

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Pleasure reading is a very beneficial hobby to have. Bridges (2014) says that a lot of our respected figures and leaders are avid readers and it is hard to find successful people who are not. A book by Strong et al. (2002) entitled *“Reading for Academic Success: Powerful Strategies for Struggling, Average, and Advanced Readers, Grades 7-12”* has discussed the relation between reading with academic success and reading strategies. Reading habits can influence academic success. Balan, Katenga, and Simon’s (2019) study regarding reading habits and their influence on academic achievement among students at Asia Pacific International University has stated that students with habits of reading academic and non-academic materials have better academic outcomes.

It is not easy to develop reading habits. Many researchers have tried to develop a way to improve reading habits and one type of reading habit that can help it is reading for pleasure (Maharsi, 2019). Clark and Rumbold (2006) define reading for pleasure or pleasure reading as reading that we do with our own free will expecting a sense of satisfaction from the act of reading itself. It also includes continuing to read what was started from someone else’s request because we are interested in it. They explain that reading for pleasure could impact not only the educational aspect but personal development as well. Pleasure reading increases vocabulary skills, forms background knowledge that is useful in any content area, forms reading comprehension, and has been proved to increase our understanding

of human behavior and make us able to empathize with other people (Murphy, 2013). These are some of the studies that discuss the benefits of pleasure reading. Elley and Mangubhai (1983) started the study on the effects of pleasure reading on second language acquisition. They find that pleasure reading can help people in second language acquisition. The finding is supported by Pilgreen and Krashen (1993) and Chang and Krashen's (1997) study with the same topic and a similar finding. Reiter's (2003) study examines the effectiveness of SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) to increase the reading comprehension and motivation of high school students of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). And also, Attiyat, N. M. A. (2019) study with the positive impact of pleasure reading on enhancing writing achievement and reading comprehension.

Indonesia's lack of reading culture and habits has been shown in many surveys (Wibowo 2015). A study was done by Maharsi (2019) with High School Students of Sleman Yogyakarta shows that they also have a low interest in pleasure reading. The subject of this study, the student in SMAN 1 Pare is no exception either. Despite the benefits of pleasure reading, no program that supports it has been implemented in any school in Indonesia either. Sugiharto (2009) states that the power of reading in general and free voluntary reading, in particular, is not acknowledged by Indonesian scholars, politicians, and language teaching practitioners. And that the demand for this kind of reading in the curriculum is almost non-existent. This situation also applied in SMAN 1 Pare. No reading programs have been implemented or encouraged in the school itself.

The study that proves the benefits of pleasure reading to academic success had been done by many researchers. Galik (1999) has explained the connection between academic achievement and the time spent on pleasure reading by college students in their vacation. Howard's (2011) study states that pleasure reading enhanced the academic performance of young teens. Cupp et al (2014) study focuses on the relationship between pleasure reading, textbook reading, and academic success and it finds out that pleasure reading does have a beneficial impact on the students' academic success. Mary and Joseph's (2015) study states that pleasure reading helps readers score high on tests as it promotes both practical and linguistic knowledge. The study by Sullivan et al. (2016) has examined the impact of pleasure reading on students' academic success and how the educator thinks about pleasure reading. It researched the impact of pleasure reading on academic success and proves that pleasure readers have better academic scores than non-pleasure readers.

Waring & Nation (2004) mentions that a strong connection between pleasure reading, vocabulary acquisition on foreign language, and morpho-syntax has been identified. Pleasure reading can help foreign readers in establishing the foundations required to learn the literacy and the comprehension of the language with the experiences learned in pleasure reading and drawing the foreign sociocultural setting of the language (Abbiss, 2016). Studies by Elley and Mangubhai (1983), Pilgreen and Krashen (1993), and Chang and Krashen (1997) have proved that Pleasure reading can help people in English acquisition. Chomsky (1965) and Krashen (1981) explain that the success rate of learning English is always different

from person to person, some people may be more successful than others in learning it even when they started at the same time. Many factors contribute to the success of learning English. One of those factors is the ability to comprehend things that are different for each person. Someone who has higher comprehension skills is more likely to be successful than someone who has lower comprehension skills. Pleasure readers can have a higher chance of success in learning English since pleasure reading helps build comprehension skills. A lot of the other's positive impact of pleasure reading as mentioned before can also be the foundation when learning English.

