

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents: (1) background, (2) research problem, (3) research objective, and (4) significance of the study.

1.1 Background

English as a foreign language is used in daily life because is used to communicate so that the demand of English learning has risen along with English proliferation globally. According to Faizal (2011) English as a foreign language, indicates the use of English in a non-English-speaking region. English as a foreign language (EFL) refers to the use or study of English by speakers with different native languages. This means person who is studying English in a non-English-speaking country is EFL learner. For Indonesia learners, English is taught as compulsory subject in Junior High School and Senior High School, including the vocational school. In addition, English as one subject is taught to the students at school. More specifically, there is a need for more an effective English language education curriculum in order to produce graduates who are able to communicate at the national and international levels. It means competence of English be a requirement for students so that after they graduate from school they are able to use English in daily life.

For knowing students' fluency, they will be tested or measured for their English skills. In measuring fluency in English, a TOEFL score

is needed. The test of English as a foreign language or so-called TOEFL was developed in 1963 under the direction of Professor Dr. Charles A. Ferguson at Stanford University TOEFL is one of English fluency test or competence of English with the skills being tested namely reading, listening, speaking and writing English (Fanani, 2014). So to find out students' English skills, a TOEFL score is needed.

There is an importance of TOEFL test in education which the main point of the test is measured students' competence of English skills. Nurhayati and Giri (2015) stated that the TOEFL has now become a trend in academia and is also a requirement for entering and graduating college. It is supported by Noviyenty (2018), TOEFL is used as a measure of the ability of national and international students to use English in an academic environment. In line with the statement, Zuhayana (2018) stated that TOEFL is used for most American universities require international students both undergraduate and postgraduate, to take the TOEFL test. Therefore, in education, TOEFL is very important because it is used as a condition for entering and graduating from college.

In Indonesia, a TOEFL score is also required as a requirement for graduating from college and school. Therefore, TOEFL is taught in schools, especially in high school. According to Sari (2019), TOEFL is indeed very important to be introduced to high school students. They

believe that the introduction of the TOEFL can provide benefits to students for both academic and specific purposes such as graduation requirements and following programs related to the integrity of the TOEFL score. Teaching the TOEFL to high school students is new to teachers. They realize that there are many challenges they face while teaching TOEFL test preparation in schools. According to the teacher's response, there were several obstacles they faced while teaching the TOEFL such as differences in students' language skills, poor vocabulary mastery of students, problems with pronunciation and listening skills, student fatigue, and students' passive attitudes and not serious in learning. The problem above is the main problem faced by teachers, namely the challenge in teaching TOEFL for students in senior high school.

Before doing a TOEFL test, students must prepare themselves in order to have test. Ward (1998) stated that to improve English proficiency tests, successful test preparation is required. Several studies have also stated that students who are well prepared for the TOEFL test will improve overall academic performance (Cho & Bridgeman, 2005; Fakeye&Ogunsiji, 2009; Feast, 2002). Moreover, taking an English proficiency test without preparation will waste time and money (Al-Rawashdeh, 2010; Khodadi&Yazdanmehr, 2009; Suryaningsih, 2014). Therefore, participants who want to take the test must prepare themselves to learn so that during the exam participants have the knowledge of how to answer questions in order to improve their performance in order to

reach the score which is determined by the school. In order to improve students' English proficiency, a place is needed to develop students' talents and interests. Talent is an inherent ability in a person which is innate and related to the structure of the brain (Sitiatava, 2013). From the statement above, it is stated that every participant who will take the TOEFL test must prepare himself to be able to answer every question and get a good score.

In teaching TOEFL , a teacher is required to be more creative in carrying out the teaching and learning process of English in the classroom. The density of teaching activities and the lack of training for teachers so that researchers see the need for training in teaching to support self-improvement in teaching English. The ability of English language skills must always be honed so that teachers can improve their competence to support teaching activities to students (Nuroh&Mandarani, 2020). To be able to improve teacher competence, text mastery is a must before starting to teach students because reading is very important in the TOEFL test, especially skills in genre-based texts (Mahfud, 2011). Saif (2006) stated that teachers must understand the process of the test development due to their responsibility during the teaching process. So, to improve the teaching and learning process well, every teacher must always hone his abilities so that he can provide material that is well received by students.

One of the schools which uses TOEFL preparation is SMA

Negeri Sumatera Selatan. The purpose of holding the TOEFL test at SMAN SUMSEL is for used as a requirement to take the national exam with a minimum score of 450 and also for graduation requirement and a benchmark for taking the International IGCSE exam (International Advanced General Certificate of Secondary Education), so that the school decides for teaching TOEFL test preparation at SMA Negeri Sumatera Selatan. This preparation has a goal that students know for answering TOEFL questions.

The preliminary study was conducted by interviewing students and teachers at SMA Negeri Sumatera Selatan (personal communication, P 27 September 2020). Based on interviews, there are several challenges faced by students and teachers in teaching and learning preparation for the TOEFL test, such as students having difficulty in learning the material and answering TOEFL test questions. Meanwhile, teachers experience challenges in teaching, such as, students have difficulty speaking English because of the students' lack of English skills. second, there are differences in each student in understanding each material taught by the teacher. Based on the interviews with students and teachers above, it can be concluded that teachers at SMA Negeri Sumatra Selatan have several challenges in teaching TOEFL test preparation.

Various studies related to the TOEFL challenges have been carried out. Some of them focus on the student's point of view in taking the TOEFL test or preparation program (Akmal, Risdaneva, Habiburrahim,

& sari, 2020). According to Roza (2019) the challenges faced by teachers when teaching TOEFL test preparation are student attitudes, class situations and teacher anxiety. Therefore, to get the desired TOEFL score, participants need the ability to understand the questions given and how to do them.

In short, based on the results of previous studies discussed above and the phenomena that challenge teachers in teaching TOEFL test preparation, this study focuses on the teacher's view of the challenges in teaching TOEFL test preparation in schools. Given that teaching TOEFL for senior high schools is quite challenging and different from teaching at universities, this research will provide new insights on how to deal with these challenges. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the challenges of English teachers in teaching TOEFL test preparation at SMA Negeri Sumatera Selatan.

12 Research Problem

Based on the background the problem of this study is formulated in the following question: “What are the teacher’s challenges in teaching TOEFL test preparation at SMA Negeri Sumatera Selatan?”.

13 Research Objective

Based on the research problem above, the objective of this study is formulated as follows: “To find out the teacher’s challenges in teaching TOEFL test preparation at SMA Negeri Sumatera Selatan”.

14 Significance Study

The results of this study are expected to provide useful contributions for many people. This study provides information about the challenges of teachers in teaching TOEFL test preparation at SMA Negeri Sumatra Selatan.

1. For teachers

This research can provide a lot of information for teachers in teaching about preparation for the TOEFL test. As well as giving consideration to English teachers to introduce TOEFL to students by using more interesting strategies.

2. For students

From this study, it is hoped that students can get a lot of information about their learning so that their TOEFL scores increase and their English skills become better.

3. For researchers

Hopefully the results of this study can provide information for other researchers. In addition, hopefully prospective teachers can know how to teach well, know the challenges in teaching, and how students' abilities can improve through teaching TOEFL test preparation.

4. For school

Researchers hope that this research can improve the quality of student teaching and learning so that the quality of schools will also

increase, as material to add insight in the learning process and teaching preparation for the TOEFL test before taking the TOEFL test so that students can achieve the target score that has been determined by the school.

5. For myself

I hope that with the results of this research I can find out what challenges teachers face in teaching TOEFL test preparation. Improve my English skills so that i can do other research.