

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to explain the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, assumption, theoretical framework, limitation, definition of key terms, and organization of the proposal.

1.1 Background of the Study

In learning English, there are four basic language skills and three basic components. The components are vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Meanwhile, the skills are reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Reading becomes one of the most important skills in learning English. According to Pardede (2017), there are three reasons why reading is considered important. First is because the students can perform better in reading rather than in the other skills. They may have poor oral skill or cannot write accurately but they can read well. Such conditions can motivate the students to learn English. Second is reading needs fewer requirements. Different from speaking which needs a partner or writing that needs guidance, reading only needs text and motivation. Third, when the students know how to read well, they can perform better at their studies as well.

At the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya, the students are trained to become a teacher. Therefore, the ability to read in English is essential. As a teaching education program, English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University provide some pedagogic practical knowledge and teaching practice.

Other subjects include, among others, reading, writing, listening, and speaking. One particular subject is intensive or integrated course provided for students at semester one. Besides Intensive Course, the department also provide the students with various subjects such as linguistics (Introduction to Linguistics, English Phonology, Morphology and Syntax, and Discourse Analysis), English Literature (Drama, and Prose and Poetry), PPD (*Perkembangan Peserta Didik*), Curriculum for Primary and Secondary Edition, TEFL (Teaching English as Foreign Language) one and two, TEYL (Teaching English for Young Learner), language Testing, Professional Ethic, Micro-Teaching, Teaching Practice, Research Methodology, Seminar on Thesis Proposal, and Thesis.

Moreover, the materials taught here are mostly written in English. The students have to read lots of journals and reading passages in English. Therefore, the students must be able to read and comprehend the passage well in order to keep up with the lessons. By reading, the students can also enrich their vocabulary because it helps them to develop their understanding from the passage. Moreover, students will get a lot of benefits when they are able to get the main idea of a reading text. They can improve their information processing skill which is needed in learning English.

To make the students improve their information processing skill, the first semester students who are studying at the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University must take Intensive Course. Intensive Course is a 12-credit subject which has to be taken by all first semester students at English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya. This subject provides the students with the basic knowledge of four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and three language components

(grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) to prepare them for their study in English Department of Widya Mandala University Surabaya as the learning materials are written in English. This 12-credit subject course has its additional compulsory program called Independent Study at three laboratories: SAC, Digital Language Laboratory, and ED-R2 laboratory.

The students are expected to have good reading skill. However, not all the students are able to read well. Therefore, the department provided additional reading exercises outside the classroom to help them improve their reading skill in a laboratory called English Department Reading and Writing Laboratory (ED-R2).

ED-R2 Laboratory which is known as English Department Reading and Writing Laboratory is one of the language laboratories provided by the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya. It is a language laboratory specialized in reading and writing. This laboratory helps the first semester students of English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya to enhance their reading and writing skills by giving them additional (intensive) reading exercises as one of the requirements to pass Intensive Course.

The Intensive Course students are obligated to complete the independent study every week for the first semester. ED-R2 independent study's materials are taken from an English textbook entitled "LIFE" The assignments used only the reading and vocabulary part. The laboratory assistant will provide a copy of each assignment.

At the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya, some studies have been conducted on the students' perception related with Micro-

Teaching Course (Andini, 2018; Dayinta, 2015; Setyaningrum, 2016) and Teaching Course (Tamah, 2013, 2018). Perception on language laboratories such as perception on SAC (Agustia, 2016), perception on the Digital Language Laboratory (De Rozari, 2017) and perception on ED-R2 lab (Kristantiana, 2009) were also conducted at the department. With regard to the perception on ED-R2 assignment, there is no study related to ED-R2 assignments. Therefore in order to find out the English Department students' perception on ED-R2 assignments, the writer conducted this study. The writer hopes that the result of this research might be useful for the improvement of the ED-R2 Assignment

1.2 Research Question

In accordance with the title and the background of the study, a research question is formulated as follows:

- What are the perceptions of English Department students on ED-R2 Assignments?

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study is aimed at finding out the perceptions of English Department students on ED-R2 Assignments.

1.4 Significance of the Study

- For the Head of ED-R2 Laboratory

This study is expected to gain information about English Department students' perception on ED-R2 assignments so that the head of ED-R2 laboratory can evaluate the program and the material.

- For further research

This study is expected to be an information source for another researcher with a similar topic.

1.5 Assumption

This study assumes that all students at the English Department Widya Mandala Surabaya have their own perception on the assignments provided at English Department Reading and Writing Laboratory

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study focuses on finding out English Department students' perception on ED-R2 assignments. In this study, the writer uses the theory of reading, extensive reading, intensive course, and independent study. The writer also gives a brief description of ED-R2 Laboratory at the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya as it is where the assignment is given. In order to find out the students' perception, the writer also includes the theory of perception in this study.

1.7 Limitation

This study is to survey the perception of the students who have passed Intensive Course Program in the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya on doing ED-R2 assignment. The subject of this study is all students from

academic year 2018/2019 who have passed the Intensive Course Program. This study is limited to find out the English Department students' perception on the ED-R2 assignments.

1.8 Definition of the Key Term

- Reading

Palani (2012) defines reading as a process of thinking, evaluating, judging, reasoning, and problem-solving.

- Intensive Course

Intensive Course, a 12 credit program, is one of the compulsory subjects that must be taken by the students at the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya.

- ED-R2 laboratory

ED-R2 (English Department Reading and Writing laboratory) is a language laboratory belonging to the English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya where the English Department students learn reading and writing to improve their reading and writing skills.

Reading assignments

The assignments refer to form of reading comprehension exercises which the English Department students have to complete every week.

- Perception

According to Andrej (2013) in Setyaningrum (2018) perception in general can be defined as human ability to recognise and interpret sensory information and how they respond to it.

1.9 The Organization of the Thesis

This study consists of three chapters. Chapter 1 covers the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, assumption, theoretical framework, limitation, definition of key terms, and organizational of the proposal.

Chapter 2 is about the review of related literature and previous studies. There are some sections in this chapter. They cover the followings: theories of reading, extensive reading, intensive course, and independent study. Then, it is followed by the previous studies.

Chapter 3 is about research method. This chapter contains the research design, the respondents, the instruments, the procedure of data collection, and the techniques of data analysis. The research design tells the reader the form of research that the writer uses to conduct his research. The instrument is the tool which the writer uses in collecting the data, the procedure of data collection shows the steps in data collection. The last is the technique of data analysis.

Chapter 4 is about findings and discussion. It presents the results of the analysed data and the discussed findings

Chapter 5 is about conclusion and suggestion. This section shows the conclusion for this study and some suggestions for future readers and the next writers