**Chapter One**

**Introduction**

This chapter presents the general information about the research. This chapter includes background of the research, identification of the problems, and limitation of the problem. Moreover, this chapter shows research questions, purposes of the research, and significances of the research.

**Background of the Research**

Every person has ability to solve his or her problem that is proceeded in the brain and commonly called as intelligence. Intelligence is not only about cognitive ability as stated by Gardner (1993) who argued that intelligence is the combination of different abilities. Gardner viewed that intelligence is not only both linguistic and logical-mathematic abilities but also there are still many varieties of intelligence. It means that when a student gets a low score in mathematics but he is really good at sports, then the student cannot be judged as a slow-witted student. Every person certainly has intelligence in a different way.

In recent years, some researchers are interested in investigating multiple intelligences in language learning. Savas (2012) believed that multiple intelligences play a role in a language learning process. It provides students' need and allows them to apply and develops their intelligences that will influence students' learning, such as students feel happy if they learn a subject in an appropriate learning method based on their dominant intelligence type (Rad & Rahanama, 2015). Then, it can be assumed that students might be able to understand the subject easily and optimize their competence in gratifying learning

situation. Moreover, Maftoon and Sarem (2012) argued that multiple intelligences provide students with an opportunity in choosing learning activities. Indeed, multiple intelligences give improvement in language learning for students in developing their competences.

In the beginning, the researcher was confused in looking for a title for her undergraduate thesis. The researcher read many articles and journals about English teaching and learning from internet. The researcher hoped that she would get an inspiration for her undergraduate thesis's topic. Then, the researcher found an article about multiple intelligences and she was curious about it. After the researcher read many articles and journals about multiple intelligences, the researcher found that multiple intelligences play an important role in developing students' competences and designing learning activities. Afterward, mostly there is no previous undergraduate thesis about multiple intelligences at EED of UMY. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a research about multiple intelligences at EED of UMY.

Reading as one of the language skills is a process to get information. Sofiyatun (2009) stated that the competence of reading comprehension influences learning success. It can be assumed that reading plays an important role in a learning process. Furthermore, some lecturers of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta also provide a learning activity which aims to make reading become students' habit. In doing the activity, the lecturers ask students to read a certain article or book chapter. Then, the lecturers give questions about the reading and students should answer the question based on their understanding without opening

the text. Reading is not only to know about the content but also to get the purpose of the writer namely reading comprehension (Jokar & Hesabi, 2014; Sabet & Kiaee, 2016). Indeed, reading comprehension is needed in reading question and Test of English as a Foreign Language Paper-based Test (TOEFL-PBT) as a test for English foreign ability has reading section that also needs competence of reading comprehension in order to answer the questions.

The researcher once did conversational interview with some students of English Education Department (EED) of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY), and six out of ten students consider that TOEFL score is important for their study and career. It is because EED of UMY has standardized the TOEFL score for students as one of graduation requirements. Furthermore, when the students plan to get their master degree, they need a TOEFL score because it is also one of the requirements to study at both domestic and international academic institutions. Besides, some workplaces also make TOEFL score as a requirement for their employee candidates. Therefore, EED of UMY students need to learn TOEFL to get a maximum score for their graduation.

In addition, TOEFL-like PBT has three main sections. They are listening section, structure and written expression section and reading section. Reading section in TOEFL-like test is an important section because it needs comprehension and certainly takes more time to answer the questions. However, based on researcher's experience when doing TOEFL-like test that reading TOEFL-like is placed on the last section of the test, it makes the researcher do it quickly to chase time and it causes the researcher lack of focus while reading

TOEFL-like test. Based on score document of International Language Testing (ILT) course in academic year 2015/2016, students' average reading score is 464 and this score achieved the standard score that is 450. Then, the researcher is interested in investigating students' reading TOEFL-like score batch 2014 at ILT course. ILT course provides TOEFL-like that prepared students to face the real TOEFL test. Whereas, reading comprehension questions in TOEFL test consist of main idea, directly and implied detail questions which is required test-takers to comprehend the reading (Philips, 2001). Accordingly, students should have good comprehension competence and good time management in doing reading TOEFL-like test.

Since reading comprehension is needed by EED of UMY students not only in reading assessment like TOEFL test but the students also use their reading comprehension to gather the information for doing their research. In this context, the intelligence plays an important role, so that the students have to know their intelligence to enhance their potential in reading comprehension. Furthermore, the researcher did a mini research that investigated EED of UMY batch 2014 students' most dominant multiple intelligence. The researcher found that students' most dominant multiple intelligence is existential intelligence (See Appendix A).

Existential intelligence as one of multiple intelligence types has some characteristics. People with existential intelligence are interested in philosophy and have high curiosity on some unusual questions like why they exist in this world, what is meaning of life (Hajhashemi, Akef & Anderson, 2012; Heidari & Panahandeh, 2013; Maftoon & Sarem, 2012). Moreover, Logsdon (2016) said that

existential person think critically on nature of existence and reality of this universe. It can be assumed that existential people use their critical thinking ability to think all their curiosity. According to Duron, Limbach and Waugh (2006), critical thinking is the brain's ability "to analyze and evaluate information (p. 160). Besides, reading comprehension is also the brain ability to analyze authors' meaning of the text. Furthermore, the researcher is interested to investigate the relation between existential intelligence as EED of UMY students' most dominant multiple intelligence and their reading comprehension in TOEFL-like test. It is because both of them are same as a cognitive process in the brain.

