

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction to the paper. It covers the background of the study, identification of the problem, limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, objectives of the study, and significance of the study.

#### 1.1 Background of the study

It is no doubt that reading is one of the important skill to be learned, especially for students. For most students, reading is the most essential skill to be mastered because students tend to make greater progress in other areas of language proficiency (Anderson, 2004). Anderson (1991) stated that reading is an activity that involves the reader and what reader has been read in order to build a meaning. He further explains that meaning is not driven from the text, but it is on reader's mind. Based on those statements, it can be concluded that reading does not only require the reader to know what they read but is also their knowledge to build a meaning of the text. According to Roit (2016), reading is also a process where the reader will use various strategies such as drawing conclusions and making predictions to construct meaning, this is why reading is closely related to strategy.

Strategy refers to the way a person does something, in this case, the reading strategy is to conduct to make the reader easier to understand what they have read. According to Lien (2011) reading strategies are technique that is applied to improve understanding and deal with the difficulties encountered in reading. This is

important for the reader especially in the foreign language to understand the text. Consequently, the use of strategy cannot just be ignored.

Gender differences often lead to differences in the use of strategies, including reading (Asgarabadi, Rouhi, & Jafarigohar, 2015). Gender is also considered as one of the key factors that influence the use of student reading strategies (Ellis, 1999). These theories are supported by Peart, Ibarra and Salazar (2015) who believe that gender might have a role in the use of strategies, especially L2 learner. It can be concluded that, at present studying gender is an important phenomenon in education, especially ones who said that male are less in reading or female feel that they are superior than male. For this reason, this is an interesting consideration to be discussed, particularly in EFL context.

The characteristic differences between male and female in reading have been explained by some experts. Weiyang's (2006) study showed that female students tend to have a clearer idea in dealing with a text than male students, furthermore male tend to ignore unfamiliar words. As in contrast, Bacon (1992) and Peart and Barrett (2013) claimed that women also tended to reread texts. While Boyle (1987) reported the opposite results that male students were better than female on a vocabulary recognition. As in line, male are also higher in terms of identifying main ideas and making conclusions (Peart & Barrett, 2013).

Another research by Poole (2005) reported that in using reading strategies, male and female do not have a significant difference. Nevertheless, male had higher score than female in global and problem-solving strategies, whereas female used

support strategies more often. Similar with Poole (2005), Lien (2011) investigated the relations of reading strategies, reading anxiety and gender among EFL learners in Taiwan university. This research proved that, female students tend to be more anxious at using reading strategies rather than male students. Moreover, male tended to apply Global Reading Strategies while female tended to apply Problem-Solving Strategies more frequently.

The opposite results by Martínez (2008) who conducted research on reading strategies awareness. Her purpose was to analyze the reading strategies used of ESP Spanish students and the differences between male and female students in their reading strategies awareness. The results indicated that all students were prefer to use problem-solving strategies followed by global reading and support strategies. In addition, she found there were differences among gender in the term of reading strategies use. Moreover, female students tended to use overall strategies more often than male students. This research was supported by Temur and Bahar (2011) who also analyzed the reading strategies use of ELF Turkish learners. They claimed that although the results were not significant, female students had a higher average in applying overall reading strategies rather than male students. Male tended to use Global Reading Strategies, while female tended to use Support Strategies. From some of the studies above, it can be concluded that the use of reading strategies differs depending on the students' gender.

Although many studies have been done in the term of comparing reading strategies used among male and female students, a little research conducted about gender differences on the use of reading strategies particularly in Indonesian

context. Yet, there are several studies about reading strategies at English Education Department Islamic University of Indonesia, it seems that gender topic is still less explored to be discussed as a research. Moreover, the results of this study might be different from the research described above. Considering the phenomena mentioned earlier, this present study aims to describe what reading strategies that used often by male and female students on the use of reading strategies, especially in English Department in a private University in Yogyakarta.

## 1.2 Identification of the Problem

Based on short interview conducted by the researcher, it can be concluded that some students in English Department in a private University in Yogyakarta still have the notion that female students are superior in terms of reading strategies such as more detailed in reading information compared to male student. Furthermore, they assume that gender has an important role especially in terms of reading strategies. Interestingly, some students thought different thing, they assume that gender does not affect the use of one's reading strategies.

On the contrary, Martínez (2008) reported the opposite results that there were significant differences between male and female students in using reading strategies. Moreover, Martínez (2008) and Temur and Bahar (2011) proved that female students use overall strategies more often than male students. Yet, Poole (2005) and Lien (2011) claimed that male students tend to use better reading strategies than female. For these reasons, the result differences among some

researchers and the assumption of some English Education department students becomes interesting to be studied.

### **1.3 Limitation of the Problem**

This study will describe reading strategies that are used most by male and female students at English Department in a private University in Yogyakarta.

### **1.4 Formulation of the Problem**

What are reading strategies used most by male and female students at English Department in a private University in Yogyakarta?

### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

To describe the reading strategies used most by male and female students at English Department in a private University in Yogyakarta.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The results of this research are to give contribution to students, lecturers and other researchers

#### **1. For other researchers**

This study is expected to bring benefits such as, provide information for further research regarding the reading strategies used by male and female in EFL context.

#### **2. For students**

The researcher hopes that this research will help to facilitate the students in reading, especially in English language.

### 3. The lecturers

The researcher hopes this study will help lecturers in understanding the character of the students in reading based on the gender differences. Therefore, lecturers know how to facilitate the students to improve their reading awareness.

