

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the background of the research, formulation of the research problem, the objective of study, research significances, conceptual framework, and previous study.

#### **A. Background of the Research**

This research intends to portray reading comprehension activities for young learners based on a holistic approach. Reading is one of the skills that students must master in learning a foreign language, especially English. According to McDonough et.al (2013), reading is an activity that is usually learned and carried out by students in learning English as a foreign language. This is precisely so that students can gain understanding and ideas from the text they read. Furthermore, Alqomul (2018) states that reading comprehension that students are meant to be able to analyze and evaluate the content of what they have read. It means that in reading comprehension activities students must involve more than just understanding the words listed on the page, but also involve an in-depth understanding of the information, ideas, and messages contained in the text.

Moreover, learning a language from an early age can encourage student development in mastering the language (Ismail & Yusuf,2018). As previously explained above by experts that in learning a language, reading is a skill that needs to be possessed in learning a language that can help students to gain an understanding of the text they read and encourage language skills, especially in reading skills, Ismail & Yusuf (2018) also state that learning a language can be started from a young age.

According to Curtain and Dahlberg (2004), young learners are divided into four groups based on age: first, preschoolers aged 2-4 years, usually still in kindergarten; Second, elementary school students aged 5-7 years and ages 8-10 officially enter elementary school, and finally students aged 11-14 years attend secondary education formally. Besides, according to Uysal & Yavuz (2015), young

learners are called inexperienced people, so they have a lot of strengths that can make it possible for them to have fun while learning a new language.

In Indonesia, learning English especially in reading comprehension skills can be applied at the junior high school level and the material provided is in the form of genres (types of text), short functional texts, transactional texts, and interpersonal texts (Rohim, F. et al 2016). According to Nazhirin (2013), there are several types of text (genres) used in schools, including descriptive, narrative, recount, report, procedure, review, explanation, discussion, anecdote and review. One of the materials studied by grade 7 junior high school students is descriptive text. In this material, students are required to be able to express what they want to convey with the aim of giving an overview of what has been read and described, such as people, animals, objects, or areas.

Nevertheless, in reading young learners still need guidance because they may have difficulty finding the meaning from new words which can lead to a loss of understanding of correct information in the text. Linse (2006) states that young learners may have limited exposure when learning something new especially English. Therefore, a teacher of young learners must have very good language skills and know the right teaching strategies to teach English, especially reading skills.

Based on preliminary observations of 7th-grade students at a junior high school in the Bandung district, it was found that they had difficulty understanding the meaning of sentences in reading especially in descriptive text form due to a lack of knowledge of English vocabulary. In the lesson given by the teacher to the 7th-grade students at the school, it was found that the teacher teaching English was convey material to one another material too quickly and paid little attention to the abilities of students who were unable to understand reading English texts. It makes the reading comprehension skills of these students become very low.

Therefore, teachers must be able to provide approaches or strategies that can assist students in learning reading comprehension skills. One of the approaches that can be used in learning is a holistic approach. According to Manna (2000), and Nasr

(2003), a holistic approach focuses on what teachers and students do through a framework of language totality related to the four language skills together, which ultimately leads to achieving targeted language progress for students. For example, in reading comprehension using a holistic approach, young learners will find it easier to read a text because in addition to reading they can also learn how to read with the correct pronunciation, know some new words, and know how to write a word correctly. Therefore, young learners when reading, apart from getting easy to understand a text, can also get other skills from a reading activity.

There are several previous studies that are relevant to the current research. First, Badjanova and Ilisko (2015) made sense of holistic approach in the context of primary education contents. Second, Haliq (2017) researched on students' reading comprehension through a holistic learning approach. Last, research by Alqomoul (2018) determined the impact of implementing teaching strategies based on a holistic approach to improving reading comprehension skills for seventh graders in Jordan.

Meanwhile, different from the previous research above, this study specifically discusses the description of reading comprehension activities in EYL using a holistic approach. This study focuses on reading comprehension activities at EYL using a holistic approach to find out the processes of reading comprehension activities of descriptive text for 7th-grade students at one of the junior high schools in the Bandung Regency based on holistic approach, and perceptions of students during the implementation of reading comprehension activities of descriptive text for 7th-grade students at one of the junior high schools in the Bandung Regency based on holistic approach.

