CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

My Personal Stance

English is a very important language that has a special place in my heart since I was a little girl. I know the English language when I was in my first year as an elementary school student and that was when I was 6 years old. From the first time I knew English, I have already been interested in it and of course getting a good score in it gave me a push to study more and improve my competence.

I have never thought of English as a hard subject to learn, and thanks to my family that have a really unique background in terms of language use and language learning. Although we live in Indonesia with Indonesia language as our national language. All of family members, including relatives, were able to speak Chinese, especially *Hokkien* which is a traditional language of Chinese people. From the moment I was born, the language I heard and learned was *Hokkien*, because my parents could not speak Indonesia language fluently. My family did not speak Indonesia language at home. This also happened to my brothers and sister, they also started with *Hokkien* as their first language before learning Indonesia language. So, we could conclude that my mother tongue is *Hokkien* and my second language is Indonesia language which I learned when I started going to kindergarten and talked with the teacher and my classmate. I could understand

two languages at once easily and I could also speak in these two languages fluently. As being a bilingual is very natural to me. When I started learning English as a foreign language, I could adapt well and followed the lesson without any difficulty.

My first English teacher also holds a very important key in my love for English. A teacher must not have a favorite student, however my teacher gave me a special treatment like smile more often at me, praise, and if I make a mistake she would correct it kindly, I love it so much and it boosts my spirit up.

Since I moved closer to the English world, I started to change my way of talking in which I sometimes inserted some English words in my repertoire, I also joined a course and learned English deeper than at school. My parents were also very pleased and happy with my grades and development in English, and I know they believe in the future English will be a global language because they indirectly told me that they would love it if I can master English because in the future English will be so important and used to communicate with a lot of people all around the world. They fully supported me when I wanted to learn the English language or do anything related to that and their support really help me out when I was facing some difficulties. The positive effect of family's support that I experienced is in line with what Small (2010) reported that children whose parents are involved with their education tend to perform better in school.

In addition to family support, Hansen and Joe B. (2000) research studies showed that students' performance depends on many factors such as learning facilities, gender and age differences, etc. When I have grown bigger, my parents allowed me to use a computer and I started to learn English from the computer accidentally. As what Ortiz et. Al, (2011) said parents also believe that using computers may increase their children's academic achievement and future job opportunities, my parents also believed in this and supported me with the facility I need and appropriate for my age. Furthermore, Durkin and Barber (2002) also found that computer games have positive impacts on adolescents and these two theories strengthen the belief that computer is indeed a big help for the children to face the future. Since at that time, I was still elementary school, I could not have my own computer: I share the computer with my brothers and sister who have known and learned English much longer than me, and always used the default language of English in operating their cellphone and computer, so it was normal when I started the computer. It was normal when I started the computer, the language popped out was English. At first, I did not realize that using a computer without a single Indonesia language to help me operate it was also a way of learning English and improved my English slowly, especially my vocabulary. As I had never had a computer before, and I had the chance to use it, I felt so excited and my desire to study grew bigger than before. My experience really resonates what Karemera (2003) found that students' performance is significantly correlated with satisfaction with academic environment and the facilities of library, computer lab and etc. in the institution.

Despite all of the positive environments above, I also found some weaknesses. My parents always watched Chinese film, so it was impossible for me to watch Western film with them. To make it worse, my brothers and sister watch Indonesian and a few Western films, because at that time we did not have too many TV channels to watch and our choices were limited; some English movies were also dubbed and so everything was Indonesian. I realized that my exposure to Western movie was so low. I could not learn from TV nor movies.

The limited access to learn English via TV and movies led me to learn English from games which were introduced by my brothers and it was a PlayStation game: this was my first exposure with the English language with a game. The games made me addicted since it was fun, entertaining, and I could not let it go. The game has grown roots in me and has become an important part of my life which I treasure until now, whenever I felt tired or stressed out I play the game to help me relax. I got addicted to it until now, although I have tried to reduce the amount of time I have to play and my parents who had predicted it accurately set a rule, I am only allowed to play the game once a week which was Sunday. The game I played was using English and there are many dialogs when the character started talking with each other the dialogs pop out which used English, to continue playing the game I have to understand what are they talking about, so I searched the meaning through a dictionary and translate it. From this case, I learned how to search unknown words from the dictionary and also how to translate it. Along the way, I did not need the dictionary anymore, I can understand the words and sentence well, although sometimes I used prediction to

predict the meaning of the words I did not know from the context and the situation in the game I play. Suh et al (2010) found that students studying English utilizing online role playing games shows higher score in areas of listening, reading, and writing than those who attend face to face instruction classes.

