CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the background of the research; that is the motive to conduct this research. Also, the research question, identification and limitation of the problem, purpose of the study, and significances of this study will be explained.

Background of the Study

Reading is one very important skill of learning English besides writing, listening, and speaking. It is inevitably essential since students get daily information through reading whether it is textbooks, news, or spreading issues on internet and communication tools. Reading is obviously significant for everyone in life.

Reading also gives many benefits especially for prospective teachers. Reading can help of English Education Department (PBI) Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) students master the materials that will be delivered to their students. To enhance this, students must extend their reading habit. Reading such as text books, journal, or any article is very important since it enhances their prior knowledge. Also, readers will somehow find out another teaching methodology or their paradigm on teaching style, especially when they read books specified in teaching-learning field. The researcher also believes that many reading assignments given by lecturers will definitely improve students' prior knowledge and, of course, their reading skills.

In reading, there are some reading strategies that can be used by students. Massey University, New Zealand (2012) and University of Southampton (2008) maintain three styles of reading, namely scanning, skimming, and in-depth reading. Scanning is an activity of reading on which only focus finding the substantial term or part. Having the similar definition with scanning, skimming is an activity of reading by looking at note or even the title or subtitle of the passage. On the contrary, an in-depth reading means reading the whole text to find all information. This can also be termed as an extensive reading. In addition, literature in Humanities Teaching and Learning Office of University of Manchester (2014) shows term called *Active Reading*. It defines as readers' habit when reading such as taking note, underlining, shading, or making annotation. Furthermore, reading is not solely to read and to understand the meaning, but also to analyze, to reflect and to evaluate the content of the text, which is called critical reading (Duncan, 2014). Critical reading can also be referred to readers' behaviors when facing with reading materials. The basic meaning of critical reading is that the readers should not only read and understand, but also continue to analyze and evaluate the contents or ideas given in the reading.

In PBI UMY, lecturers give many reading assignments to the students. Linked with the intensive reading assignments given, students must have different perception and action. Students come with different motivations, needs, and goals (Felder & Brent, 2005); therefore, students' learning style must be different each other (Mopinga, Nora, & Yaw, 2006). To be critical in reading, a special reading competence is needed since this is not an ordinary reading (Mustadi, 2010).

However, based on the researcher's experience as a students of PBI UMY, not all students of PBI UMY have higher level of critical reading. This is revealed by the diverse score in reading class and reading assignment. Moreover, most of the students are not aware of their level in critical reading. In fact, when the researcher asked them their levels, they also did not know how to measure their critical reading levels. In addition, the lecturers certainly teach the students to understand and master textbooks or academic writings. However, the encouragements to analyze and give argument toward the text are rarely implemented in PBI UMY. In other words, lecturing is only to make students understand, not to show the steps to be a critical readers. Derived from this background, the researcher intends to examine PBI UMY students' critical reading levels.

Identification and Limitation of the Problem

The researcher is a prospective teacher from PBI UMY, therefore, he has already found that not all of the students of PBI UMY have high level of critical reading. It is shown by the diversity of the score in reading class. Also, despite its importance, not all the lecturers encouraged students to be aware of the advantages of being critical readers. This study was then designed based on the reason that students of PBI UMY might have different levels of critical reading. However, this study was focused in investigating the higher levels of critical reading, specifically, the critical reading abilities and distribution on total PBI UMY student population. These levels are referring to the highest three of the

revised Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive domain which consists of *analyzing, evaluating, and creating.*

Research Question

Based on the problem found in the PBI UMY, the researcher formulated one research question. The research question is: what are PBI UMY students' critical reading levels?

Purpose of the Study

After the formulation of the problem in a form of research question, the researcher started this study which aims to investigate PBI UMY students' critical reading levels.

Significances of the Study

To the researcher and prospective teachers, this research would solve the curiosity on students' critical reading level. Also, since this research revealed the critical reading level of students, it could be reason to improve critical reading. For lecturers, especially in PBI UMY, they might discover the level of students' critical reading, so that they might develop critical reading as the concern of learning. Moreover, significance to the students, they might recognize their level of critical reading skills. Therefore, they would have an intention to develop it.