CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

In academic issue, most people have heard about TOEFL test or even done it, even TOEFL has become very popular in the world. Educational Testing Service (ETS) announced TOEFL as the most widely-used and internationally recognized test to evaluate non-native English speakers' language proficiency[1]. The statement from Educational Testing Service gives a reality that TOEFL is used in all over the world to test English proficiency of people who live in non-English speaking countries. Because of widely used and internationally recognized test, TOEFL is used all over the world included in Indonesia.

There are main perspectives for understanding the nature of reading comprehension: the task perspective, the processing perspective, and the reader purpose perspective[2]. In short, as Cohen has noted, in order to assess reading comprehension in a second or foreign language, it is necessary to have a working knowledge of what the process entailed. We must demonstrate that these inferences are appropriate for the decisions we need to make. Consequently, it is

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[1]Michael J, *Education Testing Service Standard Setting Materials for the Internet-based TOEFL Test*(Princeton: ETS Press, 2005), 5

[2]Mary K. Enright, William Grabe and Keiko Koda, *TOEFL 2000 Reading Framework: A Working Paper* (Princeton: ETS Press, 2000), 14

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important to have good insight into what people who take reading comprehension tests to do in order to complete them[3].

One of the most serious problems in higher education, but one which is often not recognized by either students or lecturers until some ways into academic courses, is the problem of reading, perhaps because reading is not assessed. However, the results or outputs from reading are assessed[4]. Actually, most of the students have some problems in their learning, especially in reading section. They can read the texts well because it doesn't need any assessments. Usually, the assessment of reading is when we comprehend the content of text, understand the meaning and the purpose of the text and answer the questions well if it is needed to be answered.

The ability to read academic texts is considered as one of the most important skills that university students of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) need to acquire[5]. Reading comprehension has come to be the essence of reading. Essential is not only to academic learning in all subject areas, but also to professional success and indeed to life long learning.

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[3]Andrew Cohen, *An Assessing Reading Comprehension* (New York: Predicy Press, 1994), 20
[4]Carisma Dreyer and Charl Nel, *Teaching Reading Strategies and Reading Comprehension within a Technology-Enhanced Learning Environment* (South Africa: Faculty of Education Sciences, 2003), 249-250
[5]Adina Levine, Orna Ferenz and Thea Raves, *EFL Academic Reading Modern Technology: How Can We Turn Our Studentsinto Independent Critical Readers?* (Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 2000)

It is important for us to use English as a Second Language (ESL) because as we have known that English is international language that most of people in the world use English as a First Language (EFL). We may not fail, we have to keep in trying. To comprehend the text, we must focus on reading comprehension. Reading comprehension is an essence of reading. Without comprehending the texts, we cannot get the point and understand the content and the purpose of the texts. Not only academic texts, but also the others, we have to be able to comprehend the texts, especially if we want to comprehend the texts included in TOEFL test. To comprehend the texts, we also need the strategies. One of them is the strategy of TOEFL's reading section.

Chelsea states that TOEFL exam does not only test the English language mastery, but also test-taking skill[6]. In this case, TOEFL is useful for the students who want to master English as well as possible. Besides, it is also useful to improve their skills of answering the questions of TOEFL test. In this part, the researcher wants to research TOEFL reading section. From preliminary research, it is found that the students have some problems in the reading section of TOEFL test. They are they get the difficulties to understand the sentences, they get bored while reading the text, they cannot manage the time as well as possible, and they are also unfamiliar with the words that have been read. Therefore, They need

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[6]Elizabeth Chelsea, *TOEFL Exam Success from Learning Express in only 6 Strategic Steps* (USA: LLC, 2002), 15

some strategies to solve those problems. It is reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL.

Reading section of TOEFL test contains passages on a variety of subjects. Following each passage consists of several questions about the passage[7]. In this section, the students will get the questions and written texts that are different each other. Therefore, the students need the ability to comprehend the message that delivers in the passage. Most of students are usually lazy to read the passage because of the content and time limit. Some of them have their own strategies to answer the questions as well as possible. This section examines your knowledge to understand some kinds of scientific reading that related to topic, main idea, reading content, meaning or some word groups and detail information that related to the text[8]. A number of questions were 50 questions for 55 minutes. In this section, we are demanded to have much knowledge, especially reading. We have to read the books as many as possible. Beside reading books, we should also understand the contents of those as like the topic, main idea, meaning and the others.

