

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the background of the research, statements of the problem, objectives of the research, significance of the research, scope of the research, and operational definition.

### **1.1 Background of the Research**

The Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) has far-reaching effects in nearly all social areas, including education. According to decree number 4 years 2020, the university institution should follow the term about Work from Home (WFH) and Online Learning. Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Makarim encouraged the students to learn from home and the lecturer to teach from home.

The use of technology and internet in distance learning is one of the best ways to keep the teaching and learning process still running. The interaction between lecturer and students in the learning process during Covid-19 is the conditions within a different place. It is a way to prevent the spread of Covid-19 disease. Since the decision of a through online learning media, the lecturers of the English Education Department of Universitas Muria Kudus, teach the materials to students through online media. In some courses, lecturers presented materials using WhatsApp groups as a means for learning media. Not only use WhatsApp group, for some courses use SUNAN website (learning platform which is designed by the university) as a media to deliver the materials. In addition, the lecturer uses Youtube media and WhatsApp groups to maximize the lesson. These kinds of online learning activities challenge students to study independently.

To maximize online learning lecturers use several platforms, such as Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom Meeting, CloudX, and Sunan website (a learning platform which is designed by the university). Besides being used to report the results of activities, WhatsApp is also used to receive assignments from the lecturer as well as student feedback in carrying out activities. The roles of

lecturers in this learning process are as guidance and motivators. In this condition, students need to monitor their learning by setting up a learning schedule to ensure they can complete all the lessons.

The teacher and students are separated by space, but not necessarily by time (distance learning). Previously learning through online was only done in a certain courses, but in this condition, all learning through online. This is a new challenge for lecturers as well as students. Students learn independently of their material in the online class.

Several factors influence learning during Covid-19 such as the insufficient of facilities, the availability of the internet, students' ability to participate in digital learning and the lack of interaction between lecturer (Zhong, 2020 as cited in Yuzulia 2021). Besides that, limited time in online learning makes students need more time to read the material to understand. For example, students get an assignment to create an article, it means that students have to read more reference of journals. Reading is an important thing to understanding his/her knowledge (Ismail, Syahruza, & Basuki, 2017). According to Richards and Schmidt (2002), reading is an ability that is required for skillful reading, such as understanding main ideas, sequence, noticing specific details, making conclusions, making comparisons, and predictions in second and foreign language instruction, particularly with adults.

The activity of reading current era is possible to do online. Online reading is turning out to be a particularly normal practice (Akyel & Ercetin, 2009). By reading, students can understand written English as it is presented in textbooks, newspapers, magazines, menus, messages, and academic materials. Specifically written texts which published in online there is some technical and linguistic characteristic (Thruston, 2004). The online reading process on the internet is affected by the specific highlights of the content, hypertext, and hypermedia, the presence of connections/ links, engage both linear and non-linear reading (Zenots, 2012).

Self-directed learning is relevant to be implemented in the current era even though the pandemic situation. Self-directed learning requires students to understand the lesson well. The condition makes students automatically build the new habit of lifetime learning (Şevik, 2015). Many students have difficulties in self-direct online learning. Hornby (2001) stated that difficulty is the state or quality of being hard to do or to understand. Some factors can influence students in understanding the materials. Two factors that impact difficulties in learning there are internal factors are personal, physical, mental, and habits and external factors are family environment, school environment, community environment (Slameto, 2003).

Considering the case, the researcher is interested to investigate the difficulties faced by students in reading through self-directed learning during in pandemic era. The researcher decided to the research entitled “The Students Difficulties in Reading through Self-Directed Learning during Pandemic era of the sixth semester of English Education Department at Universitas Muria Kudus”.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher formulates following research questions as follows:

1. What are the students' learning difficulties in self-directed learning during pandemic?
2. How is the condition of students in self directed learning during pandemic?
3. What are the students' difficulties in reading through self-directed learning?

## **1.3 Objective of the Research**

Based on the statement of the problem above, the purpose of the research as follows:

1. To know what are the students' learning difficulties in self-directed learning.

2. To figure out how is the condition of students in self-directed learning during pandemic.
3. To investigate the student's difficulties in reading through self-directed learning of sixth semester students of English Education Department at Universitas Muria Kudus during the pandemic.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Research**

The result of the research is expected to be beneficial study ends in the positive development of knowledge. The benefits of this research are for and reader which can be stated as follows:

1. For the lecturers  
It is expected to be useful for the lecturers to know about students' issue in self-directed learning and the difficulties of students in reading through self-directed learning.
2. For the students  
It is expected that this research can be used to provide information with a better understanding of how they organize self-directed learning in reading.
3. For the reader  
It is expected that this research could be useful for the reader who will conduct the research and need a reference on the topic.

#### **1.5 Scope of the Research**

This research focuses on a case of the sixth-semester students of the English Education Department of Universitas Muria Kudus academic 2020/2021. The researcher focuses on the students' responses in self-directed learning and the students' difficulties in reading through self-directed learning. Therefore, the researcher uses the descriptive text as a test to analyze the students' learning difficulties.

## 1.6 Operational Definition

The researcher defines some of the key terms used in this study, to avoid misunderstanding about those terms, here is the list of definition which has been conducted by the researcher.

1. Students' learning difficulties means that were faced by the students to understand the material/lesson because of some factors such as lack of confidence, nervousness, and the environment.
2. Self-directed learning means a method of a learning process that focused on the students managing their learning independently.
3. Reading is an ability that is required for skillful reading.

