

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This section will discuss the background of the study, statements of the problem, research objectives, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and systematical writing. All the sections will be explained below:

A. Background of Study

English itself is very crucial and has become an international necessity. Parents believe that learning English for children at an early age is very important, because this is the golden age for children to gain knowledge about language.¹ As a result, they would more easily grasp and accept new knowledge, including knowledge about language. They would more easily grasp and accept new knowledge and knowledge about language. It is a very vital requirement for the future of children, both in education and in the world of work. Especially as time goes on, the development of increasingly sophisticated technology must make English as the language of instruction, which is very crucial.² Students who will later continue their education to the middle and upper levels really need basic knowledge of English. So, they will not be surprised later when English subjects are required for junior high school and high school students.³

As more and more parents realize that learning English is essential for future academic and professional success, there is a new trend to enroll their children in out-of-school or private English courses at home. As English is no longer a compulsory subject in primary schools today, this

¹ Kuntum Trilestari, Ria Maya Lestari Manurung, Venny Nurcahaya Simangunsong, The Benefits of Learning English in Early Childhood: Positive and Negative Effect, Journal of Study Programme (ESTEEM), (Palembang:2024), p.669

² Arina Hafadhotul Husna, Rahayu Tri Murtini, *A Study on Students' Motivation in Learning English as English Foreign Language (EFL) at STIKES Cendekia Utama Kudus*, English Education: Journal of English Teaching and Research, (Kududs: 2019), p.208

³ Gina Chintya Zazalmi, "Supporting Children Learning English as a Foreign Language in Koto Padang, Dharmasraya", in *Solving Young Learners' Problem in Learning English*, ed. Loli Safitri, Ruang Karya, (Banjar:2022), p.147-148

move is considered all the more important. Parents are concerned that their children will miss the opportunity to build a strong foundation in English if they do not receive additional tutoring. This foundation is crucial for access to the next level of education and the workplace in the future. Parents believe that enrolling their children in tutoring or language courses will help them get additional, more focused guidance, especially in mastering English language skills, which are often a challenge in formal education. Parents are keen to trust tutoring organization that help their children learn better than they can at school.⁴ They consider this a strategic move to give their children a competitive edge in the future.

One of the English language tutoring centers that has spread all over the world is Kumon. Kumon, or Kumon Educational Japan Co. Ltd, is a non-formal tutoring institution founded by Toru Kumon in 1958 in Osaka, Japan, and developed with a franchise system.⁵ Basically, English is not the main subject taught in Kumon, but Maths is. The founder wanted to find a method to solve the learning problems experienced by his son, Takashi, an elementary school student. As Math teacher and father, he wanted to construct his own method for his son in order to get him easy understanding and learn effectively by designing a model or learning system.⁶ Thus, the Kumon method was born, which has spread in 51 countries with more than four million two hundred thousand students who are studying the method. As time went on, Kumon made English as the second focus of the Institute, as English is considered the key to success that needs to be learnt and mastered, through its slogan "Bring Success".

Kumon has a unique learning method, which sets it apart from other educational institutions. Therefore, the researcher decided to choose Kumon

⁴ Siti Nur Halimah, *Peranan Bimbingan Belajar Nurul Fikri Pamulang Dalam Membantu Siswa Lulus Seleksi Masuk PTN*, Skripsi Repository Uin Jakarta, (Jakarta:2019), p.3

⁵ Andhika Pratama Ardiansyah, Solikhah Yulianingtyas, *Analisis Semiotika Iklan Kumon "Bring Success"*, Journal Communication Specialist Vol.1 No.2, (Surabaya: 2022), p.238

⁶ Ade Indah, *An Analysis of Students' Autonomous Learning to Develop Their English Ability at Kumon Institution of Education*, Tugas Akhir Strata II, Universitas Jambi, (Jambi: 2023), p.17

as the object of this study. By using an individual or autonomic approach, Kumon provides education to each student according to his or her own ability and pace rather than by age or grade level. This allows students to understand topics thoroughly without putting them under excessive pressure. Kumon's English program also aims to help students improve their reading, grammar and vocabulary skills gradually through consistent self-practice. It differs from other educational institutions that still use traditional methods because of its focus on mastering strong fundamentals and encouraging students to learn on their own.⁷ This method is especially beneficial for children learning English as it helps them cultivate deeper understanding, self-learning, concentration skill, study habits, self-confidence and motivation.⁸