## **B. Research Questions**

Based on the background of the research, the research questions are:

1. How is the process of reading comprehension activities of descriptive text for 7th-grade students at one of the junior high schools in the Bandung Regency based on holistic approach?
2. What are the students' perceptions of the implementation of the reading comprehension activities of descriptive text at 7th-grade students at one of the junior high schools in the Bandung Regency based on holistic approach?

## **C. Research Purposes**

Based on the research questions, this research is supposed:

1. To investigate the process of reading comprehension activities of descriptive text for 7th-grade students at one of the junior high schools in the Bandung Regency based on holistic approach.
2. To find out are students' perceptions of the implementation of the reading comprehension activities of descriptive text at 7th-grade students at one of the junior high schools in Bandung Regency based on holistic approach.

## **D. Research Significances**

This research would be useful for theoretical significance and practical significance, as follows:

1. **Theoretical Significance:** This research is expected to support theories related to reading comprehension activities in descriptive text at EYL using a holistic approach. This research can provide additional information for further researchers in the related field as a reference.
2. **Practical Significance:** This research is expected to assist teachers in evaluating a holistic approach to students' reading comprehension activities in descriptive text and can improve students' reading skills.

## **E. Conceptual Framework**

Reading has become one of the most important things in the world of education because reading is a crucial skill for students especially to learn English as a Foreign Language (Debat, 2006:8). According to Bano, Jabeen, & Quitoshi (2018), reading can help students gain knowledge and improve their academic performance. Furthermore, according to Vaughn (2003), that reading comprehension refers to understanding texts that have been read, namely the presence of complex skills that require the use of various strategies to activate one's prior knowledge, monitor understanding, question oneself, distinguish between main and supporting ideas, details, and summarize.

In teaching reading, a teacher must be able to provide the right technique or approach when learning because to use any instructional technique effectively, the teacher must understand the principles and assumptions that underlie each particular technique (Dwiningtiyas, et al, 2020). Teaching reading aims to make students become effective and efficient readers. Furthermore, teaching reading is a way transferring knowledge from teacher to students by using a certain technique of strategy and a certain material in order to master reading itself (Brown, 2004), (Olson and Land, 2007).

Therefore, in teaching English for young learners, especially in reading skills there are eight ideas that a teacher should not forget. They give beginners a fun, energetic role in the learning experience, and help students improve and practice, language through collaboration, using multi-dimensional, thematically organized activities, offering comprehensible understanding, vocabulary mastery including energetic techniques, combining language with content material, validating and incorporating home language and culture, and providing clear goals and comments on overall performance (McCloskey, 2014). Furthermore, according to Prayatni (2019) in teaching English for young learners needs good teaching skills, creativity, thorough preparation and patience. Teachers must have all these attributes in order to make young learners keep motivated. Also, teachers should

consider about another characteristics which distinguish them from teenagers and adults.

In the learning process, especially in foreign language learning, students become one of the important elements for the occurrence of these activities. Young learners are referred to as energetic inexperienced persons because they have numerous power, which makes them probably have an excellent time studying a new language (Uysal & Yavuz (2015). According to Pinter (2011), classifies three groups of young learners there are preschoolers (3-5 years old), primary school children (6-12 years old), and they graduate at 13 or 14 years old. Pinter (2011) in Puskás (2016) states that in Slovakia, children at the age of 6 or 7 years old begin their primary school and graduate at around 15 years old, while elementary school is usually divided into lower and upper primary ages.

Then, every person must have characteristics whether it is children, teenagers, adults, or the elderly. According to Scrivener (2011), the characteristics of young learners are keenness, noisy, curiosity, a lot of attention, like an experiment, a sense of humor, and like have fun. They can not concentrate for a long time and always want to learn new things. However, Children may not immediately understand English as a whole, but they may understand it by engaging in interesting activities, games, and tasks.

A holistic approach in the realm of education has the purpose of developing the potential possessed by students and also paying attention to a fun and exciting learning atmosphere, democratic, humanist and it is hoped that participants can be themselves (learning to be). Furthermore, holistic approach is also the key to encouraging students to use language and learn language not separately but overall. Based on the above statement, a holistic approach is between one material and another that is still interconnected, or in another sense, in the case of the learning process the missed material is still related (Afroni, 2018), (Danim and Khairil, 2010). For example, in understanding the content of reading English texts, students can learn the meaning of each word in the reading, are able to say each word correctly, students can also learn the structure in the reading content and so on.

