

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes an overview of this research. It consists of (1) background, (2) problems of the study, (3) objectives of the study, (4) significance of the study.

1.1 Background

English is an international language which is important for all people in this globalization era. Being able to speak in this language can make our communication with each other easier, especially with the people from other countries. According to Richard (2007) and Graddol (as cited in Ardiansyah and Djohar, 2012, p.161), a lot of information is written and delivered using English. Many publication sources such as via online, international television broadcasts and other printed materials are also published in English. Therefore, English has an essential role in life as communication tools to obtain information.

The education system in Indonesia also assumes English is important to be included in the educational curriculum. Komaria said that English was designated as the first foreign language by the Indonesian education system in 1989 (as cited in Abrar, Mukminin, Habibi, Asyraf, Makmur., and Marzulina, 2018, p. 129). English as the foreign language is one of the important subjects in a school. It is supported by Renandya (2007), “English is chosen as a compulsory subject in a school” (p. 115). English subject also included as the one of the subjects in national examination in junior high school until senior high school. It can be

inferred that English is not only important to learn and use in globalization era but also important to be studied in school as compulsory lesson to be their basic in learning foreign language.

English has four skills that must be learned by students. They are reading, listening, writing and speaking. It is explained by Khameis (2006) “the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) naturally appear together in every English class, even in the EFL context” (p. 111). The skills are divided into two kinds; receptive and productive skills. Harmer (2001) states “receptive skills are the ways how people acquire the meaning from the discourse that they are see or hear” (p. 199). The receptive skills are listening and reading. Meanwhile, the productive skills are the active skills which the learners need to produce the language by their own (Masduqi, 2012, p. 63). The productive skills are writing and speaking. In short, in learning English language, the students must learn four skills of English which are receptive and productive skills.

In relation to those four skills, reading is one of the important language skills that must be learned by students. According to Richard (2007) and Pearson (as cited in Amalia, 2015, p.122), reading is the process of building meaning through the reader's knowledge and the text being read. By reading, the students can get much information and knowledge. Reading builds interaction between the text and the reader. So, reading skill can help the students to develop new knowledge, get new information from the text, increase ability, and enlarge the experience.

In Islamic religion, reading is very attentive and important thing. This is stated in surah al-alaq which mentions reading is "iqra". The surah is as follows:

عَلَّمَ الْإِنسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَم (٤) لَذِي عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ (٣) قَرَأْ رَبُّكَ الْأَلِفَ (٢) خَلَقَ الْإِنسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (٥)
(١) قَرَأْ بِسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

Meaning: “Read the name of God that creating. Creating humans are from clod-blood. Read, God is honor that had preached us. God preached human to read some lesson that they don't know yet”.(Al-alaq, verse 1-5).

Iqra was derived from the word qara'a - yaqrau - iqra. That was “read”. In the Qur'an, the word was stem from qara'a has been called several times. The Qur'an itself was derived from the verb qara'a- yaqra'u - qur'an which means that reading or something that is read repeatedly.

Reading is a very important skill in learning English and it is the main key in obtaining information. However, there are some problems in reading ability in Indonesia. It is explained by Program for International Student Assessment(PISA). Based on PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) about reading score which is done every three years by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2016, Indonesia PISA reading score result in 2015 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 is 493. Thus, Indonesia is in the 62th ranked out of 70 countries. Indonesia is ranked 69 out of a total of 76 countries. Chudgar stated that PISA can be used to guide the level and ability of students and the

school environment (as cited in Luschei, 2017, p. 8). So, Indonesia has low ability in reading and this data can be used as a reference to measure the readings' ability.

Based on the preliminary study, I did a written test at MTs Aisyiyah Palembang. The questions consisted of three texts and different structure texts. The average score was 50. Their teacher's opinion about their difficulty in reading comprehension that they did not have good understanding about the text, bad attention while studying and difficult to comprehend contents of the text. In addition, based on student's opinion about their problem in reading comprehension were unknown vocabulary, unfamiliar vocabulary and difficult to arrange the grammar of the text. Thus, it has made them difficult to comprehend the text because they did not know the meaning of the text. So, the average score of students is still low and student's weakness is in vocabulary of the text.

