

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

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

### 1.1. Background

As a global language and foreign language, English plays a more important role by people to communicate each other. According to Harmer, English is a worldwide language spoken throughout all parts of life such as in the arts, sciences, human sciences, travel and the social sciences (as cited in Astrid, 2011, p. 176). Then, Graddol states that English is one of the important things that to know by people, because in this era of globalization there is much information written down in English (as cited in Ardiansyah & Djohar, 2012, p. 161). Therefore, English can make people being easier to get more information and knowledge in the process of learning.

In learning English, there are four skills that should be learned by students, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, reading skill has to be given more exposure and practices than listening, speaking, and writing skills. Kyzykeeva states that reading is the most important academic language skill for foreign language students (as cited in Holandiyah & Utami 2015, p. 13). While according to Grabe (1991), reading is an essential skill and perhaps the most vital skill for second language learners to master in academic setting supports it. Afterwards, Nga (2005) explains that “reading is an essential skill for English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) with strengthened reading skills, ESL/EFL

readers will make greater progress and attain greater development in all academic area” (p. 2). Therefore, out of the four English skills, reading can be regarded as especially important because reading is assumed to be the central means for learning new information.

Nowadays, one of the most important ways to get the information from other countries is reading. Theresia (2011) states that reading supports the development of overall proficiency and provides access to crucial information at work and in the school. While, Nezami (2012) explains that:

“reading can be considered as one of the basic ways of acquiring information in our society and in academic settings in particular, because the person who is not able to read well will face serious trouble, especially in what is regarded to be educational and, subsequently, job opportunities” (p. 307).

Therefore, it can be concluded that with reading students can get more information and knowledge, which they have not known yet.

As a part of reading, there is a reading comprehension. Alanis explains that reading comprehension is influenced by a broad range of factors, such as vocabulary knowledge, appreciation for text structure, thinking and reasoning skills, ability to apply reading comprehension strategies, and word reading ability’ (as cited in Mawadda, 2015, p. 58). Comprehension here is meaningful interpretation of printed or written symbols or word that requires a combination of word recognition and emotional interrelated with prior knowledge. While according to Woolley (2010), the main purpose of reading activity is to obtain the overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than just to obtain the meaning from some word or sentences from the text. In short, the students need to

comprehend the idea of what the writers write in the text to achieve the overall understanding.

Considering the importance of reading mentioned above, Indonesian reading achievement is still not satisfying yet. It is proven from the data from PISA (*Programme for International Student Assessment*). Indonesia PISA in reading score result shows that Indonesia's reading level is still below the average score of OECD. Indonesia's mean score of reading is 397, meanwhile the average reading score of OECD in 2016 is 493. Thus, Indonesia is in the 62th ranked out of 70 countries.

The unsatisfactory result mentioned before may be influenced by many factors. It may occur because students found difficulties during reading, Westwood (2008) states that there are eight problems that exist in reading comprehension. They are limited vocabulary knowledge, lack of fluency, lack of familiarity with the subject matter, difficulty level of the text (readability), inadequate use of effective reading strategies, weak verbal reasoning, problem with processing information, and problems in recalling information after reading.

There are factors that affect individuals' capability in learning a language. According to Esser (2006), three main factors for a successful second language (L2) acquisition process can be identified: the motivation of the learner, the exposure to the second language and the learner's efficiency (p. 9). Harmer (2007) states that if students get enough exposure to language and opportunities for its use, then language exposure will take care of itself (p. 52). Then, Peregoy and Boyle (2005) explain that language exposure plays a big role in the learners' production, exposure can

immediately develop a target language and that language comprehension can be result of social interaction with speakers of the target language (as cited in Parina & de Leon, 2013, p. 233). In addition, Reber (1985) explains that through exposure an individual becomes involved in a socialization process, thereby the knowledge, values, and social skills required in learning a second language. From those three theories it can be inferred that exposure is an important way in acquiring a language by doing a contact with other people. Therefore, exposure can be one of the factors, especially for the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students to get access in learning, comprehend, and develop they language in second language acquisition.