Kumon in Indonesia focuses on three learning programs: Math, English, and Indonesian. In English language learning program, Kumon provide the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) class program is designed for children whose primary language is not English and learning it as a foreign language. Students will gain a better understanding of the basics of English, moreover in reading skills through the materials offered in this program. In countries such as Indonesia, Japan, Korea and others where English is not the primary language, this program is very popular. Kumon Learning Institute started creating English lessons known as EFL class specifically for students from nations whose mother tongue is not English, like Indonesia, after realizing that English was becoming more widely used as a foreign language and that kids were learning it.⁹ EFL class at Kumon is

⁷ Ade Indah, *An Analysis of Students' Autonomous Learning to Develop Their English Ability at Kumon Institution of Education*, Tugas Akhir Strata II, Universitas Jambi, (Jambi: 2023), p.18

⁸ L. Orcos, R. M. Hernández-Carrera, M. J. Espigares, Á. Alberto Magreñán, *The Kumon Method: Its Importance in the Improvement on the Teaching and Learning of Mathematics from the First Levels of Early Childhood and Primary Education*, MDPI Journal Mathematic, (Spain:2019), p.4

⁹ Maya Anisa Farani, Santi Farماسari, Muh. Isnaini, *An Analysis of the Influences of Kumon Learning Method Toward the Learning of English as A Foreign Language*, Journal of English Education Forum, (Mataram:2024), p.48

a program especially for children whose mother tongue or primary language is not English.

Due to the pressure on students to learn English fluently and the intense competition to be accepted into more prestigious universities, many of them see Kumon Courses as a solution to meet their aspirations. This is consistent with the assumption that "a child's language environment will determine the quality and quantity of the language they speak." The first Kumon Method class in Indonesia was opened in 1991, and the method has since spread to 50 countries and regions, including various areas across Indonesia. As of December 2016, 4.26 million children have been taught at Kumon.¹⁰

In fact, the existence of English is very important in various aspects, especially globalization and international language communication. The concept of language learning consists of four basic aspects that form the foundation of the learning process. These four concepts are listening, reading, speaking and writing. According to Nunan, reading is a fluent process where readers blend information from the text with their background knowledge to create meaning.¹¹ It defines the reading comprehension process, in which readers actively interact with the text by integrating the information provided with their past knowledge and experiences to produce meaning. Skilled readers perform reading comprehension in a fluent, efficient, and automatic manner.

Furthermore, based on Anderson et al., reading is a technique for deciphering the meaning of a text by integrating one's background Reading knowledge to construct meaning.¹² According to Tarigan in Panjaitan,

¹⁰ Rumanti Yuliasih, Suparno Eko Widodo, Makruf Akbar, *Evaluation of Implementation Kumon Method*, International Journal of Advanced Engineering and Management Research, Vol. 3 Issue 3; 2018, p.212

¹¹ David Nunan, *Teaching English of Speaker to Other Language*, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p.21

¹² Neil J. Anderson, *Metacognitive Reading Strategy Awareness of ESL and EFL Learners*, The Catesol Journal 16.1, (Utah:2004), p.12

reading is a process in which a reader obtains the message conveyed by the author through written language.¹³ This process involves using the brain to think and reason out, combining word recognition with prior knowledge to understand the meaning of the written text. Meanwhile, according to Goodman in Banditvilai, reading as an active process in which readers use effective strategies to extract meaning from a text.¹⁴ Thus, reading is an important skill that everyone must possess, because through reading, we can convey information clearly and accurately.

