Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter discusses several things underlying the research. It serves the introduction of the research which includes the background of the research and statement of the problem that are discussed to find out about the reason why the researcher conducted this study. Furthermore, this chapter also discusses the research questions to find the objectives of the research. In the end of this chapter, significances of the research are provided for those who may take benefits from this study.

Background of the Research

Reading is one of the essential activities in students' life. It is a source of information and a source of learning for them in studying. Through reading, students can get to know other places and other times, into other things that they previously do not know for a wide range of experience and gain some knowledge. However, they do not intentionally learn how to read. It is because not all of them are aware that reading is something they need to learn. Reading has to be learned and taught for the better understanding in reading since the early age. The environment of a child is an important role in developing the reading habits. Flores as cited in Fernández-Blanco, Prieto-Rodríguez, and Suarez-Pandiello (2017) explained that family environment has a big number of influence in particular on reading habits of children and teenagers. Furthermore,

encouragement from parents, teachers, and people nearby are also the essential things in conducting a child's reading habits.

The current reading approach introduced by experts is extensive reading. Bamford and Day (2004) addressed that extensive reading is a reading to practice the skill of reading by reading the context with pleasure and not under the pressure to read. It implies students to improve comprehension by reading in enjoyment and processing language faster. The aim of this approach is not necessarily to learn new knowledge, even though they may gain some, but to build reading fluency. In addition, extensive reading must be done in a condition where a learner chooses their own interest of text, enjoys the reading, feels no pressure, and reads whenever he or she wants to.

Nowadays, the increasing popularity of extensive reading program in the hope for enhancing reading habit has been implemented with different characteristics. Despite the common characteristics of the extensive reading, one of the ten characteristics is that "reading is individual and silent" (Bamford & Day, 2004). One program with another program has different characteristics and different contexts. A basic implementation of extensive reading is done by learners individually and only for themselves. A research study conducted by He and Green (2012) has shown the benefits and challenges of an extensive reading program in a Shanghai senior high school. This program was aimed to engage students in a large number of exposure. They found that through this program, students improved their reading interest and reading speed. However, the challenges were also found in this program because this approach is not common

for Chinese students. They are unwilling readers, the role of the teachers change, the classroom behavior changes, and there is a pressure on the academic context.

An extensive reading program is currently running at a private university in Yogyakarta. The teacher who organized the program said that the program is called Reading Date which required students to read silently, to have reading mates, and to share their thoughts on the book they read. It is implemented for students from batch 2017 in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context. The Reading Date is conducted in the campus environment or wherever the students prefer to read. The Reading Date has nine weeks in a semester and five minutes in the first meeting then plus five minutes in the next meeting and every meeting. Despite the different characteristics in the implementation, the benefits of this extensive reading program may be shown differently from the other extensive reading programs. However, the implementation of extensive reading program is still uncommon in Indonesia. In addition, according to the popularity of extensive reading in enhancing reading fluency, the researcher conducted this study.

Identification and Limitation of the Problem

The affective skills of students might appear during Reading Date as both benefits and challenges. In the Reading Date, the students read individually, hence, at the same time they read in one place and at the same time. They need to engage with others and share what they have gotten from their reading to their reading mates. For those students who are confident, they do not have difficulty in sharing. However, these students who have a lack of confidence experience discomfort in the sharing section.

Based on the researcher's experience, the challenges in the extensive reading program is mainly because of the individuals themself. For example, a student is reluctant to read in the first place. For some people, if since the early age there is no practice in reading, it appears that reading is an undesirable activity to do. They also tend to think that reading is not a fun activity and is a boring one. Another thing is that people like everything in an instant. Reading is an activity which takes time, and for people who like instant things, they do not want to struggle. People who do not like to read think that reading costs too much. It is because they do not want to spend on books that will only be used once. Even though they can afford it, they think it will waste their money. It is easy to just go straight to the library, but libraries do not provide much. In Indonesia for example, materials in the library are limited and the environment also do not support reading.

To make this study deeper, the limitation of the problem is presented by the researcher. The main focus is on the students' perception on the implementation of an extensive reading program which covers the benefits as well as the challenges faced by students in the implementation of an extensive reading program in English Language Education Department of a private university in Yogyakarta.

Research Question

The key point of this research focuses on the extensive reading program for the freshman students of English Language Education Department of a private university in Yogyakarta. Based on the identification of the problem above, the

researcher formulated two research questions. The following are the research questions:

1. What are the benefits of joining Reading Date as a program of extensive reading as perceived by the students?

2. What are the challenges of joining Reading Date as a program of extensive reading as perceived by the students?

The Objectives of the Research

After formulating the problem in a form of research question, the researcher started this study which is aimed at:

1. Investigating the benefits of joining Reading Date as a program of extensive reading as perceived by the students.

2. Investigating the challenges of joining Reading Date as a program of extensive reading as perceived by the students.

The Significances of the Research

There are several significances of this research. The following are the category of significances of this research.

The students. The result of the research would give information concerning extensive reading for other students. Through knowing the benefits of the extensive reading program, students may be encouraged and also motivated to join the program. Therefore, after knowing the challenges, students can minimize the challenges in joining an extensive reading program in the future.

The lecturers. The result of the research will give lecturers out there information about the references for extending extensive reading activities. The

result also can give the lecturers a description of the program and later on give some ideas in conducting an extensive reading program. Furthermore, by knowing about the challenges, lecturers as the provider and the guide can avoid the challenges shown in the extensive reading program.

Other researchers. The result of the research will give references for the next researchers who have concerns on the extensive reading program. It comprehends them about how to conduct other studies about extensive reading program.

The program. The result of the research will help the program to improve students' quality by overcoming the students' challenges in joining is elaborated in this research. Other than that, the fact that program could still be implemented by optimizing benefits that students' obtained is also shown in the research.