The researcher has found six previous studies which have done regarding TOEFL, reading, and reading strategy. Three of them deal with TOEFL and three of them deal with reading and reading strategy. The first previous study was conducted by Andrew D. Cohen and Thomas A Upton focusing on the reading

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[7]Peterson, *Master TOEFL Reading Skill* (United States of America: A Nelnet Company, 2007), 3
[8]Slamet Riyanto, *Test Strategy for Reading Comprehension* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), 11

and test-taking strategies that test takers used in the Reading section of the Language courseware. The investigation focused on strategies used to respond to more traditional single selection multiple-choices formats (i.e., Basic Comprehension and Differencing Question) and the new selected-response (multiple selection, drag and drop) reading to learn items[9].

Different with the research which belongs to Elis Rahmawati's, it analyzed test-taking strategies use in TOEFL equivalent test by the sixth semester students of English Teacher Education Department UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya before and while doing TOEFL equivalent test[10]. Furthermore, Feni Rahmawati's research found out students' perception of time management behavior that used by the students in reading section on TOEFL test and what question types that most influence students' perception about time management behavior in reading section on TOEFL preparation test[11].Carol A. Fraser additionally conducted which reported on a strategy training study that investigated the lexical processing strategies used by second learners when they encounter unfamiliar

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[9]Andrew D. Cohen and Thomas A Upton, *Response Strategies on Reading Subtest of the New TOEFL* (Indianapolis: Indiana University, 2002)

[10] Elis Rahmawati, Undergraduate Thesis: *An Analysis of Test-Taking Strategies use in TOEFL Equivalent Test by Sixth Semester Students of English Teacher Education Department UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya Academic Year 2013-2014* (Surabaya: UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2014)*, 135137*

[11]Feni Rahmawati, Undergraduate Thesis: *Students' perception about time management behavior in reading section on TOEFL Preparation Test at UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya Academic Year 2013-2014* (Surabaya: UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2014),90

vocabulary while reading and the impact of these strategies on vocabulary learning[12].

Next previous study conducted by Carisma Dreyer and Charl Nel that discussed about teaching reading strategies that used to develop reading skill of South African students who have low levels and also improve their ability in reading comprehension within a technology-enhanced learning environment[13]. Another study was conducted by Batia Laufer who stated that reading comprehension and vocabulary comprehension were the same, or reading quality was determined by vocabulary alone. Reading comprehension was also affected by textually relevant background knowledge and the application of general reading strategies such predicting the content of the text, guessing unknown in context, making inferences, recognizing the type of text and text structure[14].

However, this research has distinctive focus from those previous studies. Different with previous studies from Cohen and Upton, Elis and Feni, This research tries to measure the extent to which reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL can improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL's reading section based on Philip's theory. Besides, this study aims to investigate students' response after studying reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL, dissimilar with

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[12] Carol A. Fraser, "Lexical Processing Strategy Use and Vocabulary Learning through Reading", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*,Vol.21, Issue 02, 1999, 225

[13]Carisma Dreyer and Charl Nel, (2003), "Teaching Reading Strategies and Reading Comprehension within a Technology-enhanced Learning Environment*", Individual Differences: Advancing Knowledge*, Vol.31, Issue 3, 2003, 349

[14]Batia Laufer, *The Lexical Plight in Second Language Reading: Words You Don't Know, Words You Think You Know, and Words You Can't Guess* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 20

the other three previous studies that conducted by Fraser, Drayer and Laufer that discussed about different kinds of reading and reading strategy.

English Teacher Education Department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya is one of the departments in Indonesian Universities that obligated their students to achieve the English Proficiency score at least 500 as the graduation requirement. Moreover, it is found that some students complain in reading section, they feel bored and less interseted on reading section because of many words to read and understand and they should answer it within fifty five minutes on fifty questions. They need TOEFL reading strategies to solve the problems. Furthermore, in English Teacher Education Department, there is also the class that used to prepare the students to join TOEFL test. Therefore, it is good if the researcher can make the research in this area.

Because of some reasons above, the researcher wants to know whether reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL are effective to improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL reading section for students in the sixth semester of English Education Department Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University. Reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL that are used in this study is proposed by Deborah Philips at the title "*Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL test*".

The researcher uses the theory of longman book because it is intended to prepare the students for TOEFL test. It is based on the most up-to-date information available on the format and style of the *new* TOEFL test, introduced

on July 1995[15]. Besides, it also consists of complete language skills instruction for skills which was tested on both TOEFL paper test& test of written English and diagnostic pre-tests & evaluation post-tests for each section that allow students to identify their strengths and weaknesses. It is practice exercises for each of the language skills that maximize understanding and retention that is effective for the students who want to join TOEFL test[16].