I have more and more exposure in my journey of life. I started to listen to Western music, even my brother challenged me to listen to the song and write down the lyrics myself, and now I know that was needed to practice my listening skill. However, at that time I was still in a different level with him, I unable to write the lyrics, so I choose to practice singing. I chose a song that I like, then I searched for the lyrics, sometimes my brother gave it to me, and started practice my singing skill which also related to my pronunciation and speaking skills. I mimic that person or character pronunciation of a word when they sang and I tried to make it as identic as possible.

From my own experiences and reflection, I understand that English language exposure is very important, especially the one that the students encounter outside the class and school. Some people may say that playing games are wasting time and it makes the students lazy and get a bad grade, however, it is not 100% true, because in my experience, playing video game really helps me to learn English effectively. This leads to my own curiosity to know the exact activity and stories that second language learners share in dealing with English via informal learning using fun activities such as playing games or watching TV at home. Before going further to formulate my research questions, I would like to highlight what literature says about this issue.

Does Exposure matter in second language acquisition?

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is "a complex field whose focus is the attempt to understand the processes underlying the learning of a second language" (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p.5). The definition should be critically seen at least in three main components. First, it should be noted that the word "second" in SLA does not mean only learning a second language after mastering the first language or mother tongue, but it refers to any languages other than the first language, not necessarily after the first language is acquired as it is in the case of monolingual people. Secondly, though people in general accept learning and acquisition as interchangeable, most experts believe that they are different. Ortega (2014) defines learning as a conscious process, similar to what we find in learning inside the classroom with friends and teacher. It is the normal thing and that is also the only activity that all the people believe as a serious learning process which help the students become smarter. However, acquisition is a subconscious process where an L2 learner involves in any activity of life while learning a second language. Some people claim that other activities aside from school and books are considered as unimportant and even wasting time. Parents usually believe that video game, listening to music, etc. are only for entertainment, nothing important and great will come out of it. If this assumption is true, then why do L2 learners speak a foreign language without formal education in learning that target language. Ortega (2014) refered this phenomenon to Julie, an American married to an Egyptian, who did not study Arabic formally but could achieve native like competence in Arabic. In addition to factors

contributing to the success of acquiring a second language such as age of onset, transferability, aptitude, motivation and affect, literature of SLA claims that language environment also plays a great role (Ortega, 2014). Learners who are exposed to the target language such as in the context of English as a second language (ESL) have greater opportunity to acquire English than those who learn English in EFL (English as foreign language) context.

Krashen (1982) in his seminal book "Principles and Practice of Second Language Acquisition", argued that the studies in SLA are not solid in predicting that exposure always gives positive impact to L2 proficiency. He concludes that "exposure variable are also indirect and not in themselves causative". (p.37) That means that exposure does influence the success but it is indirectly so that a success of L2 proficiency is not directly caused by exposure. An Indonesian who stays in the U.S. does not necessarily speak English better than those who study English in Indonesia. Furthermore, Krashen stated that there are two aspects of exposure: length of residence (LOR) in the target language and reported use of the L2. Those who do not stay in English speaking countries may also have great exposure when they use the target language extensively. In this direction, exposure is a contact or activity that the student has when they are trying to learn or try something. Exposure is said to affect the student's English score improvement and the activities they are exposed to are not only used as an entertainment when they are bored. As what Sundqvist (2009) said that typical spare time activities in English can be listening to music, watching English-

speaking TV programs or films, playing video games, surfing English sites on the Internet, and reading books, newspapers, or magazines in English.

The exposures that the students get outside the classroom wall are a lot but they do not realize it. Forsman's (2004: 173) study stated *Unintentional Learning* term, which is defined as "accidental learning of information without the intention of remembering that information". While Sundqvist (2009) stated the term of *Extramural English* (EE) that allows for any type of situation in which learners come in contact with or are involved in English outside the walls of the English classroom.

The literature in SLA underlies my own experience in learning English in which activities that I did outside the classroom does impact my proficiency. I wonder whether this also resonates among other students nowadays. In this direction, I have found it fascinating that studies in SLA give ways for narrative research (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2014) in which participants' stories in reflecting their experiences in learning a second language can be valid data source of investigation. Due to the limited number of narrative research of SLA which includes Indonesian respondents, this research aims to fill this gap.