In Indonesia itself, there are journals regarding pleasure reading such as Sugiharto's (2009) journal that discusses pleasure reading as a recommended pedagogy in Indonesia and Maharsi's (2019) journal that discusses what high school students think regarding pleasure reading and their past reading habit. Research regarding the positive effect of pleasure reading in Indonesia has not been conducted yet. With the development of the international current of technology and commerce in Indonesia, English as the most frequently used language of the world today is highly demanded (Weda, 2014). English has been the first foreign language taught in Indonesia and had become a compulsory school subject in the state curriculum. And Indonesia has been using a nationwide standardized English school examination to evaluate the students' English competency since the 1950s (Dardjowidjojo, 2000). It uses a multiple-choice format that is argued to be a powerful tool for evaluating the success of students' learning (Education & Culture Department, 1996). Further studies are needed to confirm the benefits of pleasure

reading to English learners in Indonesia. By doing this study we will be able to know whether English non-academic pleasure reading will have a positive or negative impact on the English score in Indonesia. It will be beneficial to those who learn English, teachers, and researchers in the same area. We will also be able to know if there are any similarities or contradictions between research that had been conducted overseas and the research that will be conducted in Indonesia.

The purpose of this study is to apply the theory that pleasure reading has a beneficial impact on English language learners in Indonesia. The subject of this study is SMAN 1 Pare students. Pare is known as English Village (Kampung Inggris). There is a lot of English tutoring centers in Pare, and it is the city to go to when you want to learn English. With this variable, the student in SMAN 1 Pare has a higher chance of having pleasure reading habits, especially on English text. Pleasure reading is not only limited to academic text such as essays, book reports, and academic journals. Even non-academic texts such as short stories, novels, or news can have a positive impact as well (Krashen, 1993). This study would like to find out the reading habits of the high school students in Pare and whether the student who read non-academic English text for pleasure have a higher score in English than non-pleasure readers to prove its benefits.

1.2 Statements of the Problems

Based on the background of the study, the writer formulates the problems as follows:

1. Do the students at SMAN 1 Pare have pleasure reading habits?
2. Do the reading habits of 11th grade students of SMAN 1 Pare impact their

English scores?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the research question of this study, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To know the pleasure reading habits of the students at SMAN 1 Pare.
Whether the students have pleasure reading history or not, and regarding their perception on pleasure reading.
2. To test whether there is a difference between the English score of the students with pleasure reading history and the students with no pleasure reading history.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study is expected to give insights for researchers of the same field and readers as well as to provide some contributions in linguistics, specifically in English Language Teaching (ELT) and its relation to Pleasure Reading in Indonesia. This study is expected to provide an explanation about the impact of English non-academic pleasure reading on the English score of 11th grade students of SMAN 1 Pare in Indonesia.

Practically, this study is expected to provide evidence of pleasure reading benefits to researchers, teachers, as well as readers who are learning English. This study hopes to prove the beneficial impact of pleasure reading in English Language Teaching to encourage developing pleasure reading habits as it has many positive impacts in many areas. Hopefully, this study can also be beneficial to other researchers for further studies.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

The writer gives the definition of key terms related to the research as follows.

- *Reading Habits*: Reading that is frequently carried out is measured by the materials read and time spent on it (Wagner, 2002).
- *Pleasure Reading*: One type of reading habit, and is a reading done with our own volition and will bring us joy and satisfaction for doing it (Clark and Rumbold, 2006).
- *English Score*: The English score here is from the nationwide standardized English school examination that evaluates the students' English competency using a multiple-choice format that is argued to be a powerful tool for evaluating the success of students' learning (Education & Culture Department, 1996).