#### **CHAPTER I**

#### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Research Background

For EFL or ESL students, reading is an important skill in learning English. Through reading, the reader not only gains information but also improves his or her general English. In their book "More Reading Power", Mikulecky and Jeffries argued that reading is important way to improve general language skills in English for some reasons. They are: Reading helps to think in English, reading can enlarge English vocabulary, reading helps to improve writing, reading is good way to practice English especially for who live in a non-English-speaking country, reading helps to prepare for study in an English-speaking country, and reading is a good way to find out about new ideas, facts, and experiences.<sup>1</sup>

Reading skill is also the hardest skill in learning English. When reading, students not only read using their eyes but also think about the idea of the text. As Grabe and Stoller argued that the ability to read requires the reader to combine the new information from a text with the knowledge that he or she already has.<sup>2</sup> Reading is a complex process, because there are several activities

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Beatrice S. Mikulecky - Linda Jeffries, *More Reading Power* (United States of America: Longman, 2003), vi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> William Grabe - Fredricka L. Stoller, *Reading for Academic Purpose: Guidelines for the ESL/EFL Teacher* (Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 2001), 188.

in reading, whether physical or mental activity. According to Edward L. Thorndike "reading as thinking" means that in reading process involved thinking processes such as remembering, understanding, distinguishing, comparing, discovering, analyzing, organizing, and ultimately apply what is contained in the reading.<sup>3</sup> When reading, different people may have different perspective about what they read in the text.

Additionally, Davis defined reading skill into eight subskills which prove that reading skill is a complex skill. They are:

"Recalling words meanings, drawing inferences about the meaning of a word in given context, finding answers to questions answered explicitly or in paraphrase, weaving together ideas in the content, recognizing a writer's purpose/attitude/tone/mood, identifying a writer's technique and following the structure of the passage".

In opposite with the statements above, according to some students in fourth semester of English Teacher Education Department in UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, reading was the easiest skill than other skills in their previous semester. In addition, reading class was quiet place to follow teaching learning process than other skills such as listening, writing and speaking class. It was because in reading class they just sat and listened to their friends' presentation about something they had read.

The importance of reading is the comprehension to the text. Furthermore, comprehension is the goal of reading. Without comprehension,

<sup>4</sup> J. Charles Alderson, Assessing Reading (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Nurhadi, *Membaca Cepat dan Efektif* (Bandung: Sinar Baru), 13.

reading is just following the words from left to the right on a page and without meaning. Comprehension occurred when the reader understands what they are reading. As Mikulecky and Jeffries state, "When we read, we make connection between what we are reading and what we already know". 5 Sometimes, we will gain the information easily when we read something matched with our experience, and we just want to add details information about it, but it is also possible that we will have difficulties to gain information from the text if the information not matched with our knowledge and experience.

Effective comprehension can be defined as the ability to recognize the structures which is inherent in a text. It is difficult for ESL and EFL students because it requires them to have ability to identify the idea in the text, ability to have basic grammar to understand the text, and ability to aware of discourse structure. The purpose of reading comprehension is to grasp the ideas of the text and then the reader can express it through discussion and writing. Besides, comprehension can be evidenced by some reasons, they are the reader can interpret and evaluate general information in the text included events/dialogue/ideas, connect the new information in the text with the knowledge that he already know, in order the reader can get new idea or see the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Beatrice S. Mikulecky - Linda Jeffries, More Reading Power... 16

idea in different way, and determine the important points and read "between the lines" to understand the meaning.<sup>6</sup>

It is important to check students' comprehension after they have finished reading. Mikulecky and Jeffries explained the comprehension skills to think about what we are reading. They are: previewing, scanning, skimming, using vocabulary knowledge for effective reading, making inferences, finding topics, discovering topics of paragraphs, understanding main ideas, identifying patterns of organization and summarizing.<sup>7</sup>

The description of the IELTS test of academic reading illustrates the range of techniques that are now being employed in the testing of reading:

"A variety of questions are used, chosen from the following types: Multiple choices, short answer questions, sentence completion, note/summary/diagram/flow chart/table completion, choosing from a 'heading bank' for identified paragraphs/sections of the text, identification of writer's view/attitudes/claims: yes/no/not given, classification, matching lists, matching phrases". 8

To test students' reading comprehension in extensive reading class, the students in third semester got assignment to write summary of ten thousand words taken from various sources every week during a semester, but there was no middle or final test for extensive reading course.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "Comprehension Skills, Strategies and Best Practices" *Benchmark Education Company*, (http://www.benchmarkeducation.com/best-practices-library/comprehension-strategies.html accessed on November 10, 2014)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Beatrice S. Mikulecky - Linda Jeffries, More Reading Power... 17-141

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> J. Charles Alderson, Assessing Reading... 205

Summarizing is one of indicators to measure students' reading comprehension. Summarizing is retelling the important parts of the text in shorter format. It is difficult because the content of the text is expressed intensively in different form.

The importance of summarizing is to indicate one's degree of reading comprehension. According to Mikulecky and Jeffries, they said "when you are able to summarize a passage, you can be confident that you have understood it". It means that to summarize a passage the reader should have good comprehension of the text. In addition, students who write summary of what they have read can get clear understanding of the material. Besides, Alderson argued that to have satisfactory summary, students should have good understanding about the main idea of the text and organize the text in logical order.