Not to mention the demands of work, especially in companies that have been categorized as advanced and well-known, making English language skills a requirement for entry into the world of work. This is very important because English is an essential life skill in the era of the workforce and globalization, in addition to being an academic subject. If students are proficient in speaking English early on, they will have a strong foundation for understanding more complex concepts in later levels of education.¹⁵ The teachers also said that teaching English at the primary level enhances creativity, problem solving, critical thinking and other cognitive skills. They believe that learning approaches that involve interactive communication and vocabulary enrichment can increase students' confidence in using English. English has been widely used by students, teachers, and researchers worldwide because it is the primary language used in many educational fields and the only language in which information is stored in books and journals in both printed and electronic formats.¹⁶ In addition, learning

¹³ Tarigan, in *The Student's Reading Problems in Private School in Pematangsiantar*, ed. Limsardo Panjaitan, Nengsih P W Siahaan, Veronica A Tampubolon, Novyta Sipayung, Selviana Napitupulu, International Journal of Education and Humanities (IJEH), (Pematangsiantar:2022), p.25

¹⁴ Goodman, in *The Effectiveness of Reading Strategies on Reading Comprehension*, ed. Choosri Banditvilai, International Journal of Social Science and Humanity, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2020, p.47

¹⁵ Titin Kustini, *Teacher Perspective: English at Elementary School, is it Necessary or not*, Journal of English Language Learning (JELL), Vol. 5 No 2, 119-123, (Majalengka:2021), p.122

¹⁶ Parupalli Srinivas Rao, *The Role of English as a Global Language*, Research Journal of English (RJOE), (Saudi Arabia:2019), P.73

English early allows students to have greater access to international educational resources, such as articles, videos and online platforms based around the world, which opens up more learning opportunities.

English is still considered a frightening spook for students and all that makes them reluctant to learn English. Still, several students claim that learning English is challenging, and they have complicated explanations for this.¹⁷ The demands of the increasingly sophisticated technological world and the increasingly dominating era of globalization, contradict the basic knowledge of English that they get at school. This phenomenon makes them also lose their interest and enthusiasm in learning English. Not to mention, not all parents have the ability and potential to teach their children English at home. As a result, there are various opinions and solutions that parents take from all these problems with the aim of developing the potential and ability of their children in English. One of them is by enrolling their children in Kumon tutoring institution.

Several researchers have investigated the subject of Kumon, and we will briefly describe their research. The first research is that Kumon's English program aims to help students become more independent and responsible for themselves. It differs from traditional classroom teaching approaches in that it does not rely on direct teaching. Instead, students are provided with organized materials, worksheets and guidance so that they can learn at their own pace.¹⁸ The second study investigated the methods of teaching English at Kumon. Specifically, it examined the curriculum, learning strategies, learning materials, learning media and assessment procedures used at the English course. By concentrating on more than just Kumon's learning approach, the researcher delved deeper into the process

¹⁷ Ade Indah, *An Analysis of Students' Autonomous Learning to Develop Their English Ability at Kumon Institution of Education*, Tugas Akhir Strata II, Universitas Jambi, (Jambi: 2023), p.9

¹⁸ Ade Indah, *An Analysis of Students' Autonomous Learning to Develop Their English Ability at Kumon Institution of Education*, Tugas Akhir Strata II, Universitas Jambi, (Jambi: 2023), p.18

of teaching English at Kumon.¹⁹ Their research discusses self-directed learning and English language teaching practices, using qualitative methods. Whereas, the research that the author writes here focuses on the description of the Kumon program on students' reading comprehension skills in foreign language classes.

From the explanation above, the reason why the author chose Kumon as the tutoring institution to be used as the object of research is that this institution has been established since 1958 and has been widely spread in various parts of the world. Given that English is one of the topics that students find most challenging as well as the growing need for proficiency in the language in both education and the workforce, parents may assume that their children are searching for extra help outside of the classroom. Given the high standards parents have for the quality of education in schools, particularly when it comes to EFL, many parents enroll their kids in Kumon courses to try to address the issue.²⁰ In Indonesia itself, there is a Kumon course in almost every region, so this is proof that Kumon is a tutoring institution that has a very strong appeal, thus generating the interest of parents to enroll their children in this tutoring institution. Kumon also has a consistent, structured and tested learning method, the 'Kumon Method'.