In addition, some researchers have different results in investigating correlation between multiple intelligences and reading comprehension. Sabet and Kiaee (2016) found that multiple intelligences have positive correlation with students' reading comprehension. Fahim, Bagherkazemi and Alemi (2010) also examined the relationship between test takers' multiple intelligences and their performance on the reading sections of TOEFL and IELTS. The findings revealed that some intelligence types of multiple intelligences are correlated with reading TOEFL and IELTS. However, Razmjoo (2008) found that there was not a significant correlation between both combination of intelligences in general and types of intelligences in particular and language proficiency. Hence, the researcher is interested to know possible relationship between students' existential intelligence as the students' most dominant multiple intelligence and their reading comprehension in TOEFL-like at EED of UMY batch 2014.

**Identification of the Problems**

   Many studies argued that multiple intelligences play a role in EFL teaching and learning. Multiple intelligences also allow the students to develop their potential, so they can understand their intelligence type and the teachers are able to provide an appropriate method and many activities for all students with their intelligence types. However, there are nine types of multiple intelligences. There are verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, spatial/visual, musical, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and existential intelligences (Gardner, 1999). Then, the researcher has time, energy and cost limitation in doing a research, so the researcher cannot investigates EED of UMY students' all types of multiple intelligences.

   Besides, multiple intelligences might be develop students' competence especially EED of UMY students. They have to improve their language skills that consist of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Therefore, it can be predicted that multiple intelligences correlate with students' language skills proficiency. Then, multiple intelligences might also affect students' language skills proficiency. All of these possibilities need many times and energies to investigate. Therefore, the researcher only investigates one possibility about correlation between students' most multiple intelligence and their reading comprehension.

   TOEFL score is an important thing for EED of UMY students. EED UMY has standardized the TOEFL score for students as one of graduation requirements. Moreover, TOEFL also becomes one of requirements for students who want to get

master degree in domestic or international academic institutions. Thus, EED of UMY students have to optimize their TOEFL score to get their needed score.

Based on the researcher's experience when doing TOEFL-like test which consists of listening, structure and written expression and reading sections, the researcher did less focus when doing reading section. It is because reading section is placed on the last section of the test, and then it makes the researcher do it quickly to chase time. Then, the researcher thought that students' time management was involved by their intrapersonal intelligence as one type of multiple intelligences. Intrapersonal intelligence is self-desires or a strong feeling that person wants something, self-discipline or a dedication to oneself to be holding responsibility and controlling gratification (Fahim, Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010; Javanmard, 2012). It can be assumed that students' intrapersonal intelligence involved their time management in doing reading section of TOEFL-like test. Therefore, the researcher endeavors to do a research on the correlation between students' most dominant multiple intelligence and their reading comprehension in TOEFL-like. It is hoped that students are able to optimize their competence in reading comprehension through their dominant intelligence type. Then, students are able to use their comprehension competence while doing reading TOEFL-like test in limited time in order to achieve TOEFL score that they need.

**Limitation of the Problem**

The researcher limits this study in order to get specific results. Based on the above problems that have been identified, the researcher only limit this research on the EED of UMY students' most dominant intelligence type among multiple intelligences, students' reading comprehension score in TOEFL-like, and also the correlation both of them. The researcher is only interested in TOEFL reading section because the researcher believes that reading comprehension is a crucial skill for EFL students. However, the impact of students' most dominant multiple intelligence toward students' reading comprehension in TOEFL-like is uncounted. This research only investigates the correlation both dependent and independent variables which are students' reading comprehension in TOEFL-like and students' most dominant intelligence type among multiple intelligences.

**Research Questions**

To achieve the purposes of the research, these following three research questions are:

1. How is students' most dominant multiple intelligence at EED of UMY batch 2014?

2. How is EED of UMY batch 2014 students' TOEFL-like reading comprehension score?

3. What is the correlation between students' most dominant multiple intelligence of EED of UMY batch 2014 and their reading comprehension in TOEFL-like?

**Purposes of the Research**

The purposes of this research can be identified as follows:

1. to identify how the students' most dominant multiple intelligence at EED of UMY batch 2014 is.

2. to reveal how the students' TOEFL-like reading comprehension score at EED of UMY batch 2014 is.

3. to know what the correlation between students' most dominant multiple intelligence of EED of UMY batch 2014 and their reading comprehension in TOEFL-like is.

**Significances of the Research**

This study is hoped to give advantages for researcher of this study, students, lecturers and next researchers.

**Researcher of this study.** This study gives benefits for the researcher in developing her knowledge on multiple intelligences in language learning. Then, the researcher knows every student has different intelligence type. Accordingly, the researcher is able to prepare herself in her future teaching.

**Students.** This study contributes significantly for students in knowing their types of intelligence among multiple intelligences. Then, they are able to choose a suitable learning strategy to solve their difficulty faced in language learning. This study also states how important reading comprehension for students is, so hopefully, they can optimize their comprehension ability in reading.

**Lecturers.** This study helps lecturers to choose the appropriate English language teaching method based on students' intelligence types among multiple

intelligences. Then, this research suggests designing various classroom activities in order to develop students' abilities and potentials. This research also proposes English teachers or lecturers to provide a classroom activity to make reading become students' habit.

   **Next researchers.** This study might give benefit for next researchers who are interested to conduct a research in the same field. The results of this study will give additional information of multiple intelligences and reading comprehension in TOEFL-test. Then, this study also might become a reference to conduct further research with different research design or methodology.