Researching the effectiveness of reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL at English Teacher Education Department UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya will be very important. The first importance is people will be able to measure the extent to which reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL to improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL's reading section. If the result of this study shows that those strategies are effective to improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL's reading section, it means that those strategies are successful to be taught and can be practiced while doing TOEFL Test of reading section. The second importance is that people can investigate students' response after studying reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL. If the responses are positive, it means that reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL are good and can be practiced.

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[15]Deborah Philips, *Longman Complete Course for the TOEFL Test: Preparation for the Computer and Paper Test* (NY: Pearson Education Company, 2001)

[16] Deborah Philips, Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test the Paper Test, with Answer Key (NY: Pearson Education ESL, 2003)

B. Research Questions

Based on the research background, the research questions of this study were:

1. Are reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL effective to improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL reading section?

2. What are students' responses after studying reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL?

C. Hypothesis of the Study

Hypothesis of this study was based on the research questions as follows:

H_0 : Reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL are not effective to improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL reading section.

H_1 : Reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL are effective to improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL reading section.

D. Objective of the Study

Based on the research questions above, the researcher has formulated the major objectives of this research. They were:

1. To know whether reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL are effective to improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL reading section.

2. To investigate students' responses after studying reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL.

E. Significance of the Study

The significances of this study were as follows:

1. Theoretical Significance

    a. The result can give knowledge to the lecturer about reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL and students' responses after studying those strategies.

    b. The students can know the extent to which reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL can improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL's reading section and what students' responses after studying those strategies.

    c. The result of this research can give the readers an additional knowledge about reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL that can be learned and practiced while doing TOEFL test.

2. Practical Significance

    a. The result of this research can be useful for teaching TOEFL, especially for reading section.

    b. The result of this research can be useful to help lecturer who teach TOEFL to encourage the students to practice reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL when doing TOEFL test of reading section.

    c. The result of this research can be useful as a reference for the researcher who wants to conduct a researchto measure to what extent reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL can improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL reading section.

F. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study was the effectiveness of reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL to improve students' achievement scores of TOEFL's reading section. The reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL that used in this research are proposed by Deborah Phillip in his book entitle"*Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test.*"

The limitation of this study was the students of sixth semester of English Teacher Education Department UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya academic year 2013-2014 who join TOEFL Preparation Class and get the lesson of reading skill-based strategies for TOEFL. In this research, the researcher only takes one class from three classes. It is "B" class.

G. Definition of Key terms

To avoid misuderstanding in the way to understand this study, the researcher tried to explain some related terms as follows;

1. TOEFL

It is defined as the abbreviation of Test of English as a Foreign Language that examines how far the students can master English that includes Listening Comprehension, structure and written expression and reading comprehension[17]. In this case, TOEFL can be defined as the test that held by the lecturer of TOEFL subject to evaluate English language proficiency of the

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[17]SlametRiyanto, *The 1st Student's Choice TOEFL*, (Yogyakarta: PustakaPelajar, 2007), 1

sixth semester students of English Teacher Education Department and the kind of TOEFL test is Paper Based TOEFL (PBT).

2. Reading Section

It is designed to examine students' knowledge in understanding some kinds of scientific texts that related with the topic, main idea, content of text, meaning of words or phrase and also detailed information of text[18]. In this case, reading section is one of the sections in TOEFL and the material of reading section is held by the lecturer of TOEFL.

3. Reading Strategy

It is a cognitive or behavioral action with the goal of improving some aspects of reading comprehension[19]. In this case, reading strategy is the strategy that used by the students to comprehend the text entirely and can answer the questions of reading.

4. Reading Skill-Based Strategy for TOEFL

It is a strategy that is proposed by Longman to help the students to be able to answer the questions of TOEFL's reading section by identifying some kinds of questions based on the skills[20].

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[18]Slamet Riyanto, *Test Strategy for Reading Comprehension*, (Yogyakarta: PutakaPelajar, 2007), 4

[19]Carisma Dreyer, *Teaching reading strategies and reading comprehension within a technology-enhanced learning environment*, (South Africa: Potchefstroom 2520, 2003), 350

[20]Deborah Philips, *Longman Preparation Course For TOEFL Test*, (Jakarta: Addison Wesley Longman, 2000)

5. Student's achievement score

It is defined operationally as the average of student's scale score, inclusion of an achievement level[21]. In this case, the researcher gives a definition of students' achievement scores as the improvement of students' scores before and after getting the treatment.

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[21]S. Paul Wright, Sandra P. Horn, and William L. Sanders, *Teacher and Classroom Context Effects on Students Achievement: Implications for Teacher Evaluation*, (Boston, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 59