Unfortunately, out of the many previous studies in Kumon, the researcher only found a few studies that focused on reading comprehension skills in EFL classes. The previous studies that discussed Kumon were mostly related to mathematics programs. Of the 70 articles published with the keyword 'EFL reading comprehension', only one article discussed reading comprehension skills in Kumon EFL classes directly, then of the 97 articles with the keyword 'Kumon learning method in EFL' only twelve

¹⁹ Inggrit Betrika Trihapsari, *Practice of Teaching English in Kumon Course Tulungagung*, Tugas Akhir Strata I, Institute Agama Islam Negri Tulungagung, (Tulungagung:2021), p.6

²⁰ Inggrit Betrika Trihapsari, *Practice of Teaching English in Kumon Course Tulungagung*, Tugas Akhir Strata I, Institute Agama Islam Negri Tulungagung, (Tulungagung:2021), p.7

articles discussed the Kumon learning method in EFL classes according to Google Scholar searches conducted by researchers. As for articles discussing the 'Kumon program in mathematics' out of more than 100 articles, there are more than 50 articles that discuss this material. This shows that, especially in Indonesia, research that focuses on the English language field of reading comprehension skills in EFL classes is still very lacking and rare. As evidence of this, researcher will outline it in the form of a table to clarify this statement.

Table 1. The Comparison of Kumon's researches

Keyword	Total Results Found	Relevant Results	Explanation
Kumon EFL reading comprehension	70	1	This topic is rarely discussed, with only 1 relevant article out of 70 results.
Kumon learning method in EFL	97	12	Research focuses on Kumon learning methods in EFL, with broader coverage.
Kumon program at mathematics	100	50	This topic is the most researched, showing the dominance of Kumon in mathematics.

Based on the narratives and tables describing previous studies on the topic of the Kumon program, they often highlight the development of mathematical skills. Meanwhile, research articles that discuss Kumon in EFL Class are still very rare and few, especially if it is specific to the aspect

of reading comprehension, relatively no one has discussed it. This suggests that, particularly in Indonesia, there is a need to conduct research on the reading comprehension skills of students in the EFL Class at Kumon tutoring centers. So, with the facts that the author found above, the researcher raised this study with the title **“THE EFFECTIVENESS OF KUMON LEARNING METHOD TOWARD STUDENT’S READING COMPREHENSION SKILL AT KUMON AHMAD YANI, PURWOKERTO”**

B. Problem Formulation

Based on the background above, the researcher can state the problem as follows:

1. How does student's reading comprehension skill in EFL Class at Kumon Ahmad Yani, Purwokerto?
2. How does the Kumon Method improves student’s reading comprehension skill in EFL Class at Kumon Ahmad Yani, Purwokerto?

C. Research Objectives

Based on the problem formulation above, this study aims to:

1. To explore student’s reading comprehension skill in EFL Class at Kumon Ahmad Yani, Purwokerto.
2. To identify whether the Kumon Method improves student’s reading comprehension skills in EFL Class at Kumon Ahmad Yani, Purwokerto.

D. Research Benefits

Considering the proposed research, this section describes some expected benefits. This research is supposed to be beneficial for related institutions, researchers, and readers. Each will be revealed below:

1. For related institutions, it is expected to improve the quality of teaching and learning mentors and improve student learning outcomes.
2. For researcher, it is expected to be an evaluation, reflection and self-development.
3. For readers, it can be a reference and reference material.

E. Scope And Limitation

Due to the limitation of time and energy, this research discusses student's reading comprehension skill in EFL Class at Kumon Ahmad Yani, Purwokerto. Then, this research also discusses whether the Kumon Method improves student's reading comprehension skills in EFL Class at Kumon Ahmad Yani, Purwokerto. This research used a qualitative approach. The researcher conducted interviews with the owner of Kumon Tutoring Centre, EFL class tutors, and EFL class students.

F. Writing Systematic

The first chapter discusses some information to find the basic concept of this research. It explains the background of the study, the formulation of the problem, the research benefits, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study.

Following the basic information in Chapter I, the second chapter discusses some review of related theories. The discussion is all about The Nature of Reading, and English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Following the information on the review of related literature in Chapter II, the third chapter describes the research type and design, research participants, research location, data resource data collection techniques, research instruments, data analysis technique, and trustworthiness.

The fourth chapter discusses about data presentation, analysis data and discussion about the result of the research.

The last chapter concludes the conclusion of the research and the suggestion.