Therefore, it is evident that reading skills with other skills are interrelated as a whole.

Furthermore, holistic education (Miller, 2007) says there are five holistic language teaching strategies put forward. These strategies are (1) Contextual and natural language teaching; (2) themed language teaching; (3) Language teaching in a balanced manner between language knowledge, language proficiency, and between results and processes; (4) Language teaching that cultivates all self-potentials; (5) Language teaching that provides a relationship between students and themselves.

All learning processes always begin with perception. Student perception is the process of selective treatment of students towards the information they obtain from an object, through observation with the five senses, and students can interpret the observed object (Cole, 1994:84). Furthermore, Sari (2016) states that perception is the process of gathering information compared to previous experiences. Thus, students' understanding and perceptions may be a key factor in influencing the success of the learning process.

#### **F. Previous Studies**

Several previous studies are relevant to this research. First, the study by Badjanova & Ilisko (2015). This study focuses on making sense of a holistic approaches in the context of primary education content. to the development of reading in teaching the Macedonian language. This study aims to elucidate the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of a holistic approach to primary education. In collecting data, this study used a written survey of Latvian primary school teachers. The instrument in this study used a questionnaire with 22 questions as statements with multiple choice options. The results of the study reveal differences in perspectives in the two clusters of respondents with 17.8% or 128 respondents choosing a holistic approach as a teaching and learning strategy in real (R) and ideal (V) pedagogical situations; furthermore, 36.9% or 249 elementary school teachers chose a formal approach in their assessment of the organizational and content

components while preferring a holistic approach when assessing the social component in real (R) and ideal (V) pedagogical situations; 12.1% or 82 respondents who fully support the formal approach in real (R) and ideal (V) pedagogical situations; as many as 33.1% or 224 respondents who chose a formal approach in real pedagogical situations (R) while claiming that they prefer a holistic approach in an ideal pedagogical situation (I) which would require some welcome change in social or other conditions. Therefore, this previous research is relevant to the current research using a holistic approach to education. However, there are also some gaps in the current study from previous studies. The current research has the topic of reading comprehension at EYL based on a holistic approach in Junior High School.

The following relevant research is conducted by Haliq, A.N. (2017). This study focused on improving reading skills at SMPN 6 Moncongloe, Maros Regency using a holistic approach. In this research, the researcher used the research model classroom action research (CAR) of John Elliot (1988). Action research by John Elliot consists of two cycles with every cycle consisting of four steps: (1) Planning, (2) Action, (3) Observation, and (4) Reflecting. This study uses the method of observation, interview, and test. In this research, the researcher used a reading test in 2 classes with a total of 45 students. This result that the average score of students in reading comprehension through the Holistic Learning Approach in the first cycle is 6.44 and in the second cycle is 7.79. Therefore, the holistic learning approach affective for developing students in reading skills. This previous research is relevant in terms of topic. the topic is reading comprehension using a holistic approach. However, there are also some gaps between this and previous studies. This study is to describe the process of reading comprehension activities in young learners based on a holistic approach and the method used a case study.

Another research was conducted by Alqomoul (2018), this study focused on the use of a holistic approach strategy in teaching English reading comprehension skills to seventh grade students in Jordan. This study aimed to identify the impact of implementing teaching strategies based on a holistic approach to improve reading



comprehension skills for seventh graders in Jordan. In collecting data, this study used tests on 120 students, 60 male students, and 60 female students. The sample was divided into two groups, namely the experimental group and the control group. The instrument used is a post-test and pre-test on a reading text that contained a multiple-choice model. This result that the average value of the experimental group is 17.4 and the average of the control group is 14.4. Therefore, the holistic approach can improve reading comprehension skills for seventh graders in Jordan. This previous research is relevant to the topic of reading comprehension using a holistic approach. However, there are also some gaps between previous research and current research. The current study describes the process reading comprehension activities in young learners based on a holistic approach with a qualitative design and using instruments such as observation, a questioners, and interviews with several participants.