> "Students read a text and then are required to summarise the main ideas, either of the whole text or of a part, or those ideas in the text that deal with a given topic. It is believed that students need to understand the main ideas of the text, to separate relevant from irrelevant ideas, to organise their thoughts about the text and so on, in order to be able to do the task satisfactorily". 10

When reading some students' summary writings, the researcher found that their summary were short. Also when the researcher asked them about how long they summarized ten thousand words, they said that they could summarize it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Sasan Baleghizadeh – Maryam Babapour, "The Effect of Summary Writing on Reading Comprehension and Recall of EFL Students". New England Reading Association Journal. Vol. 47 No.  $^{1}$  ,  $^{20}$ 11,  $^{3}$  J. Charles Alderson, *Assessing Reading* ...  $^{232}$ 

in a night before the deadline, some of them argued that they usually did summarization on weekend. The way they doing their assignment were various, it was based on their individual, because they had other business such as doing another assignment, part time job, and sometimes they were reluctant to do the assignment. About their summary writings, some of fourth semester students stated that they just told the content of reading passage in general, but some of them stated that they summarized the reading passage carefully. Once again, it depends on personal factors of each student, how they motivate their self and manage their time to do the assignment.

However, the researcher did not know whether their summary had indicated their comprehension to the reading passage. Therefore, the researcher interested in conducting the research about the ability of fourth semester students in reading article comprehension as it is indicated by their summary writings.

A number of researchers have done the studies about reading comprehension ability and summary. For example, Ainul Yaqin with his study entitle the effect of directed reading thinking activity (DRTA) on students' reading comprehension achievement, Agus Kusdiyanto with his research under the title using STAD technique to improve students' understanding in reading comprehension, Bustanul Arifin with his research about the correlation between reading comprehension and summary writing performance, Rochimah with her thesis under the title using summarization as a technique of teaching English to

improve the students' reading comprehension and a journal entitled the effect of summary writing on reading comprehension and recall of EFL students.

However, the researcher has not find yet the study about the ability to comprehend article as it is indicated in the summary writings in UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Whereas, summarizing skill is important for academic success, because in writing research report, students have to summarize materials from various sources without plagiarizing.<sup>11</sup> Hence, it is important to carry out a study to analyze students of university in comprehending article as it is indicated by their summary writings.

Therefore, it is important to conduct the research entitled ASSESSMENT OF SUMMARY WRITINGS AS STUDENTS' READING ARTICLE COMPREHENSION INDICATOR (A Study of Fourth Semester Students at English Education Department in UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya).

#### **B.** Research Questions

From the background above, the researcher formulates the problem as the following:

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Sasan Baleghizadeh – Maryam Babapour, "The Effect of Summary Writing on Reading Comprehension..." 3

- 1. What is the ability of fourth semester students at English Education Department in reading article comprehension as it is indicated by their summary writings?
- 2. What are the factors that influence students' achievement in each criterion of good summary writings?

## C. Objectives of the Study

Derived from the research questions above, the objectives of this study are:

- To identify the ability of fourth semester students at English Education
   Department in reading article comprehension as it is indicated by their summary writings.
- 2. To know the factors that influence students' achievement in each criterion of good summary writings.

## **D.** Significance of The Study

This study is expected to give insight that summarization is a good method to measure students' reading comprehension. It is also expected to be useful for:

**Lecturer**: it can inform the lecturer about the ability of fourth semester students in reading article comprehension as it is indicated by their summary writings and the factors that influence their achievement in each criterion of good summary writings, even though they get high or low score in summarizing article.

**Students**: it can inform students about their ability in reading article comprehension as it is indicated by their summary writings. In addition, it can inform them the characteristics of good summary, so that they can improve their ability in summarizing.

**Readers**: it can give information about fourth semester students' ability in comprehending article as it is indicated by their summary writings, inform the characteristics of good summary and the importance of summarizing.

#### E. Assumption

Concerning with this study, the researcher assumes that:

- 1. The students' summary writings indicate their comprehension to the article.
- 2. The students' answers in interview are true.

### F. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study only focus on analyzing fourth semester students' ability in comprehending article as it is indicated by their summary writings. Therefore, the researcher does the research with the limitation below:

Scope:

This study is conducted to the fourth semester students at English Education Department of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

#### Limitation:

This study is limited only in analyzing students' ability in comprehending article as it is indicated by their summary writings, not in others. There are four criteria that will be analyzed to indicate students' comprehension to the article, they are content in their summary, topic sentence, supporting details and paraphrase.

# **G.** Definition of Key Terms

The following terminology will be used in order that the readers will have the same interpretation in understanding the study.

**Assessment:** calculation of the quality, amount, or value of something.<sup>12</sup> In this study, assessment means the researcher give score to the students' summary writings and then the score in each criterion will be used to answer the research question about the ability of fourth semester students in reading article comprehension as it is indicated by their summary writings.

**Ability:** the quality of being able to do something, especially the physical, mental, financial, or legal power to accomplish something.<sup>13</sup> In this study, ability to comprehend the article as it is indicated by their summary writings means students are able to grasp the content or the idea in the article, find the effective topic sentence which state the main idea of the article, organize the supporting details in logical order and paraphrase the idea in the article.

**Achievement:** success in doing or getting what you are worked for.<sup>14</sup> In this study, students' achievement means students score, both high and low score in each criterion when they summarize the article.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Longman Dictionary of American English, (Pearson Longman: 2007), 54

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> The American Heritage, *Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition* (Houngton Miffin Company), 27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Longman Dictionary of American English... 9