

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

The English language focuses on four skill language skills that are taught by the learning process, such as reading, listening, speaking, and writing. In this modern society, people improve their English language skills to improve their value and achievement, especially reading skills. The basic skill that learners must consider is reading skills, which is vital for a beginner in the English language. Reading has essential aspects to comprehension of a word and text. Reading comprehension aims to look for the pattern and specific context of the text intensively. Learners expected can practice correctly in reading comprehension to avoid reading errors. Besides, in Al-Quran Al-‘Alaq verse 1:

اِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

Based on that verse, Allah leads us to read in universal context. Muhammad SAW was forced to read three times by Allah. Read means Allah precepts to Muhammad SAW to analyze and explore various kinds of science. Allah precept science that forms into affection that bonds as inscription, to make us read what we have to learn. Even though there is not only a definition of reading, but it could also mean a human view of something. Thus, as human beings, Allah allowed us to improve our knowledge by reading or seeing something. Humans strongly connect with Allah as the command to enhance their knowledge. Thus, reading is crucial

to understanding the learning process and giving information to get the best result. English foreign language (EFL) in general complicated to spell a word in English language, limited vocabulary, and lack of knowledge of words, phrases, and even paragraphs.

The ultimate goal of the reading activity is the ability to understand phonological awareness. readers must refer to extensive reading by phonological awareness the skill of identifying and manipulating units and parts of oral languages, such as words, syllables, onsets, and rimes." Hence, EFL learners aim for intensive reading activity in micro-skills to recognize the pattern of a word (D'Angelo, Nadia ; Boucher, Kathleen Hipfner, 2017).

In addition, EFL learners usually find it complicated to recognize the alphabetic knowledge, pattern and context of the text. This research aims for learners to be concerned about phonemic awareness to recognize the pattern of the sound rhyme in a word. The problem is that it would be a different meaning if learners cannot spell a word correctly. However, reading comprehension aims to improve learners' vocabulary, main idea, grammatical structure, etc. Therefore, in daily activities and even for educational purposes must pay attention to developing reading skills.

There are several kinds of research related to this research. One of study related to this research is by Alhumsi (2020), which focused on phonemic awareness and word recognition of EFL learners. Phonemic awareness is defined in several progressive levels that describe the student's level of segmenting words. This research used semi-structured interviews

with students. Conducted the interview participants are native speakers aged seven years on average. The component of a word could make students hard to understand a segmentation. This research has a different variable that focuses on word recognition. Data collection used semi-structured interview questions with a qualitative study. The children's constituent sounds of a word by the instruction of phonemic segmentation (Tunmer, Herriman, & Nesdale, 1988).

In another research related by Yoshikawa & Yamashita (2014), the similarity of data collection in this research focuses on phonemic awareness tests, vocabulary tests, decoding tests, and reading comprehension. However, focus measures such as blending, counting, deletion, isolation, oddity, and segmentation are used in phonemic awareness. They choose students English learners with at least six years of Japanese educational system with a different background individually. The differences of this researcher are from the variable measurement and different part measurement on phonemic awareness because Indonesia has a different characteristic to pronounce a word. Also, the differences in research are that they used subject stratified random sampling.

Last, research related by Liu (2014) has a different variable that measures various aspects of students' English learning: Phonological awareness, alphabetic knowledge, letter-sound correspondence, word reading, word decoding abilities, paragraph reading, and reading comprehension. The similarity of this research used correlation and

quantitative descriptive statistics to analyse data collection, and the study used a questionnaire. Even though it helps EFL learners develop their understanding ability to read aloud and learn how to decode English words. In this research, would illustrated that phonemic awareness is a crucial consideration for basic skill in reading. The previous study argued as soon as possible in early learning children able to process more phonological data (Miralpeix, 2011).

This research will take place at Islamic State Antasari University, in their Tarbiyah and Teacher Training chosen in English Department. The study location is very interesting because their department teaches phonology. This department provides phonology as a core subject for English students to improve student English language. Thus, students' ability in phonology would be attractive to find out.

The data collection would be obtained from fifth-semester students that who have studied phonology subjects in English Department. However, students have basic pronunciation skills to recognize how to spell the sound in their first semester and they learn about phonology in their third semester. This research focuses on their ability to recognize phonemic awareness through the researcher also investigate the correlation between phonemic awareness and reading comprehension. This research title is **“The Influence of Phonemic Awareness on Reading Comprehension as EFL learners.”**

B. Research Questions

1. How is students' phonemic awareness?
2. Is there any correlation between student's phonemic awareness and reading comprehension?

C. Objectives of Study

1. To describe how is the student's phonemic awareness.
2. To describe the correlation between students' phonemic awareness and reading comprehension.

D. Hypothesis

1. Research hypotheses (H_0): There is a low correlation between phonemic awareness and reading comprehension.
2. Research Hypotheses (H_a): There is a high correlation between students' phonemic awareness and reading comprehension.

E. Significance of Study

This study is also expected to impact students for educational purposes. It hopefully could provide students with much information about phonemic awareness and reading comprehension to complete their tasks. If they could improve their phonemic awareness or reading comprehension skills, they can use this research as a reference. Therefore, it would help students' interest in reading.

The result of this research is expected to provide information about phonemic awareness and reading comprehension to help the lecture/teacher in learning activities. Teachers could develop an attractive and helpful way

to teach students. However, in phonemic awareness and reading comprehension, researchers discuss the correlation. The lecturer/teacher could encourage students to be concerned about phonemic awareness to reading carefully, which would help the teacher build students to read intensively.

This exciting research may help the next researcher to expand information about phonemic awareness and reading comprehension. The next researcher may develop their next study to improve their reading material. Therefore, hopefully the result of this research may be helpful for people to make them more interested in reading and could help students to articulate English words.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness is understanding the broken spoken words into individual phonemes. This research will focus on the most difficult measure of phonemic awareness skills. There are five levels of measuring phonemic awareness skills: recognition rhyme, generating rhyme, identifying phoneme, blending phoneme, and substitution phoneme.

2. EFL Learners

EFL learners is English as a foreign language in learning English that is not used as their first language. Learning a language concerning how to pronounce or produce sound is the basic skill in reading. Syntax in reading comprehension is how the pattern of a word, especially in

phonological awareness; one part is phonemic awareness. EFL learners are expected to reach reading ability that they could improve.

3. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is ability to read with understanding in extensively and intensively. This research focus on micro-skills necessary to improve knowledge in comprehend the pattern of a word or sentences. There are measurement components of reading comprehension such as: decoding, vocabulary, syntactic, discourse, effective aspect, and readiness aspect.