

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a widespread explanation of the research. It contains the background of the problems, formulation of the problems, operational definitions, aims of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is one of the English skills that has a pivotal role. Reading is a basic and significant skill in the learning process (Abeeleh et al., 2021; Ramadhianti & Somba, 2023). Through reading, people including students can comprehend written materials (Ayu et al., 2021). However, comprehending the written materials through reading is not a simple process. There is a complex process in reading comprehension such as building meaning, making sense of words, sentences, and linked text, the needs of readers' knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical expertise, familiarity with the text, and other factors (Klinger et al., 2015; Pang et al., 2003). In addition, there are five aspects of reading comprehension, such as determining the main idea, finding detailed information, making inferences, identifying references, and grasping the meaning of words which are considered as students' difficulties in understanding the text (Pandiangan et al., 2021). To comprehend what they read, students need understanding.

However, in the Indonesian EFL context, there are eight problems that EFL students face in reading. This is shown by the results of the latest study from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2018, where the reading ability of students in Indonesia scored 371 out of an average of 478 which is classified as level 1 or low (Schleicher, 2018). Specifically, in the aspect of reading comprehension, the students have difficulties in distinguishing between main ideas and supporting ideas in the reading text, summarizing the main ideas of the text, getting the main idea between paragraphs, understanding the topic of the texts from other culture, relating topic with background knowledge, understanding vocabulary, guessing the meanings of some new words, and inferring the text (Abeeleh et al., 2021; Ramadhianti & Somba, 2023). The problems of reading

comprehension among the EFL students were also found, particularly in one of the junior high schools located in Tasikmalaya in the ninth grade.

Based on the pilot study at a research program of MBKM *Mandiri* through pre-observation and pre-interview with the English teacher, it was found that students struggled to grasp the main points of the text, the content of the text, and the language used in context. Furthermore, in the characteristics of students in class, while comprehending the reading texts activities, they tended to be quiet, less interaction with each other, competitive, less able to collaborate with others, and unresponsive. That is why they dislike learning in groups and are less talkative to discuss while comprehending the text. As a result, they are less able to share understanding with each other who is experiencing problems in comprehending the text.

In addition, a pre-test was also conducted to find out the specific problems that students had in comprehending the reading text. Based on the results of the pre-test, seven problems were identified as obstacles for students in understanding reading texts, namely identifying the main idea, detail, vocabulary in the context, expression/idiom/phrase in the context, excluding facts not written (unstated detail), supporting ideas, and making inferences. However, as time passed, it emerged that students were having difficulty understanding the text due to the grammatical features. The findings indicated that only 8 students or 25% of all students were able to acquire criteria of success with an average of 61.94. However, although they acquired the criteria of success, in the learning process, they still found difficulties in comprehending the reading text. Hence, to solve the problems, it is critical to employ the right techniques when teaching reading comprehension. One of which is jigsaw as a cooperative learning technique.

Jigsaw as cooperative learning is a technique in which students work in small groups and help each other to understand and get the meaning of the story through cooperation (Adi & Arifaini, 2017). In addition, it also organizes students' activities in class that make students responsible and depend on each other to succeed (Mutaqin & Haryudin, 2020). It is because there is a need to communicate with each other to fill in missing information and to integrate it with other

information (Namaziandost et al., 2020). Hence, the role of each student and his sense of responsibility is crucial to gain understanding.

Several studies have investigated the use of jigsaw as a teaching technique in English skills. Samad (2018) has found that jigsaw can improve the students' listening comprehension. It was proved by the difference in the mean score of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group is 16.62 while the control group is 0.73. Furthermore, in the research conducted by Namaziandost et al. (2020), it was found that Iranian EFL learners who got treatment using jigsaw in reading comprehension gained higher scores on their post-test with a mean score of 17.99. In addition, Ayu et al. (2021) discovered that pupil's reading skills in five indicators improved when they used the jigsaw technique in senior high school. They also work together more effectively as a result of their discussion. Moreover, Ardianto et al. (2020) researched the effect of a jigsaw that helps students' speaking performance by increasing students' participation in classroom activities. It can be seen from the significant difference in students' speaking performance after the implementation of a jigsaw, with a significance level of .001 ($p < .05$).

Even though several studies have been conducted towards jigsaw used in the classroom, most of them only focus on reading in five indicators, listening, and speaking skills. Most of the methods that were applied in this study were experimental. Therefore, to fill the gap, this study focused on improving students' reading comprehension in eight indicators as problems found using classroom action research with two different cycles. Hopefully, this study provides new insight into how the use of jigsaw can improve students' reading comprehension, especially at junior high school level.

1.2 Formulation of the Problems

Based on the problem, the formulated questions of this research are:

1.2.1 How can jigsaw improve the students' reading comprehension?

1.2.2 To what extent jigsaw can improve students' reading comprehension?

1.3 Operational Definitions

The researcher provides two definitions related to this study to avoid misunderstanding about the terms set out in this study as follows:

1.3.1 Reading

Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a process of constructing meaning in the written text including finding the main idea, detail, vocabulary in the context, expression/idiom/phrase in the context, excluding facts not written (unstated detail), supporting ideas, grammatical features, and making inferences.

1.3.2 Jigsaw Technique

Jigsaw technique is one of the information gap techniques in groups where each member has the responsibility to become an expert in a particular area and also depends on each other to achieve goals.

1.4 Aims of the Research

According to the research questions, this research aims are as follows:

- 1.4.1 To investigate the implementation of the jigsaw in improving students' reading comprehension.
- 1.4.2 To know the improvement of students' reading comprehension using jigsaw.

1.5 Significances of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Uses

This research will enrich the existing theories of the implementation of jigsaw in improving students' reading comprehension.

1.5.2 Practical Uses

This research will provide teachers with a new jigsaw to improve students' reading comprehension.

1.5.3 Empirical Uses

This research will provide empirical insights into how the implementation of jigsaw can improve students' reading comprehension.