

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, there will be discussion on the background of study, statement of problem, purpose of study, significance/benefit of study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of Study

English is the most widely used language on a global scale out of the thousands of languages that exist. In 2022, *Statista* data shows that approximately 1.5 billion people worldwide spoke English either as a first language, a second language, or a foreign language. The statistics demonstrate how widely English is spoken in every part of the world.

In Asia Pacific, more than 80% of international organizations utilize English as their primary language, making English critical in social, political, educational, and economic activities (Mufanti, 2019). This highlights how crucial it is for individuals to master English in order to compete and get good opportunities in a global environment through a good communication abilities.

Most people are attempting to enhance their English skills to be able to communicate well in daily situations (Asiyah & Maghfiroh, 2021). In these daily communications, English is also used for study or job-oriented purposes. In the current era of globalization, the ability to communicate in English allows individuals to take part in the global society.

In today's connected world, learning foreign languages, especially English, is a vital requirement in today's world (Harmanto, 2020). Mastering

English is essential for every individual to participate in and benefit from the global economic system, as it provides access to education, skill sets, and job opportunities, as well as a facilitator of social mobility.

As a language that has many virtues in an individual's life, there are requirements that must be applied as standards in order to guarantee an individual's English proficiency. An instrument that can be used to establish English proficiency standards is an English language test. English proficiency test exists to assist individuals in measuring their levels of English proficiency for specific purpose.

The English Proficiency Test is a test that assesses a person's level of competency in the four main language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The English test is regarded as crucial in determining an individual's proficiencies both in academic and professional workforce contexts (Nimasari et al., 2020). These may also influence someone's future education and employment opportunities.

Language testing services provide a range of specialized language examinations since the capacity to communicate in English might have an impact on a person's future. In order to help provide an assessment of English proficiency, English proficiency tests are now available in several different formats and types of tests, both standard and non-standard.

For international purposes, the English language test has several standard variations that can be taken to meet specific requirements. According to Kasim et al., (2019) English language tests that are recognized as standardized test include

the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication), IELTS (International English Language Testing System), and TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). Among those English standardized tests, The TOEFL test has been asserted to be the most widely used.

TOEFL is a well-known type of English proficiency test for non-native speakers of English. The English Proficiency Test is required for academic purposes as well as for employment in a range of institutions, including government agencies (Collins & Miller, 2018). In Indonesia, the TOEFL is frequently chosen by citizens as a means of determining their level of English proficiency in order to fulfill entry requirements for both domestic and international organizations. These requirements make everyone more conscious of the value of gaining proficiency in English.

The scores an individual earns on a proficiency test certificate will indicate their level of proficiency in English. These are encouraging individuals to strive to pass the proficiency test with a good score. To get a high score, taking a class to prepare for the English proficiency test is one strategy to acquire the target score. Currently, there are many institutions that specifically offer preparation classes for English proficiency tests.

The preparation class is seen to be crucial in assisting with an individual's readiness to meet the requirements for taking the actual test. According to Akmal et al., (2020), preparing for the test can reduce test-taker anxiety while also potentially enhancing students' expertise and level of English proficiency.

Therefore, besides helping learners with theory, preparation classes like these are thought to assist learners to stay motivated and focused on their main purposes.

As English is regarded as a challenging subject (Asiyah, 2018), assisting in English learning demands for the appropriate method and approach. The preparation class is intended to aid test takers in dealing with English proficiency tests, is supposed to be able to overcome the obstacles and challenges encountered by test takers, particularly in learning and understanding English.

Practically, practicing is one of the most effective strategies for learning languages. The finding by Mostafa (2022) shows that the integrative practice-based approach is quite successful in helping students gain language proficiency. In preparation for an English proficiency test, practicing can help students experience simulations that may influence their scores on the actual test.

With the introduction and direct practicing experience during the preparation program, the researcher aims to investigate the high school students' perceptions towards the preparation of the English proficiency test. Students' perceptions of learning processes may actually be more relevant than what outsiders observe because student perspectives are influenced by their own learning behaviors and the insights they experience. This study will be conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Ponorogo in the preparation of the English proficiency test service.

B. Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, the statement of the problem in this research is:

1. How are students' perceptions towards the preparation of English proficiency test?
2. Do strategies used in the preparation of the English proficiency test program help students improve their abilities related to the English proficiency test?

C. Purpose of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study is to find out:

1. Students' perceptions towards the significance of the preparation for the English proficiency test at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Ponorogo.
2. The role of test preparation strategies in improving students' abilities related to the English proficiency test.

D. Significance/Benefit of the Study

The expected significance/benefits of the study are:

1. For the Students:

The findings of this study will help students in expressing their perception towards Preparation of English proficiency test.

2. For the institution

This study will provide information related to the students' perceptions of the preparation of an English proficiency test and help determine further policy regarding the preparation of an English proficiency test for high school students to prepare to study abroad or as a requirement to get a job.

3. For the reseacher

The results of this study will help researcher find out the students perception towards Preparation of English proficiency test in the TOEFL and develop the researcher expertise that will shape future studies.

E. Scope and Limitation

In the preparation of English proficiency test, there are several different types of test and methods used by different service provider. However, the study's scope and limitations will make it more specialized. The scope and limitation of this study is the use of TOEFL PBT in preparation of English proficiency test at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Ponorogo.

F. Definition of Key Terms

English Proficiency Test :English proficiency tests are a type of test designed to measure individuals' proficiency in English (Yuyun et al., 2018). English proficiency tests are standardized tests which test takers take to determine their level of fluency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing the English language. Since English has become so essential in today's society, people use standardized English proficiency tests to verify individuals' English proficiency.

Test Preparation :According to Messick (1982) Test preparation refers to “any intervention procedure

specifically undertaken to improve test scores, whether by improving the skills measured by the test or by improving the skills for taking the test, or both”

Students' Perception

:According to Bimo (1980), perception is a process that is facilitated by the senses and is received by each individual stimulus via the sensor's process. Students' perceptions are defined as the opinions, beliefs, and emotions described by students in order to gain insight or viewpoints from them.