1.2   Statement of the Study

Based on my experiences in *personal stance* and literature in SLA*,* I would like to formulate the research questions as follow:

1. What English exposure do the students have outside the classroom which improve their English proficiency?

2. In what way do those activities develop students' proficiency in English?

1.3   Objective of the Study

This study is conducted to find out the kind of English exposure that the students have done outside the classroom which improve their English proficiency, and also the way those activities develop their English proficiency. From this, the writer will get the information of why the students have different English speaking proficiency in the school.

1.4   Theoretical Framework

This study employs Krashen's (1982) model of second language acquisition which denotes the role of exposure as one of causative factors in the success of second language learning. In this model, the main context is naturalistic environment that students are exposed to the target language rather than formal context such as school setting. The naturalistic environment here is extended not only residing in English speaking countries but any situations in which students use English in completing a

task. In this direction, playing games in English, for example, can be a conducive environment in which students are exposed to task in English that they need to complete.

This type of exposure is in line with L1 acquisition in which according to Kennedy (1973), a child who begins to acquire his or her L1 is normally exposed to a rich linguistic environment, consisting of a range of un-simplified adult grammatical and lexical items, many of which are incomprehensible to the child. Krashen has developed Michael Long's theory of interaction in which comprehensible inputs play important factor to the success in L2. How students comprehend the inputs in the naturalistic environment is explored though out this thesis.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Each person has a different kind of activity every day and that also happen to the students and this research will give some informations about what kind of activities or exposure that will benefit the learners. The exposure could be watching a movie, listening to music, talking with friends and parents, etc. They study when they are watching Western movie with subtitles, the western song they listen, when they are outside the classroom they talked English with their friends and parents, and also when they are having a course. From the exposures, we can see that the students are learning English a lot without realizing it. They do all of the activities that involve English and use it in their daily basis and even build

it up as their habit. This proves that the students study and learn English more outside the classroom and the time they spent in class is less than outside. So, the chance that the students expose to English outside the classroom and even outside the school is very high. This research can be used to understand how the outside exposure improve the students English proficiency.

1.6   Limitation and Scope

For this research, the subject involves all the students of grade 11. All of the students will be given the questionnaires which they have to fill based on their daily life activities and habit. After they have finished with the questionnaires, 4 students of grade 11 in a Senior High school who are chosen based on their English score which are 2 High means students who get 90 in their report consistently and 2 Low means students who get 70 in their report consistently will be interviewed about their daily activities.

1.7   Definition of Key Terms

- Impact

Impact is the action of one object coming forcibly into contact with one another; a marked effect or influence. Impact is a concept that is used for many purposes and at all stages of development programming. It affects how a programme is perceived and how people will want to or are expected to be involved. It affects which

programmes get funded and the level of risk a funder is willing to tolerate. It affects how programmes are designed, the strategies they take, and how ambitious they are. It affects the way in which programmes will be judged, who takes the credit and who takes the blame for particular outcomes. It affects what can be learned from one programme and applied to another. It affects the view of the world in which a programme operates.

- Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Second language acquisition (SLA, for short) is the scholarly field of inquiry that investigates the human capacity to learn languages other than the first, during late childhood, adolescence or adulthood, and once the first language or languages have been acquired. It studies a wide variety of complex influences and phenomena that contribute to the puzzling range of possible outcomes when learning an additional language in a variety of contexts.

- Exposure

Exposure is a contact or activity that the student has when they are trying to learn or try something. Exposure will affect the student's English score improvement. Exposures can also be thought of more broadly to include the social contacts, cultural practices, regulations, policies, and laws that people live with every day.

- Narrative Inquiry

  Narrative inquiry is set in human stories. It provides researchers with a rich framework through which they can investigate the ways humans experience the world depicted through their stories. According to Bell (2002), narrative inquiry rests on the assumption that we as human beings make sense of random experience by the imposition of story structures on them.

1.8   Organization of the Study

This study consist of 5 chapters, chapter 1 will talk about the background of the problem, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, theoretical framework, the significance of the study, limitation, and scope, definition of key terms, and organization of the study. While in chapter 2 will be about the related literature and the previous studies of exposure. Chapter 3 talked about research design, population and sample/subjects, instruments, the procedure of data collection, and the technique of data analysis. Chapter 4 will be about the result and discussion of this study, while chapter 5 will talk about the conclusion of this study and the suggestion for the future research.