

Chapter One

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher would like to describe the study that the researcher is working on. The descriptions are about the background of the study, statement of the problem, limitation of the problem, research questions, and the objectives of the study. This chapter also discovers the significance of the study.

Background of the study

English language, as a lingua franca has become a platform for us to communicate with everyone in any aspect of our life. Different country, background, and language are no longer appear as a boundary for every individual to communicate with each other. The English language has emerged as a uniting tool within the communication world. In term of worldwide or global communication, English is necessarily needed, as in the present days English appears as an International language that could replace other languages. According to Morozova (2013), nowadays, the existence of the English language could replace other languages as means for worldwide communication. The researcher agrees with Morozova that English is used to communicate globally. The undeniable thing that present society face is if they want to be able to communicate with global society, they should be able to communicate using the English language.

The researcher has realized the significant role and importance of the English language. As the English language used in every sector of our life, for instance, vital areas such as educational institution and most of industrial company in the world are using English as their primary language and also demand a good English proficiency from their students and employees to support their environment. Yuyun et al. (2018), argued that companies and institutions employ English proficiency test (EPT) as one of the requirements in the recruitment process. Puspawati (2014), also contends that taking the standardized EPT for non-English speakers could not be avoided, because the score achieved from the EPT play an important role in such life events as admission to school, gaining a scholarship, or getting a job. Hence, to determine whether someone having a good competency on the English language or not, the English proficiency test is considered as an essential instrument to be used as a tool to measure someone's English competency.

The awareness of the need for the English language has made the educational institution to make a move in term of preparing their students to have a good English competency. Referring to Kyung-Suk (2010), most universities provide English lesson to help their students preparing them to succeed in the educational environment and their future career such as graduating from a college, applying for a scholarship, and getting a job. Notably, in Indonesia, most of the educational institution provides its students with an English preparation course and also implemented an English proficiency test to measure their competencies.

The English proficiency test as the researcher conclude is the valid tool to measure someone's English capability as it used and implemented in most of the educational institution and accepted in the most company in the world as a valid measurement of someone's English capacity. Hence, to measure someone's English capability we can use the EPT as a measurement platform. Halim & Ardiningtyas (2018), stated that the English proficiency test in a country where English is a foreign language is necessary as a valid test to measure one's English capability. Thus, in Indonesia, where English is a foreign language, the English proficiency test is necessary to be applied and considered as a valid measurement platform.

The English proficiency test comes in various forms. For instance, there are TOEFL and IELTS tests that commonly used in the English proficiency test. According to Halim and Ardiningtyas (2018), TOEFL (Test of English as Foreign Language) is the most popular test used in many countries all over the world. The actual condition in Indonesia seems to support that statement as most of the university in Indonesia used TOEFL to measure their students' English capability. Clarck (2014) stated that according to ETS (Educational Testing Service), the TOEFL test is used by more than 9.000 colleges, universities and agencies in more than 130 countries to help them make admissions decisions, making it the most widely accepted English-language test in the world. According to the data that presented by Clark and the actual condition in Indonesia, the researcher think that TOEFL test is considered as the most suitable kind of-English proficiency test which could represent one's English ability and help educational institution

and Industrial companies to make admission decisions such as graduating their students, accepting scholarship proposal, and selecting the employees.

Nowadays, TOEFL as a form of English proficiency test (ETP) has become a crucial factor in deciding someone's career. Mainly, in Indonesia where TOEFL test used for multiple purposes both in educational and workplace field. Hence, TOEFL has become an important test to aid and support someone's future and career development. To cope with the Educational institution's need, which demands their students to have an excellent competency in English, Students need to be aware of the importance of the English proficiency test for their future. Halim and Hardiningtyas (2018) stated that most universities in Indonesia use TOEFL as a requirement to complete college. As a real proof, at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta, the TOEFL-Like test is used as a requirement for students to get a degree or graduate. Moreover, this policy has been applied to all faculties, not only the faculties that are dealing with English in its daily basis. Thus, to graduate, all students are demanded to accomplish the TOEFL-Like test.

