

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Globalization has made English the world's most widely spoken language for trade, education, business and tourism. It means English is much used by people of different mother tongues and countries of origin as language as contact in immediate interactions (see: Fithriani, 2018.). Because of its universal nature, of course English is one of the most widely used languages in the world. So if we master English, we can communicate with people from various countries easily. In Indonesia, English has become a compulsory subject taught at elementary school to university level. It's has been explicitly stating in several official documents released by the government especially those related to education. This language can become a tool to achieve the goal economy, the relationship among countries, social-cultural process, education career development for people.

Reading is one of the main idea skills that students must have in learning English. Reading is the act of someone who reads. According to Hornby (2005), reading is an active and complex process based on the application of a number of skills and knowledge of language and print. In reading, vocabulary is an important thing that students must know to understand the text. According to Aunnurahman, et al (2020), reading comprehension allows students to understand the contents of a book and other reading texts. So understanding in reading is something that is indeed mastered by students.

Reading comprehension is not merely a process of recognizing and understanding words and their meanings. It involves a more complex cognitive process where students could understand the meaning of written language, link it to their prior knowledge, and build up a mental representation of the information that they have read (Keenan, et al.,

2008). This includes lack of vocabularies, difficulties in academic field, and difficulties in mastering English in general. Therefore, reading comprehension needs to be given more attention, particularly in EFL classes (Robinson, et al., 2019).

Unfortunately, since English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia, students have higher possibilities of facing difficulties in comprehending reading text. Students are also not regularly exposed to the language, which makes it harder for them to master it in a short period of time and further leads them to have limited vocabularies. Moreover, when it comes to their reading motivation, the students' reading motivation in Indonesia can be considered low. This is proven by a survey conducted by Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2018 that was released in 2019. The survey shows that the students' reading ability in Indonesia is considered very low since it sits on the 72th position out of 77 surveyed countries.

In a previous study with the author Ratih Laily Nurjanah entitled *Analysis of Student Difficulties in Taking Reading Comprehension Final Tests*, Vol 2, No 2. 2018. In this study, it was shown that students faced problems related to vocabulary knowledge or mastery. These problems are related to poor reading habits and the lack of interest in learning reading comprehension that they have in class such as games, or audio-visual media to keep them interested in lectures or reduce anxiety. This research is important to find out the difficulties experienced by students in reading comprehension, with this research, lecturers can increase students' willingness in reading comprehension through interesting learning strategies such as applying games and using audiovisual media.

Article with the authors Teni Lestari, Setia Mujianto and Amir Hamzah entitled *An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Reading Comprehension*, Vol. 3, No. 1. 2020. The result found that the most difficulties oftenfaced by students in reading comprehension is lack of relevant vocabulary. Caused the students do not understand the meaning

of the whole passage. Furthermore, the students strategies to improve their reading comprehension ability are comprehension monitoring. Predecing generating and asking question, activating and using background knowledge, making inference, summarizing, and visualizing the dominant strategy used by the students is comprehension monitoring. The data obtained from this study found that the students lacked vocabulary mastered in reading comprehension, it was also found that the strategy used by the students was to ask questions to summarize the reading text.

Based on a previous article by author N.K.R. Saraswati, P.E. Dambayana, N.P.A. Pratiwi entitled Analysis of Reading Comprehension Difficulties for Class VIII Students, Vol. 19, No. 1. 2021. Determining the main idea is the most difficult aspect faced by students with a difficulty percentage of 72%. Followed by locating reference which gets 70%. For the difficulty level is 68% and 67% which is only a difference of one percent. While the difficulty of students in making inferences got the lowest percentage of difficulty, namely 63%.

From previous studies, many researchers conducted research at schools or universities, especially to find out what difficulties students faced in reading comprehension. The researchers conducted the study in a place where it was easy to meet the participants. This study aims to analyze what are the difficulties in reading comprehension. This research was conducted at the IKIP PGRI Pontianak Campus for second semester students majoring in English. In this study, researchers focused on analyzing several aspects that became difficulties for students. The aspects used are Determining the Main Idea, Understanding Vocabulary, Making Conclusions, and Detailed Information. The findings of this study will become an evaluation material for policy makers, such as: Lecturers, Students, and Campuses in reducing the difficulty of reading comprehension in English.

B. Research Questions

Based on the above background, the researcher formulated the problem in this study is :

What are the students' difficulties in reading comprehension at IKIP PGRI Pontianak?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the research question, the researcher formulated the purposes in this study is :

To find out the students' difficulties in reading comprehension at IKIP PGRI Pontianak.

D. Research Significances

The researcher hopes that this research will be a source of knowledge and important source in providing guidelines to provide a better understanding of students' difficulties in reading comprehension. There are two kinds significance point of theory and practice.

1. Theoretical Benefits

The researcher hopes that this research can be useful in the process of learning English, such as reading comprehension. The researcher also hopes that the solutions in students' difficulties in reading comprehension can help students overcome difficulties in reading comprehension.

2. Partical Benefits

The practical significances of the research can be stated as follows:

a. To the Lecturers

This research will be useful for lecturers to diagnose students' difficulties in understanding reading.

b. To the Students

This research will apply to students to help them to active to read and motivate them to read as as often as possible.

c. To the Other Reseachers

This research will be useful for the future researcher who wants to conduct a reasearch in English teaching-learning process to get references.

E. Scope of the Research

There are two things described in this scope, namely variables and terminology:

1. Research Variables

The research variable is something that is the focus of attention that has influence and has value. According to Sugiyono (2017: 61), the research variable is an attribute or nature or value of a person, object, or activity that has a variance determined by the researcher to be studied and then draw conclusions, based on this explanation the variable in this study is a single variable. The variable in this study is the students' difficulty in reading comprehension.

2. Terminology

The following is an explanation that will be explained by the researcher, namely:

a. Students' Difficulties

Student difficulties are one of the important aspects that must be known because by knowing the difficulties of students, lecturers and students can do what must be done so that the difficulties found can be resolved.

b. Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to process text, understand the meaning of the text and integrate it with what students know. An individual's ability to understand, process, and integrate text is influenced by their skills and ability to process information.

c. IKIP PGRI Pontianak

IKIP PGRI Pontianak is a campus located at Jalan Ampera Number 88, Sungai Jawi, Pontianak City District, Pontianak City, West Kalimantan.