

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter one as an introduction covers the description of the research background. It consists of rationale, research questions, research objectives, scope of the study and weight & relevance.

1.1 Rationale

Nowadays, even though some students chose to pursue further education, particularly in English language education, some of them still have lack proficiency in the four basic English skills, one of them is reading. Unlike their school days, English in college is much more complex. Therefore, some students have difficulty to understand the text and do not have good understanding of the text structure because they are difficult to determine the main idea, finding specific information (scanning), making inferences and understading the meaning of words / detailing information. According to Amalia Rakhmyta & Maulidiyah (2021) stated that one of factors of student's difficulties typically encountered within the learning process. The factors that affect students' reading comprehension in college, include the reading difficulties they face.

Students in college may encounter several reading difficulties, such as determine the main idea, finding specific information (scanning), making inferences and understading the meaning of words / detailing information. These difficulties can be caused by the complexity of vocabulary and concepts at the college level, as well as higher reading demands. Additionally, students may

struggle with reading at an adequate speed and accuracy. Another factor is the ineffective learning strategies that students employ. Students who lack effective learning strategies may have difficulty in understanding texts. Effective learning strategies include active reading, annotating, summarizing, organizing information, and asking questions. Students who are less skilled in using these strategies may struggle to organize information, to make connections between ideas, and extract meaning from complex texts.

According to Amin & Wahyudin (2022), reading is a crucial role in enabling students to access valuable resources and enhance their English proficiency. For instance, it allowed them to encounter new English vocabulary that they may not come across in their everyday conversations. However, the problem is in the students' limited enthusiasm for reading, which hinders their progress in developing master reading skills. Fauziah & Dania (2021) argued that students' difficulties in reading comprehension do not occur in high school, but also in higher institution finds difficulties in reading encountered by learners. Reading is an activity that can provide insight and reveal all the secret of science. In addition, Fauziah & Dania (2021) also stated mastering reading is fundamental for students as it serves as the foundation for studying scientific subjects. Engaging this activity enables individuals to acquire new information and expand their knowledge. It needs the capacity to comprehend, process, and derive meaning from reading material, facilitating the formation of correct conclusions. Reading involves gaining command over information presents through print media, and it is essentially the skill of extracting meaning from text. Therefore, one of the essential ability ways

in achieving good English is reading comprehension. Reading comprehension helps students to comprehend what the text means. Students use the text to draw inferences. Reading allows students to acquire new knowledge, and it stands as a critical determinant of success or failure in learning English.

Many students perceived reading as a challenging skill struggling to achieve reading proficiency, which is leading for comprehension (Tatipang et al., 2021). However, students' reading abilities remain inadequate in practice. This can be a sign that the students are having trouble reading and comprehending the text. They have a very hard time locating the key words in the text while making decisions about it. Students' limited language skills and the difference between reading texts in a foreign language and their native language cause these issues. It's possible that students have better literacy skills in their native language. When reading English literature, many aspects of language proficiency should be taken into account.

In previous study, “An Investigation into the Reading Comprehension Problems faced by the Pakistani Students at University Level” by (Ali et al., 2022). The research collected the information to know the reading comprehension problems faced by students at university level specifically in the students of Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST) Kohat and Federally Administered Tribal Areas, FATA University, District Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The research also has the result, there are some of the problems highlighted by the study regarding reading comprehension; not understanding long sentences, weak grammar, lack of vocabulary, frequently consulting dictionary, and lack of English texts reading. The results show that the students have difficulty in understanding

long sentences (53.12%), weak grammar (57.8%), frequently consulting dictionary (31.28%), lack of vocabulary (45.31%), and lack of English texts reading (42%).

According to the data of UNESCO as cited in Lenggo Ginny et al., (2022), The level of interest in reading among Indonesian citizens is still low, estimated at approximately 0.001%. A study from the Central Connecticut State University also stated that Indonesia ranks 60th out of 61 countries in terms of reading interest. However, data from the National Library suggests that Indonesia's reading interest index in 2020 was moderate, sitting at around 53.84. In reality, we also can find around us that many students have difficulties in reading for many reasons such as lack of vocabulary that causes of students are having no to desire read English text, etc.

Students will have reading difficulty if improper use for reading comprehension. The students are overwhelmed by the text and struggle to locate its main idea. As a result, the researcher is eager to learn more about the students' English reading comprehension issues. Reading is an important activity for everyone, but especially for Universitas Kuningan English Education Study Program students because it is involved in every aspect of their academic life. Reading comprehension difficulty is a significant issue to address because reading is regarded as a necessity in all spheres of life, particularly in the process of learning English. Because many students still do not comprehend the meaning of the text, it is expected that students learn such as in determining the main idea, understanding the meaning of words, making inferences and detail information.

