

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the research, research questions, objectives, uses, scope, and definition of terms in order to provide an insight into the research and justify the significance of this research.

1.1 Research Background

Reading plays a very important part in daily life. First, reading is a means of communication that is very needed by everyone. It can help someone to communicate with other people, especially written communication. Second, from reading, we can get the information easily. Reading is an essential skill for pupils to develop, especially when it comes to the English language (Rao, 2019). Reading provides people with the opportunity to gain a wealth of information and experience. Reading is not only a fun activity for kids, but it is also an activity that is not only necessary but essential (Dewi, 2020). This is due to the fact that students' academic performance is dependent, in large part, on their ability to read. Reading is a highly vital activity that has a significant impact on our lives. Reading allows us to explore the world, nations that have never been visited before, as well as the brains and ideas of great individuals from the past; all of these things will increase our experience and knowledge, as well as extend our horizon. If the students' reading ability is low, they have a significant chance of failing their courses, or at the very least, they will struggle to make any headway in their studies. On the other hand, if kids are able to read well, they will have a better chance of succeeding in their academic endeavors at school. As a result of

the above statement, we are aware of the significance of reading for students both during their time in college and after they have completed their degrees.

Indonesian people as English Foreign Learners face some difficulties in comprehending the text. Only few people can comprehend its content. The literacy level and reading interest in Indonesia are low, and only a small percentage of Indonesians continuously read books. According to the Human Development Index (HDI), Indonesia is classified as one of the Asian countries with the lowest proficiency in the English language. According to Gunobgunob-Mirasol (2019), the act of reading in the English language as a foreign language presents considerable difficulties. A deficiency of English literature materials, such as books, newspapers, and novels, is seen among students in Indonesia. The 2018 PISA results also revealed that only 30% of Indonesian students are able to achieve Level 2 of Reading Skills, which is much lower than the average OECD level of 77%. Another piece of evidence is the recent release of the 2021 English language proficiency index report for countries in Southeast Asia by the educational organization Education First (EF). As a direct consequence of this, Indonesians' proficiency in the English language is only ranked sixth in the world. It has been determined that Singapore is the nation in Southeast Asia that possesses the highest overall level of competence. The English Proficiency Index for the country is at a level of 635 (Haerazi & Irawan, 2020). Therefore, the level of English language ability among the populace of Indonesia is still considered to be quite low. It is important to acknowledge that the Indonesian government has actively promoted reading through various measures. The School Literacy

Movement, as mandated by Permendikbud Number 21 2015, has been implemented by the government with the aim of fostering pupils' enthusiasm for reading.

Reading comprehension in English is a necessary skill for students to have at the university level. They are not required to comprehend each individual component of the phrase or paragraph, but they should have an understanding of the message the author is attempting to express (Oakhill & Elbro, 2019). Reading difficulties can have an increasingly detrimental impact on a student's ability to succeed in the workplace and in postsecondary education as reading requirements become more demanding and comprehensive (Nwokoro, 2020). This is because reading requirements are becoming more and more thorough. As a result, the researcher has come to the conclusion that it is necessary to do research on this subject, working on the premise that various students may struggle with different aspects of comprehending English reading text. When university lecturers are aware of the challenges that their students face, they will be better equipped to determine the instructional approach that will best help those students develop their reading skills.

1.2 Research Question

Related to the background stated before, the research question in this research was:

1. What are the challenges that sixth-semester students in the English Department face in comprehending English reading texts?
2. What are the strategies to alleviate the challenges?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the research questions above, the objective of this research was to find out:

The challenges that sixth-semester students in the English Department face in comprehending English reading texts and the strategies to solve them.

1.4 Significance of Research

This research will hopefully be useful both theoretically and practically:

1. Theoretically

The results of this research hopefully can be used as verification of the previous theories about comprehending English reading text.

2. Practically

- a. As information for the English teacher to help the students to improve students' performance in reading.
- b. As information for the English teachers to improve their reading teaching and learning process and to choose the most appropriate teaching method based on the students' problem.
- c. To be a reference for the next researchers who will take the students' challenges in comprehending reading text as materials in their research.

1.5 Scope

The scopes of this research are limited to the subject and object investigated.

1. Subject

This study will focus on sixth-semester students in the English Language Education at Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto

2. Object

This research focused on the students' challenges in comprehending English reading text. The researcher used a reading test to analyze the students' challenges.

1.6 Definition of Term

Some terms were used in this research and to make it clear, some definitions of terms were presented as follows:

1. Reading is a process that a reader goes through in order to achieve the purpose of the writer through the use of the written word, as stated by Moge (2019).
2. English reading text in this research means the written or printed material that has to be studied by students in learning reading on English subjects.
3. Comprehension of the text is the most important part of the reading process. According to Banditvilai (2020), for students to demonstrate that they have fully comprehended a book, they must demonstrate that they have a comprehensive comprehension of all of the book's components, because English is not their first language.