According to Magno, Filho, Lajom, Regodon, and Bunagan, (2009), language exposure as the total amount of time, in which an individual has contact with a language, may be in verbal or written form, formal or informal ways of communications and in which the individual may have either an active or a passive role also occurs whenever individuals engage in conversations in the second language with family members, friends, classmates, and colleagues and whenever they read books, magazines, and newspapers written in that language and also whenever they come across information being disseminated in different multimedia sources; or even when they are mere passive listeners in any activity or place in which the second language is being spoken (p. 64). Afterwards, Ismail (1991) states that in the second language, learning exposure is equally important in the first language-learning requirement when the students have the same exposure between first language and second language so greater success may be achieved because,

exposure as one of the conditions in acquiring the first language also has an equally major role in second language learning.

There are some factors to get exposure by the students; they can get English exposure both inside and outside the classroom. In the classroom, students can get English exposure from their lessons, teachers, friends, and the media. Outside the classroom, they can get it from family, neighbourhood, and every social gathering. It is line with Kim (2013) who state that, which are friend, self, mother, father, teacher, school, TV, reading, homework, and playing time (p, 445). Therefore, English language exposure is very important for students relating to the language they learn in the process of learning English.

This phenomenon of English language exposure is also found in SMA N 3 Palembang, as English foreign language students, most of the students have been exposed to English every day, such as from teachers, friends, textbooks, as well as from family members and social gathering. Most of them have taken the course as their activity after school, especially in English courses. Some of the eleventh grade students in SMA N 3 were satisfied with they current reading comprehension achievement. Then, it was also some of the students' were faced difficulties in comprehend the text. It hard for them to understand the content of the text with their prior knowledge, and some of the students just read the text without trying to connect the presented ideas of the text with their thinking patterns, they only focused on some questions present in the text without comprehending the text overall.

Some studies have revealed that there were relationships between effect of language exposure and students competence in reading comprehension achievement. Kim (2013) examined the effect of attitude toward reading toward English language competence. The results showed that exposure to reading in English was significantly related to English language competence and students who read more in English showed better English language competence and then there was a positive effect on English language competence through reading in Korean and English. Besides, Fadhilah (2016) investigated a study about the correlational between English language exposures and students' reading comprehension achievement. It was found out that students had a "medium exposure" of English language and students reading comprehension achievement was "good". Meanwhile, there were positive and very strong correlation between English language exposure and students' reading comprehension achievement.

Referring to the description above, the writer interested in finding out the correlation and influence between English language exposure and reading comprehension achievement of the senior high school students. Since, eleventh grade students of SMA N 3 Palembang were exposed to the English language in their classroom activities, media, and social gatherings. Therefore, I would like to conduct a research entitled "The Correlation between English Language Exposure and Reading Comprehension Achievement of The Eleventh Grade Students of SMA N 3 Palembang."

## **1.2. Problems of the Study**

The problems of this study are formulated into two questions:

- 1) Is there any significant correlation between English language exposure and reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh grade students of SMA N 3 Palembang?
- 2) Does English language exposure significantly influence the reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh grade students of SMA N 3 Palembang?

## **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the problems above, the objectives of this study are:

- 1) to find out whether or not there is any significant correlation between English language exposure and reading comprehension achievement on the eleventh grade students of SMA N 3 Palembang.
- 2) to know whether or not English language exposure significantly influences reading comprehension achievement on the eleventh grade students of SMA N 3 Palembang

## **1.4. Significance of the Study**

It is hoped that this study can answer the questions that concern about the correlation between English language exposure and the students' reading comprehension achievement in SMA N 3 Palembang, especially eleventh grade students. It also hoped that this research could be beneficial for many parties. Firstly, for the students, it can develop their English skills by being more exposed to English in social contact or media and may increase their reading comprehension

achievement in academic. Second, for teachers, these researches hopefully give more information about influence that more exposed to English language can beneficial for students in reading comprehension. Third, for me, the result of this study is expected to give the benefits for her, so she can improve and to enlarge her knowledge that exposed to the English language influence reading comprehension, and can apply this in her life. The last, it also expected that this study would also be useful for the future researchers who are interested in conducting similar study as a reference.