There are some previous researches that supported and inspired the research. The first research is “An Analysis of Students’ Difficulties in Reading Comprehension” by (Septia et al., 2022). This research aimed to identify the challenges students face in learning reading comprehension at a public high school in Bangka, as well as the underlying factors contributing to these difficulties. The study focuses on eighth-grade students in Bangka, employing a descriptive qualitative methodology. Following the collection of students' test scores, their difficulties were analyzed, and the frequency of each difficulty determines through tabulation and calculation. The identified difficulties included struggles in answering main idea questions (53.67%), vocabulary questions (47.84%), and making inference questions (45.34%). Four main factors were found to influencing students difficulties in reading comprehension namely students' motivation in learning reading was low because they did not want to read English material and were uninterested in reading, students' difficulties reading text and translating English meaning, lack of facilities at their school which did not supply adequate reading material for them, the last one was the home setting; a parent's participation in providing kid support was critical.

The second research is “An Analysis of Student’s Difficulties in Reading Comprehension At Vocational High School in Padang” by (Syafutri Lisiana & Mega Putri, 2021). This study aimed to identify the primary factors contributing to the challenges faced by class X OTKP students at SMK N 3 Padang in comprehending reading materials. Random sampling was employed as the data collection technique. The research utilized tests, questionnaires, and interviews as

instruments. To collect data, the sample consisted of 26 students who underwent testing and completed a questionnaire comprising 10 statements. The test results revealed that the majority of students struggled with understanding vocabulary. Based on the result of the research, 82% of students were reported having difficulty in understanding vocabulary in the questionnaire, 43% of students struggle with understanding reading materials due to excessively long texts. Furthermore, 46% of students encounter difficulties with reading strategies. Based on the test results and the percentages of these three levels, it can be concluded that the most dominant factor contributing to reading comprehension difficulties is vocabulary mastery.

The third research is “An Investigation into the Reading Comprehension Problems Faced by the Pakistani Students at University Level” by (Ali et al., 2022). Reading is a crucial and fundamental aspect of language acquisition, serving various purposes. However, achieving expertise in reading comprehension is a challenging and time-consuming endeavor. Thus, the primary objective of this investigation was to explore the challenges in Reading Comprehension (RC) encountered by university-level students. The study aimed to uncover the difficulties in reading comprehension experienced by English language learners in general and specifically by students enrolled at Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST) and FATA University in District Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Researchers surveyed 64 students and interviewed 9 teachers from the English departments of KUST and FATA University using a Likert-scale questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings of this research unveiled several key issues regarding to reading comprehension, including

difficulties in understanding long sentences, weak grasp of grammar, limited vocabulary, overreliance on dictionaries, and insufficient engagement with English texts. Furthermore, the study indicated that English educators actively encouraged students to prioritize and to recognize reading as a vital skill for language acquisition.

From the researchers above, the researcher has the reasons why the researcher chooses this topic that attract the attention to find out what students' difficulties and the causes of difficulties in Reading Comprehension are. For several reasons as follows; 1) reading comprehension difficulties do not just occur in high school but also in higher education have difficulties in reading comprehension. Some of the researchers' object conduct in high school, but the researcher takes the object of higher education in Indonesia, specifically at Universitas Kuningan, the second semester students in the academic year of 2023/2024. 2) Even though they choose to continue their studies and major in English education, some of them still do not understand about the text that they have read by paying attention to various things, this research uses the theory of reading comprehension from Nuttal (2018) as cited in F. Fahmi, (2023) there are determining the main idea, finding specific information, making inferences and understanding the meaning of words. 3) it is also has the difficulties in reading comprehension are caused by three factors. The researcher uses the theory from Rahim (2006) in Fauziah & Dania, (2021). They are lack of interest in reading English (long English text), lazy to learn English material and house environment. This research also find out students' strategies to overcome the difficulties in reading comprehension.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the statement above, the researcher determines the research questions, namely :

1. What are the difficulties faced by students in reading comprehension?
2. What are the causes of difficulties in reading comprehension at higher education?
3. How to overcome the students difficulties in reading comprehension?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions above, the research objectives of the research are :

1. To find out students' difficulties in reading comprehension.
2. To find out the causes of difficulties in reading comprehension.
3. To find out students' strategies to overcome the difficulties in reading comprehension.

1.4 Scope Of Research

To limit the research, this research focuses on analysis of students' difficulties in reading comprehension at higher education by using qualitative method. The researcher conducts the research in reading class at the 2nd semester students of English Department of Universitas Kuningan. Furthermore, the research also concerns about the factors of students' difficulties in reading comprehension at higher education such as determining the main idea, understanding the meaning of words, making inference and understanding vocabulary / detail information and

the causes of students' difficulties in reading comprehension at higher education such as lack of interest in reading (long English text), lazy to learn English material and students' environment that affect the students in reading comprehension. The findings of this research make students aware of their reading difficulties using the strategies provided.

1.5 Weight and Relevance

The result of the research expects to give contributions in both theoretical and practical point of view. These two points of view are as follows:

Theoretically, this research is intended to help readers to find out what the difficulties of some students in Reading Comprehension are. When the readers read this research, they will know the reasons why some students have difficulties and causes in reading comprehension especially at higher education.

Practically, this research helps students to use the best method for Reading Comprehension. After the readers know about student's difficulties in reading comprehension, this research has some optional strategies in reading comprehension.