. This research is relevant to the current research, which explores teachers' strategies for teaching reading. However, a gap between them is using different materials. The previous research used non-specific materials, while the current research uses authentic material specifically.

Second, Santoso and Islam (2019) investigated the role of authentic texts in teaching reading. The research was quasi-experimental, with a nonrandomized pretest-posttest control group. The research sample was two eighth-grade Lawang Junior High School classes in Indonesia. In collecting data, multiple-choice tests on reading comprehension were administered as a pretest and posttest. It was found that employing authentic texts in teaching reading comprehension helped enhance students' reading comprehension achievement. Compared to students taught with non-authentic texts, those whose reading comprehension is bolstered via exposure to authentic materials have considerably better proficiency levels. The previous research is relevant to the current research regarding the role of authentic materials in teaching reading. In contrast, the current research uses a qualitative design with a case study. Moreover, the instruments used were observation, interview, and questionnaire.

Third, Rehman and Perveen (2021) explored the teachers' perception of using authentic materials for teaching English in Pakistani classrooms. The research used a quantitative study and collected data through a survey questionnaire. There were 40 English teachers from Pakistani secondary schools as respondents. The result shows that most teachers desired to use authentic materials in their classrooms but were hesitant due to curriculum, examination system, and administrative pressures. The research suggests adapting the curriculum and examination systems to facilitate using authentic materials in English language classrooms by Pakistani secondary school teachers. The research topic is relevant to the current research, which is the teachers' perception of the use of authentic materials in EFL classrooms. After all, there is a gap between the previous research to the current ones. The current research uses qualitative study with observation, interviews, and questionnaires for collecting data.

In brief, the current research differs from those mentioned above since the previous research focused on the use and effects of authentic materials on students' learning. Furthermore, Dwiningtyas et al. (2020) investigate the teachers' strategies in teaching reading with non-specific materials. In contrast, the current research explores teachers' strategies for teaching reading with authentic materials. Hopefully, the findings of this research could assist teachers in overcoming the challenges when selecting and implementing authentic English materials in reading classes and significantly improve students' English reading skills.