

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Many foreign languages have entered Indonesia. Foreign languages are one of the basic skills needed in this 4.0 revolution era. As a basic capability that needs to be mastered in the 4.0 era, the use of foreign languages has received special attention, one of which is in the field of education. Mastery of foreign languages is also one of the natural resources in the field of education. Mastery of foreign languages is also an absolute prerequisite for accessing sources of information both in writing and orally.

According to Law No. 24 of 2009 in article 29 paragraph 1, it is stated that the language of instruction can use foreign languages for purposes that support students' foreign language skills. Therefore, foreign languages are important and mandatory to learn, even some educational institutions require students to be able to speak foreign languages, one of which needs to be learned is English. The purpose of mastering this foreign language can basically function in terms of communication, namely as a means of communication between individuals to build social relationships and gain more understanding.

English is an international language, so it is widely used to communicate between nations. According to David Crystal, English acts as a global language, because this language has been recognized in every country. English is used as a learning and communication tool in various countries. In some countries English is used as a second language or

foreign language.¹ Having the ability to speak English as an international language turns out to be one of the requirements for someone to continue their work or study in the country or abroad. To measure a person's English language skills, an international standardized test is needed. These international standardized tests can be grouped based on the purpose of foreign countries and the purpose of study or work abroad.

International standardized tests aimed at continuing into the world of work use TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication). TOEIC is an international standardized English language test for people who use English as their main language. The TOEIC test is designed to measure English communication skills for people who work in an international environment.

The Directorate of Vocational Development has developed a program to facilitate competency improvement and certification of vocational students in English. In 2007 the government has created the SMK English Challenge program and runs until 2023, namely by holding international communication skills certification activities specifically for SMK students with the Test of English International Communication (TOEIC). The English Challenge program is a competency facility and foreign language certification for SMK students with TOEIC. By holding this SMK English Challenge program, it aims to test the English language skills of vocational students and increase students' confidence in speaking English as evidenced by international standard assessments.

Currently, the Directorate of Development has created a program to facilitate the improvement of competence and certification of vocational students in English. Therefore, in 2023, the SMK English challenge 2023

¹ David Crystal, *English as a Global Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3.

has been opened with the aim of training students in carrying out the TOEIC test later and providing *additional value* for Indonesian SMK students to work in multinational and international companies.

In order to increase global competitiveness in the midst of the development of this era, the Directorate of SMK is again organizing the SMK English challenge 2023 with the aim of training students in carrying out the TOEIC test later and also providing additional value for Indonesian SMK students to work in multinational and international companies.

TOEIC is one of the tests designed, developed, and managed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS). In this TOEIC test measures the ability in 4 language fields, namely speaking, writing, reading and listening, the value score by CEFR is what is needed in the world of work. This TOEIC test can measure daily skills in the international workforce. The score results can measure employee skills whether they have English communication skills with other people at work. Therefore TOEIC is a test to measure the ability of people in the world of work in an international work environment. The TOEIC score results also determine that a person has good communication skills with other people in the world of work.

Currently, there are more than 1000 companies in the country and abroad that use the TOEIC test as a requirement in recruiting their employees. In Indonesia, companies held by BUMN make the TOEIC test one of the requirements in applying for a job. The minimum score is 400-600. The company PT Garuda Maintenance Facility AeroAsia is one of the companies held by SOEs that has a minimum score of 475. In addition, there are also private companies such as PT Krakatau Posco,

ConocoPhillips and others that use the TOEIC test as one of the requirements in applying for a job.

With the research title "An Analysis of The Students' Difficulties in Reading Section on TOEIC (A Descriptive Qualitative Research at SMK YP Fatahillah 1 Cilegon)" is interested in conducting research related to student problems in answering TOEIC, especially in reading tests.

B. Identification of The Problem

Based on the background of the problem above, the problems in this study are:

1. Students have difficulty in doing the reading test on TOEIC.
2. Students' strategies on reading test practice on TOEIC

C. Focus of The Study

For this research to be more focused, it is necessary to provide a limitation in the research to be reviewed in detail and in depth. The problem limitations of the research carried out are:

1. Researcher focus on students' difficulties in working on the reading test on TOEIC.
2. Solutions made by students to difficulties in doing the reading test on TOEIC.

D. Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the formulation of the research question is stated as follow:

1. What are difficulties faced by vocational high school students in answering the reading test on TOEIC?

2. How do students' overcome difficulties in answering the reading test on TOEIC?

E. Objectives of Study

Based on the background of study above, the researcher has objective of the study. The objectives of the study in this research are:

1. To investigate the difficulties of vocational school students in answering reading test question on TOEIC.
2. To provide recommendations to students' to overcome students' difficulties in answering reading test questions on TOEIC.

F. Benefits of Research

The expected benefits of the results of this study are as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefits

This research is expected to be used as a foothold and reference in further research related to Student difficulties in Working on TOEIC Reading Test.

2. Practical Benefits

a. For the Students

This research is expected to benefit the students by emphasizing how important it is to be able to understand and communicate in English.

b. For the Teacher

This research was made to provide references to teachers to provide valuable solutions and references for teachers to deal with students who have difficulty in completing TOEIC reading tests.

c. For the School

The researcher believes that this study can make a clear contribution to the importance of improving English Teaching and Learning skills for teachers and students in improving English language skills in vocational schools.

G. The Organizations of Writing

To facilitate and understand the discussion in this thesis, it is necessary to put forward a systematic system that becomes the framework and guidelines for writing the thesis. The writing systematics are as follows.

Chapter I Introduction: Consists of Background, Problem Identification, Problem Limitation, Problem Formulation, Research Objectives, Research Benefits, previous research, and Systematics of Discussion.

Chapter II Literature Review: Consists of basic theories because of literature studies. This theory can be used as a supporting foundation regarding the problems studied by the author, and a framework of thinking.

Chapter III Methodology of Research: This chapter describes the analysis methods used in the research and the data used and data sources.

Chapter IV Finding and Discussion: This chapter describes the general description of the object of research and data analysis.

Chapter V Conclusion and Suggestion: Consists of conclusions and suggestions from the research results obtained.