

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents the introduction of this research. It consists of six sections. The first section talks about the background why the researcher was interested to investigate the topic. Next, the researcher formulates the problems relating to the topic. It is followed by the research questions. Then, the researcher explains the purposes of the research and the significance of the research. Last, the researcher mentions the outline of the research.

Background of the Study

English is an international language used in worldwide communication. English has become a mean of communication that dominates all fields such as sciences, technology, communication, politics, economy, trade, banking, culture, art, film, and education. According to Erdem-Keklik (2011) and Sindhedkar (2012), English is internationally used by all countries in this world. Some countries use this language as a foreign language while other countries use this language as a second language. This statement means that the countries that English is not their mother tongue or first language use and learn English as their second language or a foreign language.

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language. English is the knowledge that Indonesians need to learn. Most of Indonesian students learn English from junior high school to senior high school. For elementary school, there are only some schools who have introduced English for their students. Besides, learning English is more important to be learnt in university. For example, Universitas

Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) requires the students to learn English. To prepare them to face globalization era, UMY encourages each student to understand English in both written and spoken. Students of every major get an English subject during their study at UMY, and in the end of the study they must pass a certain TOEFL score proven by TOEFL certificate as a measurement of their English proficiency and as a requirement to graduate from the university (UMY, 2015).

There are many kinds of English proficiency tests that can be taken by the students such as IELTS, TOEIC and TOEFL. Commonly, UMY requires students to achieve a certain TOEFL score as the measurement of their English proficiency. Each department at UMY possesses a different regulation of a TOEFL score that students should achieve in order to graduate. Some students assume that it is difficult to get a certain TOEFL score to fulfill the standard of graduation. The common issue occurring among students is that they cannot graduate on time because their TOEFL score does not meet the university requirement (Habiby & Adi, 2015). Students undergo some difficulties in achieving a certain TOEFL score which is determined by the university maybe because of some factors such as lack of English practice, lack of motivation in learning English, not using English in daily conversation, and having low English skills. In order to achieve the standard graduation in university, they should face those problems and find some solutions.

There are many solutions to overcome students' difficulties in achieving a good score in TOEFL. One of those solutions is joining TOEFL preparation

course. For instance, at UMY there is Language Training Center (LTC) which provides a TOEFL preparation course. LTC is a center that has responsibility for the development of language teaching and learning of all university members and stockholders of UMY. In order to achieve its goal, the LTC provides several language courses. One of them is TOEFL preparation course.

Based on the researcher experience when joining International Language Testing lecture at English Education Department (EED) of UMY, she learnt TOEFL preparation. After joining the lecture, her TOEFL score in post-test improved from the pre-test. Most of the students in her class also increase their TOEFL score. The researcher assumed that it was no wonder why the students increased their TOEFL score because they were in EED major where English was their daily lesson. The increasing score of EED students made the researcher interested to investigate TOEFL preparation but in other course which has variant students from all majors at UMY. Therefore, the researcher intends to investigate TOEFL preparation course at LCT. It raised curiosity of the researcher to find out whether or not joining TOEFL preparation course at the LTC of UMY has a significant effect on the students' TOEFL score achievement. To provide answers of this curiosity, the researcher carried out a study on this topic entitled "The Effects of Joining TOEFL Preparation Course toward Students' TOEFL-Like Score Achievement at the Language Training Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta."

There are some researchers who have investigated TOEFL preparation course toward students' TOEFL score in previous studies. Most of them are focus

on some strategies used in the course. The purpose of the studies is commonly to prove the effectiveness of the strategies used in the course. The previous researchers also just investigate a class of TOEFL preparation course. Therefore, this study is different from them because this study is focus on the number of effect size or the effect size of improvement score that students achieved after joining TOEFL preparation course. Moreover, this study measured many classes with different students' background of major.

The Formulation of Problems

One of the graduation policies at UMY is that all students from all majors should take a TOEFL test to accomplish their study. The test is presumed necessary because being able to communicate in English is one of the requirements of either working or pursuing next degrees. Commonly, the standard of graduations depends on its department. Each department may have a different TOEFL score standard.

Students of UMY find that achieving a certain score of TOEFL is quite challenging. Some of issues considered as the causes of the difficulties in achieving the TOEFL score standard are the students' motivation, students' background and the TOEFL materials (Dewi, et al., 2015). To deal with these problems, there are some solutions that students can do to prepare their TOEFL test and achieve better TOEFL score such as joining TOEFL preparation course.

One way for students to be ready to face the TOEFL test is by joining the TOEFL preparation course. In joining this TOEFL preparation course, students will be guided, trained, and well prepared to take the test. Students will get new

knowledge. For example, students will get useful tips when taking the test. More specifically, the course will direct and provide some strategies of each session of the TOEFL test. These strategies are very useful and helpful for students during taking the test. In the TOEFL preparation course, students will also be taught to enrich the English basic skills tested in TOEFL.

There are three skills tested in the TOEFL test, namely listening, grammar (structure and written expression), and reading. In listening section, students will learn the techniques to listen and capture the intent of the speaker. In grammar structure, students will be taught some grammar lesson which is commonly tested in TOEFL. The teacher will explain clearly and give some strategies. In reading section, students will acquire special techniques to read quickly and properly. After joining TOEFL preparation course, students are expected to be successful in the TOEFL test. Thus, it is possible that there is a significant effect of joining TOEFL preparation course on students' TOEFL-Like score achievement. To know deeply whether or not it has a significant effect, the researcher needs an investigation to know what the effect is.

The Research Questions

Considering the research background and formulation of the problems, this research attempts to answer two questions. The research questions are written as follows:

1. How is the students' TOEFL-Like score achievement?
2. What is the effect of joining TOEFL preparation course toward students' TOEFL-Like score achievement at the Language Training Center of UMY?

The Purposes of the Research

Based on the research questions, this study has two purposes written as follows:

1. To know the students' TOEFL-Like score achievement
2. To know the effect of joining TOEFL preparation course on students' TOEFL-Like score achievement at the Language Training Center of UMY.

The Significances of the Research

At the end of this study, the researcher expects this research will give some benefits for teachers, students, institution or course, other researchers and the researcher herself.

The researcher. The research can be useful to the researcher to experience in doing research especially for her requirement to pass her study in university. The researcher also be able to gain some knowledge and implemented this study that she has investigated.

Teachers. For the teacher who teach TOEFL preparation course, this study can be an evaluation of activities that the teachers implement in teaching TOEFL preparation course.

Students. This study can provide information for students that joining TOEFL preparation course can be a strategy to help them improve their TOEFL score.

Institutions. This study can be a reflection and evaluation for Language Training Center of UMY regarding to its TOEFL preparation course. For other institutions, the researcher hope that the research results can be an example for them to do evaluation.

Other researchers. This research is expected to be a good reference to other researchers who have the similar research topic to this study.

The Outline of the Research

In chapter one, the researcher writes research background, the formulation of problem, the research question, the purpose of the research, the significant of the research, and the outline of the research. In chapter two, the researcher explains the literature review which is related to the research topic. In chapter three, the researcher presents the methodology used in this research, the respondents, the instrument, the data collection, and the analysis of the data. In chapter four, the researcher explores the findings and discussion. In chapter five, the researcher summarizes the study in the conclusion.