

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background Research

English proficiency is the student's ability to use English and communicate meaning in oral and written contexts which are completed during study. English proficiency is used to measure the ability of a person who study English as a second language for academic purposes, one of the examples is EPT (English Proficiency Test).

EPT is necessary for students especially who took English Education study. (EPT) is a comprehensive test that measures three aspects of English proficiency including listening, reading, structure and written expression. English proficiency test is a standardized test to measure the English proficiency of a person whose mother tongue is not English and the person intends to work or study in a country where English is the official language spoken. Usually, there are two type of EPT, *Paper-Based Test (PBT)* and *Institutional Testing Program (ITP)*. All types of questions in the EPT are in the form of multiple choices.

According to Yuyun et al. (2018) most of universities needed students to acquire the EPT score in specific level as a graduation requirement. It is in line with the rules at private university in Indonesia majoring in English language education. The students are required to get score at least 500 as a graduation requirement and the students are given

chances approximately five times to take and retake English Proficiency Test. Sometimes when exam is over, there are still many students who do not pass the exam. For comparison, if there are 100 students who take the EPT, no less than 50% of the participants pass the exam. Most of them still get scores that are far below average, such as 300, not a few of them also get scores of 400 although they look quite high, they do not meet the requirements that appropriate in English language education. The score of EPT generally ranged from 310-677.

Nevertheless, English students from English Education Study Program in private university in Purwokerto still find out lot of difficulties to pass English Proficiency Test. They fail to achieve a competent level of English language proficiency even though they are English education students. Abboud and Hussein (2011) the students experience some difficulties in listening comprehension section, students assume that long conversation make them difficult to catch the information from the audio, also students have some difficulties with the time limitation for the whole sections.

Students' perceptions of the difficulty of the English Proficiency Test can provide a brief overview of the difficulties to pass the test. From the perception, it may be caused by several internal factors such as environmental suitability, knowledge, understanding of concepts and reality in learning English Education to the difficulty of English Proficiency Test. From the explanation above, the researcher wants to

conduct research to investigate the difficulties of English Education students in passing English proficiency test

## **B. Research questions**

The research questions can be stated in the following question:

1. What are the difficulties faced by English Education students in passing English Proficiency Test?
2. What is the most difficult section on English Proficiency Test?

## **C. Research aims.**

The aims of this research are:

1. To find out the difficulties faced by English Education students in passing English Proficiency Test.
2. To discover the most difficult section in English Proficiency Test faced by English Education students.

## **D. The Benefit of Study**

The writer hopes this study can contribute to the reader to help them in passing English Proficiency Test. And, it can be used as a reference for other researchers.

## **E. Clarification of Terms**

English Proficiency Test is one of the programs in English Education study program in one of private university in Purwokerto which always held at the end of each semester to measure English Education students' ability in English. English proficiency test is like a TOEFL test, there are three kinds of test in EPT including listening comprehension, written structure expression, and reading comprehension.

