

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Reading is an activity attached to human life. From reading, people can obtain information, intending to be able to know the meaning contained in a text. Yunus on Satriyawan *et al.*, (2023) reading is an activity to interpret the symbols and meaning verbally in the written language which aims to obtain an understanding or information. This activity is the factor that affects the progress of a nation because the habit of reading can increase insight so that it creates superior human resources. According to Ratih (2022), the ability to read comprehension plays an important role in the 21st century since it is one of the skills included in literacy and it is the basis for students to comprehend the broad.

However, based on a survey conducted by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) which was released by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (EOCD) in 2019 (Tahmidaten & Krismanto, 2020). Stating that Indonesia occupied a rank 62nd of 70 countries. What if plainly explained, means Indonesia is among the top 10 countries with a low level of literacy. Of course, this was able to be one of the factors that hindered the progress of the Indonesian nation in several sectors, one of which is education. Especially in college, as a student, reading is an obligation to have broad insight.

According to Brown cited by Febriani, *et al.*, (2019), reading is the most important skill in the context of education for the general reference for the assessment of language skills. Reading comprehension ability is very important because all subjects will always be related to reading activities. Based on Snow (2002), reading comprehension is the simultaneous extraction and construction of meaning via interaction and participation with written language. Reading comprehension in English is

a crucial factor in helping pupils learn more effectively. Not only for reading literature reading comprehension is important, but also for success in college and employment.

In English, in addition to three skills (speaking, listening, and writing) reading is one of the skills that must be controlled. So, reading is a mandatory course that must be taken by English students. Some of these courses are literal reading, interpretative reading, critical reading, and extensive reading. These four courses are courses that must be taken to complete the study at the English education department at Nahdlatul Ulama' Sunan Giri University. With the number of two credits from each course.

Because English is an international language, it can affect the development of technology and several other aspects. It is very important to have English language skills. To learn English language skills, which can be through the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) test. The TOEFL test consists of three tested skills. Namely, structure, reading, and listening. Currently, TOEFL is needed to apply for a scholarship or to apply for a job for a certain company or field. With the provisions of the score that has been determined by the university or company intended.

At Nahdlatul Ulama' Sunan Giri University located in Indonesia, TOEFL is mandatory for the strata of one-level graduation. For some students, TOEFL tests are still very difficult. This also applies to EFL students. In 2022, the TOEFL test was held. And those able to reach a score of 500 there is only one student.

Today, the result of the TOEFL test is needed in human life. From the test, it can be drawn to conclusions about English language skills. However, as explained above, TOEFL is still difficult for some people. Especially in the portion of reading the test. Not only in EFL students, because the previous study discussed the difficulties in the reading section of the TOEFL prediction test. A study from Febriani *et al.*, (2019) conducted research on English educational students of Bengkulu University of Bengkulu as a sample. This research used the descriptive

quantitative method with Questionnaires as the instrument. Data presentation of percentages. Researchers found five aspects of the difficulty faced by EFL students in reading comprehension. The problem is the understanding of reading regarding the process of understanding, motivation, a background of knowledge, lack of reading strategy, and Language knowledge. In addition, there is also research conducted by Saman *et al.*, (2017) which was quoted by Rezkiani (2019) that analyzes EFL students' strategies in dealing with general difficulties in reading TOEFL tests.

Therefore, researchers have discussed several phenomena related to the ability of the reading section of the TOEFL prediction test. Based on the explanation and problem above the researcher is interested in analyzing EFL students' difficulty in reading the TOEFL prediction test.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the title of this thesis proposal "An Analysis of EFL Students' Difficulty on The Reading Section of TOEFL Prediction Test" this study aims to analyze the difficulties of students in the TOEFL reading test. So, the research question of this research are:

1. What are the difficulties faced by EFL students in working on the reading section of the TOEFL prediction test?
2. What are the strategies used to complete the test in the reading section of the TOEFL prediction test by EFL students?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions, the researcher can write the objectives of the study. The objectives of the research are:

1. To find out the EFL students' difficulties in reading the TOEFL prediction test.
2. To explore the strategies used by EFL students on the reading section of the TOEFL prediction test of EFL students in the 2019 academic year.

1.4 Significance of the Research

Three kinds of significance can be found in this research. There are two aspects to this part:

1.4.1 Theoretically

This research can contribute by giving valuable analysis information, especially about the reading strategies used by EFL students in reading the TOEFL prediction test and the difficulties of EFL students in reading the TOEFL prediction test.

1.4.2 Practically

1) For the students

EFL students are expected to be able to anticipate the difficulties faced in reading the TOEFL prediction test.

2) For the lecturer

This study provides information about EFL students' difficulties in reading the TOEFL prediction test. So that lecturers can find out the best method to help students have the ability to read the TOEFL prediction test.

3) For another researcher

This research can be used as a related study in seeking more information about the problem under study.

1.5 Scope of the Research

The scope of this study is the difficulties of EFL students in the TOEFL reading test. Limited in this study is focusing on the reading strategy used and difficulties faced by EFL students at Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri University.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

Some of the words that become a keyword in this research are difficulty, reading, and TOEFL prediction test. To know more and to avoid misinterpretation about the terms used in this research, that are:

1.6.1 Difficulty

The difficulty is difficult circumstances to do or understand caused by a problem. The researcher analyzes EFL students' difficulty in reading the TOEFL test.

1.6.2 Reading

Reading is a person's activity to find meaning in a text so that can understand and gain information to increase knowledge.

1.6.3 TOEFL Prediction Test.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a test used to learn about English skills from someone, by testing three English skills reading, listening, and structure.