Two past studies which conducted by Munadia (2016) and Halim and Ardyningtyas (2018) are related with this study. Research that conducted by Munadia (2016) is highlighting the students' difficulties on taking the TOEFL-Like test. The finding shows that the difficulties in facing the structure and written expression has become the primary reason behind student's failure in accomplishing the test. Compared to this research, that difficulties is not the main aspect and that difficulties also could appear as a problem because students are unable to understand the text and they are also having lack of basic English skills.

The second past studies which conducted by Halim and Ardiningtyas (2018) mention fewer basic skills and lack of practice as a problem that cause difficulties on taking the EPT. In line with this research, lack of basic English skills and lack of practice also appear as a problem on how students perceive the difficulties on taking the EPT.

Pursuing students who come from non-English faculties to accomplish the EPT could become an issue. Nimasari et al. (2019), argued that it is not an easy task to do for those whose academic field of specialization is non-English to accomplish or get certain intended score of English proficiency Test. As the researcher found, there are a lot of non-English students from one of private university in Yogyakarta who saw the EPT as an obstacle. Taking a look from non-English student's perspective, it is unfair to pursue specific score of EPT while they are having lack of English language input. Not only struggle to accomplish the test but also, they probably struggle to graduate as the EPT used as one of the conditions for them to graduate. The thing that becomes the researcher's concern is the student perception on the EPT, especially TOEFL. How students perceive the English proficiency test is a crucial factor to have an insight into why these non-English students considered the English proficiency test as a problem.

Statement of the Problem

Accomplishing the EPT in the form of TOEFL-Like test could be slightly easier for English students, which they are having a considerable portion of

exposure to the English language. In the other hand, the TOEFL-Like test could become a harder challenge to accomplish for the non-English students due to lack of exposure to the English language. Although, the policies regarding with TOEFL-Like test between non-English students and English-students are different, such as the demanded score, for instance, the English students should achieve 500 of TOEFL score while the non-English students needed 400 of TOEFL score to pass the test, but, some of the non-English students still consider the TOEFL-Like test as an obstacle.

The non-English students also face the difficulties to understand and interpret the meaning of the text inside the EPT. Thus, most of non-English students are failing to pass the test because they could not understand the question being asked that probably could be caused by the lack of English input they have. Also, the non-English students' preparation could appear as an obstacle why they are unable to reach the intended score of the EPT.

The researcher would like to explore students' perception of the difficulties they have faced in doing the English proficiency test to find out the essence of the phenomenon that appears within students. Then, the researcher also would like to focus on how the students prepare themselves to face the EPT.

Delimitation of the Problem

The researcher focuses the research on how non-English department students perceive the difficulties of facing the EPT and how they prepare themselves to face it. The study conducted at one of the private universities in

Yogyakarta as the EPT is used as a condition for students to graduate there. This research only focusing on how students perceive the difficulties of the EPT and how do they prepare themselves to face the EPT. This research only focusing on non-English departments students at one of private university in Yogyakarta and only involved six participants.

In this research, the researcher used a qualitative approach method to gather the data. The researcher did an interview with the non-English department students regarding their experience of taking the EPT to get a full description relating to the phenomenon.

Research Questions

According to the statement of the problem, in attempting this research, the researcher has formulated two research questions. The research questions of this study are:

1. How do the Non-English Department students perceive the difficulties of taking the English Proficiency Test?
2. How do the Non-English Department students prepare themselves to face the English Proficiency test?

Objectives of the Study

There are two objectives in this research to be mentioned. The objectives of this research are:

1. To find out Non-English Department students' perception on the difficulties in taking the EPT.
2. To find out how Non-English Department students prepare themselves to face the test.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study are aimed to be beneficial for:

Students. This research attempt to reveal students' perceptions of the difficulties they might face on taking the EPT and find out their strategies on facing the test. Hopefully, the finding could help students to accomplish the EPT with providing them a solution or strategies to overcome their weaknesses and difficulties.

College/Educational institutions and Teachers. This research could give important aspects and insights for them in the way they accelerating the English proficiency test preparation course. Addressing the difficulties students might encounter on taking the test could help teachers or institutions to focus on the difficulties, then design a course that students need and suit the most.

Other Researchers. The significance other researchers who has interest in English proficiency test is that hopefully this study could become one of the considerable references for them to conduct related/further studies.