

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Reading comprehension is one of the essential things in learning English. It becomes important to understand what the writers of the text try to present in their writing. More than understanding the text, the students need to be capable to breakdown, to analyze, and to re-organize ideas and information in the text (Mckee, 2012). Furthermore, it could help the students to develop their mind. Understanding the written word is one of the ways to make mind grows in its ability so that it assists the readers in developing their language skills. By realizing the benefits of reading, it will be easier to discover new things in written text.

Reading comprehension consists of several skills that readers need to master in order to be able to answer questions. According to Nuttal (1982), the skills of reading comprehension are finding topic and main ideas, finding detailed and factual information, making inference, checking vocabulary in context, and checking the referring word. These skills are regarded as the difficulties that the students encounter in comprehending English texts.

At university, reading is one of English basic skills that become one of mandatory subjects the students need to pass in order to be able to contract other compulsory subjects. The researcher found out that to comprehend English text is not easy especially at university level that requires higher

understanding. Moreover, students who have just entered the semester will face some difficulties in reading English-language texts at the university level if they are not able to master the skills of reading. It is kind of difficult to capture the contents of the text if the reader cannot understand the text given. In order to overcome this problem, it is possible to find out the difficulties and the causes of those problems itself. Therefore, the way to improve students' skill in reading can be found. Then, the researcher wants to see the causes of the problem in each skills arises that faced by students.

Meanwhile, the possibility of students who have fewer problems in reading activities need to be explored more. It intends to develop students' skill more in reading comprehension by elaborating deeper understanding of each student. It is also possible to know what strategies which are usually used by the students as the preparation to do reading activity. Furthermore, knowing the difficulties and the strategies of the students in reading comprehension is necessary. It could be a better start to know the causes of those difficulties faced by the students in comprehending English texts and how the students comprehend the text in certain ways. Based on the background described above, the researcher is interested in finding out and analyzing **“Students’ Difficulties and Strategies in Comprehending English Texts at English Department of Universitas Jambi”**.

## **1.2 Research Problems**

1. What are the causes of difficulties experienced by the students in comprehending English texts?

2. What strategies do the students frequently use in comprehending English texts?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

1. To find out the causes of the difficulties that the students experienced in comprehending English texts.
2. To describe the strategies frequently used by the students in comprehending English texts.

### **1.4 Limitation of the Research**

This research conducted at English department of Universitas Jambi. For the topic, the researcher focused on the causes and the difficulties of English Department students in comprehending English texts and described the strategies that are used by the students to comprehend English texts.

### **1.5 Significance of the Research**

Hopefully, this research provides some contributions for the lecturers in order to find the methods which applied in teaching reading in order to help the students in comprehending texts by recognizing the cause of difficulties. The result of this study is expected to help the students to improve their reading in English and to be one of the references for those who want to conduct similar research.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

Reading Comprehension is the ability to understand the essence of a text based on what the writer tells to the reader appropriately.

Reading Difficulty is a situation where the students are not capable to comprehend the material in reading text during teaching and learning process.

Reading Learning Strategy is the action or steps in terms of behaviors and techniques used to learn reading taken by students to enhance their ways in learning.