Then, based on the lesson plan or lesson plan from the English teacher, the teacher only provides material and recommends students to create groups, provide exercises and improve them together in class. I think the strategy used by teacher is less effective because the students were bored and difficult to comprehend the material. Whereas, the teacher has a big role in the success of students in learning, Especially in reading comprehension ability. Naimi stated that the teacher has an important role in students one of which must ensure that what the student is doing is correct (as cited in Molnar and Navracsecs, 2017, p. 40). Therefore, the teacher should have different strategy which focused in students' weakness and can be applied to the students to improve their reading comprehension ability.

Contextual redefinition strategy is the teacher-directed pre-reading strategy

which introduces critical lesson vocabulary in context. It encourages students to draw on prior knowledge to predict meanings. Putnam, Bader and Bean said typically new words are encountered in the following sequence: context, isolation and context. What this means is that when readers encounter a word in context that they don't know and they try to figure out its meaning from the context (as cited in Manzo, 1995, p. 236). So, this strategy focuses the reader on the meaning of the word and the meaning of the content in the text.

By having explanation above, I decided to apply contextual redefinition strategy. Contextual redefinition strategy is to assist students with contextual analysis by helping them make educated guesses related to the meaning of a specific word in the reading text. Bean, Readence, and Baldwin (2012) stated that “the benefits of contextual redefinition is trying to identify an unfamiliar word in the text by simply focusing on the word as an isolated element is frustrating, makes for haphazard guessing, and probably is not very accurate” (p. 136). Therefore, contextual redefinition can be useful and effective strategy for the students in the reading comprehension because students will be better prepared to read efficiently and proficiently about text.

Based on the statement above, I intend to conduct an experimental study. Through this study, I interested to find out whether or not contextual redefinition strategy is effective for teaching reading comprehension. The sample for this study would be taken from the eighth grade students of MTs Aisyiyah Palembang. The eighth grade has four classes. They are VIII A until VIII C. I choose this topic because I want to know whether or not contextual redefinition strategy could support the students to achieve their goal in English reading comprehension at MTsAisyiyah Palembang. Hence this study entitled “Teaching Reading

Comprehension by contextual redefinition Strategy to the Eighth Grade Students of MTs Aisyiyah Palembang”

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the background above, I was formulated the problems of the study into the following questions:

- 1) Was there any significant improvement on the eighth grade students' reading comprehension before and after the treatment at MTs Aisyiyah Palembang?
- 2) Was there any significant difference on the eighth grade students' reading comprehension between those who are taught by using contextual redefinition strategy and those who are not at MTs Aisyiyah Palembang?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to find out:

- 1) whether or not there was any significant improvement on the eighth grade students' reading comprehension before and after the treatment at MTs Aisyiyah Palembang.
- 2) Whether or not there was any significant difference on the eighth grade students' reading comprehension between those who are taught by using

contextual redefinition strategy and those who are not at MTs AisyiyahPalembang.

I.4 Significance of the study

The result of this study is expected to give some contributions to several elements, such as teachers of English (professional aspect), English department students (practical aspect), other researchers and for researcher.

For teachers of English at MTs Aisyiyah Palembang, this study will improve teachers' way in teaching English. Especially, in teaching reading comprehension. Contextual redefinition strategy can be a good choice of strategy in teaching reading to students in junior high school. This strategy will be useful for development of teaching and learning English as a foreign language especially teaching reading comprehension.

For students, especially the eighth grades students of MTs Aisyiyah Palembang, it will motivate students to study English. They will be interested in studying English especially in reading. I believe this strategy will be fun and enjoyable while having activity in reading.

For other researchers, this study is expected to be used as an additional source for those who conduct a study on students' reading comprehension.