CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents (1) background, (2) research problems, (3) research objectives, and (4) significance of the study.

1.1. Background

Nowadays, English is used in some fields of human life. Harmer states that English is used in all of the parts of human life such as, in the fields of arts, science, human social, international trades and diplomatic relations (as cited in Astrid, 2011, p. 176). Furthermore, English is used and has a long-term impact on the development of communication, growing economic and major demographic shifts (Graddol, 2000). Besides, many of the world's top films, books, and music are published and produced in English. Moreover, English is important for access to world media and entertainment (Reddy, 2016). In brief, English is used in some fields of human life to communicate, get information, access technology, media, and entertainment.

In Indonesia, English is the first of foreign language taught to students at the school. There are of the implement of English in Indonesia. Hamra and Syatriana (2010) state that English is the first foreign language in Indonesia. English becomes one of the subjects in the curriculum of education in Indonesia and taught formally from elementary school up to the university level. So, it help the students to have a better understanding of using the language itself. Komaria

adds that English as foreign language gets a place as the first foreign language to be taught and used in Indonesia based on the law on the Indonesia system (as cited in Abrar, Asyrafi, Marzulina, p. 129). Briefly, English is the first of foreign language and has a place to learn in the educational system in Indonesia.

To master English well students have to study four basic language skills of English. There are various reasons why students must learn four basic language skills in English. First, Peregy and Boyle (2001) argue that students should learn four basic languages to develop their own learning and language proficiency by responding verbally as they read, write, speak, listen, and learn in English for functional and meaningful purposes. Second, learning four basic language skills are needed because the students use more than one skill to communicate and all skills at the same time (Jing, 2006). In short, all four skills must be learned by English students to master English properly and correctly.

Among those four skills, reading is one of important skill due to some reasons. The first reason was asserted by Patel and Jain (2008) state that reading is certainly an important activity for expanding knowledge of a language. The second reason, Burt, Peyton, Adam (2003) state that reading is essentially the process of getting important and meaningful information from written language. The third reason, Medina believes that reading is an important skill among other skills since it is an interactive process in which the writer and the reader interact through a text. For academic purposes, reading is important because it is one of the most frequently used language skills in everyday life (as cited in Ariesca and

Marzulina, 2016, p. 24). Therefore, reading skill is needed because it has various causes.

However, despite its importance, reading is considered a difficult skill to be learned. According to Oakhil (2007), reading disability may be characterized by difficulties in single word reading, difficulties in decoding or sounding out words, difficulties in reading sight words, and insufficient phonological processing. In addition, Westwood (2008) also states that the difficulty is due to the limited vocabulary knowledge, lack of fluency, lack of familiarity with the subject matter, the difficulty level of the text (readability), the problem with processing information, and problems in recalling information after reading. Furthermore, Rukmini (2014) argues that student is not interested to read their textbook because the textbook is not accustomed for them, because of long reading text, unfamiliar vocabulary, lack of pre-reading activities activating the students' background knowledge, and repetitive teaching. Therefore, the difficulties in reading include an insufficient amount of vocabulary, lack of understanding of the text, the familiarity of the reading text.

In addition, OECD PISA expresses that reading literacy in Indonesia is known at an unsatisfactory level. In 2009, Indonesia was ranked in the 57 out of 65 countries with a mean score of 402 compared with the OECD mean scope of 493 (OECD, 2010). Indonesia, then, was ranked in the 60 out of 65 countries participating in PISA 2012 with mean was 496 (OECD, 2013). The data clearly reveal that adolescents' reading literacy in Indonesia is still poor compared to those of other countries (as cited in Pitaloka, 2014), (p.1). In addition, based on

the survey by OECD PISA (2016) about reading, it is found that Indonesia is in the 64th rank out of 70 countries. The score was 397 while the OECD PISA average score was 493. From the previous facts, it can be concluded that Indonesia's reading ability is still below average.

Based on my experience in teaching learning activity (PPLK) at SMP Karya Ibu Palembang, I found that most of the students had difficulties in English skill such as reading, listening, speaking and writing. Furthermore, reading skill was the most difficult skills for students. They had low scores in was answering some question related to reading the text. There were only 20% of students could reach 70 as the standard score of *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal* (KKM) on their reading achievement. Most students got 40 to 60 on the average of the class. Besides, I also did an interview to a teacher of English and found that most of the students had some difficulties in reading such as were lack of vocabulary, unfamiliarity with the reading texts and difficulty to find information in a reading text such as contents, summary, and generic structures texts. Then, I also read the lesson plan that was used by the teacher. I found that the teacher only gave an example of how to read aloud to the students, I assume that this is not enough to solve the students' problem in vocabulary. I will use the Schema Activation strategy involving brainstorming to solve the problem in vocabulary. An (2013) states that the schema activation strategy will give the students more attention in vocabulary and basic language points. Then, the teacher only asked the students to underlined difficult words and translated difficult words in Indonesia. This is also not enough to solve the students' problems in the summary and content of the text.

To solve the problems, I will use a certain strategy in schema activation such as give the explanation text based on global meaning and students requires summary after the explanation. Shen (2008) says that the schema activation strategy helps the students to receive the content of text easily and to get summary the text from producing their thinking. Therefore, schema activation is appropriate to improve students' reading comprehension achievement.

In relation to Schema Activation as a strategy in teaching reading, some studies have revealed if Schema Activation can solve the problems of students. It was proven by a research conducted by Fitriani in 2011, who found that the use of the Schema Activation strategy was an effective teaching method to improve the students' reading comprehension of tenth-grade students at SMA YP Unila Bandar Lampung. Secondly, a research conducted by Dewi (2014) showed that the Schema Activation Strategy is a suitable teaching method to improve the students' reading comprehension of eighth-grade students at SMPN I Mlati Sleman. Then, a research conducted by Hastuti in 2014, who found that the use of Schema Activation strategy significantly effective for the students in reading comprehension text of the eighth-grade students at SMPN 1 Surakarta.

Dealing with the explanation of the preliminary study and previous related study, I would like to conduct research entitled "Improving Reading Comprehension Achievement to the Eighth Grade Students at SMP Karya Ibu Palembang by using Schema Activation Strategy".

1.2. Research Problems

The problems of this study are formulated in the following questions:

1) Is there any significant improvement on the eighth grade students' reading comprehension achievement by using Schema Activation strategy at SMP Karya Ibu Palembang?

2) Is there any significant difference on the eighth grade students' reading comprehension achievement between those who are taught by using Schema Activation strategy and those who are not at SMP Karya Ibu Palembang?

1.3. Research Objectives

In accordance with the problems above, the objectives of this study are:

1) To find out whether or not there is a significant improvement on the eighth grade students' reading comprehension achievement by using Schema Activation strategy at SMP Karya Ibu Palembang.

2) To find out whether or not there is a significant difference on the eighth grade students' reading comprehension achievement between those who are taught by using Schema Activation strategy and those who are not at SMP Karya Ibu Palembang.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

This study was expected to give beneficial contributions for some sides: Firstly, it is expected that this study is beneficial for English teacher to develop and improve learners' reading comprehension by using Schema Activation strategy when teaching reading.

Secondly, for students, it will be an effort to improve their reading skill and to solve the students' problems in reading comprehension.

Thirdly, for me, this study was expected to increase the competence and ability in teaching to become a professional educator later.

Lastly, for future researchers, it was expected that this study can be used as a reference to get information about the Schema Activation strategy.