

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of The Study**

This research will focus on reading competence in History Education Study Program in English for Academic Purpose context. Sadoski (2004) argues that developing fundamental competences that comprise reading is the most basic goal to equip the learner to pursue independence in reading (Sadoski, 2004: 51). This research tries to identify the competences as the goal especially which deals with reading on English text in college academic context.

Specifically, there are two interrelated reasons why the students who learn history in Indonesia need to read English texts. These arguments were gathered and concluded from this research interview with lectures of History Education Study Program in UNJ. The first argument is because in Indonesia, the history text which is written in English language takes a long time to be translated into Indonesian. It can take about 40 till 50 years to publish in Indonesia from the time the original book written in English was released. By this obstacle, the scholar or the people who learn history cannot wait to study the historical text that they demand, except they have to read it in the English version. Thus they really need to have enough competence in reading English text to deal with this condition.

The second argument is because learning history is about dealing with interpretation of historical facts of why something can happen. And the resouceful interpretation texts are mostly written in English. This case happens in cultural history course which is applied in this study prorgam. It is learnt that there are two cultural perspectives in this course, the semiotics and the totality perspectives. In this research interview, the lecture 1 said that almost all Indonesian history books are written in totality perspectives. So that he has to use the English text as the learning source to teach students about the semiotics prespective one.

History as a discipline actually is included in humanities studies. However in UNJ, it belongs to History Department of the Faculty of Social Science. The complexity of this one of humanities field of study lies in the use of language. As stated by McCullagh, different historians fequently describe the same subject slightly different, depending upon their interests and the concepts with which they are familiar in historic text. That what is called as ‘interpretation.’ They are one of several equally justified accounts of the subject which could be given, which provides the reader with at least the historian’s opinion of the meaning of what was happening (McCullagh, 1998: 64).

*MKU (Mata Kuliah Umum* or General Course Admission) which should have responsibility to conduct or administering English course in UNJ cannot afford a conducive learning environment in the classroom. From 2012 until 2014 about 400 until 1455 students take this course in every term. A teacher can conduct even three until four class in a term and a class can consist of 20 until

about 50 students. In addition, History Education Study Program does not include in MKU English course admission. According to this pre-research observation it has happened since 1997 because its lack of instructor or teacher in this course.

The most departments and study programs at UNJ, including History Education Study Program, still do not apply EAP based on its specific discipline characteristics of study. One of the teacher admitted that they still apply the EGAP (English of General Academic Purposes). However, English language should not be learnt generally anymore in university because it consists of many faculties, departments, majors, and study programs which have different discipline characteristics. So in fact, the usage of English in academic situation is varied. Hyland (2006) stressed that this is becoming in what EAP enterprise to be. He also argued that effective language teaching in the universities will involve taking specificity seriously. Therefore in ESP with the branches is EAP, involves developing new kinds of literacy, equipping students with the communicative skills to participate in particular academic and professional cultural context (Hyland, 2002: 117). However, the concept of EAP itself still problematic whether it should be based on General academic purposes (EGAP) or based on specific characteristics of each discipline (ESAP).

English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) comes from the basis argument of the importance of 'common core.' It is a set of language forms or skills that are found in all, or nearly all, varieties and which can be transferred across context (Hyland, 2002:11). So this concept can be applied in any kind of disciplines. Somehow, because of the low English competence of students, the

English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) may still be needed to be applied. Hyland (2012:10) also argued that weaker students are not ready for discipline-specific language and learning tasks and need a preparatory class to give them a good understanding in 'general English' first. It can be a possibility that happen in History Education Study Program students since they are non native speaker of English with varied degrees of experiences and quality of their prior English learning in school.

However, the psychology of adult learners as the students in common EAP in college degree can be a problematic consideration for teacher to choose reading material. As stated by Kobayashi (1970) if the teachers give them the hard level text to students, it will be problematic because it can end up reinforcing the undesirable habit. On the other hand, if he or she limits the choice to the reading selection that fall within their linguistics range, the students will feel that he or she is insulting the name of college education. In fact, this undesirable habit is really happened in UNJ. According to this research interview, a student of 2009 regular class of history education admitted that they still think that they are incapable in English and tend to be reluctant in choosing English book as their source of learning. He said that it also felt so by his classmates.

Johns (1988:55) argues that even though the general forms and skills of language are exist in English for academic learning, or even needed by the students, the difference among them may be greater than the similarities. This difference can affect to how hard the history source in English can be understood and learnt by the students. Especially about the language forms, their possible

meaning will depend on the context of use (Hyland, 2002: 12). And because of the broad list of source knowledge input from many branches of science, the context of learning should be varied. So by this argument, English for Specific Academic Purposes may be still reasonable to be applied, especially in History Education Study Program.

Consequently, no matter who administers the program, whether it comes from intern or extern department admission, EAP will not be appropriate if there is no needs analysis conducted in prior before designing the syllabus or learning program. Like other branches of ESP, EAP relies on needs analysis, as the basic characteristics of the ESP approach. Needs analysis is a vital prerequisite to the specification of language learning objectives (Hyland, 2002: 2). It becomes the main source of the EAP course design or syllabus. It will reflect not only the students' desire of how their English course should be taught but it also can show the specific character of a major or study program discipline. So without needs analysis EAP can lose the sense of its 'specific' and it can really entail with the quality of the EAP courses of where it belongs to an institution in a university or an academy.

Needs analysis in English for Academic Purposes context also has already been observed by Petrus (2010). He observed English course needs in Faculty of Teacher Training and Education in Sriwijaya University with both PSA (Present Situation Analysis) and TSA (Target Situation Analysis). However, he does not look the needs in the discipline specificity seriously. As stated before how the specificity is really important by Hyland (2002) and Johns (1988) that it can really

entail with the quality of the EAP courses of where it belongs to an institution in a university or an academy, but this research does not show needs of educational or teacher training discipline or subject specificity.

Because of this argument, conducting needs analysis which will observe specificity needs of academic requirement should be done. However, based on Academic Book Guidance and this research observation, the time provided for learning English as a general course in UNJ is very limited. Its credits are just two including only 16 meetings in a semester. So by this reason, even though mastering any other skills besides reading is also important, the general course of English especially in History Education Study Program should be precise to make the learning effective. In this case, needs analysis which is based on the real necessity or the more objective one need to be applied in the syllabus. And because this pre-research finding shows that reading is the most urgent skill that should be assisted to the students of History Education Study Program, so this research will try to focus only on this skill needs.

Needs analysis should be done properly with scientific method as the basis of an appropriate syllabus. This research will try to deal with this complexity. It is expected that at least by this little piece of effort, the English general course learning in this study program can be supported by considerable and imperative information about the learners and their discipline of their major condition.

## **1.2 Research Question**

What kind of English reading competences should be mastered by the students of History Education Study Program?

## **1.3 Purpose Of The Study**

This research purpose is to identify the competences of English reading text in History Education Study Program academic context.

## **1.4 Scope Of The Study**

This study is only limited to observe specific English reading competences based on History Education Study Program academic needs.

## **1.5 Significant Of The Study**

This research can be a source of alternative reference of English language curriculum development in History Education Study Program. It is also expected that it can contribute to ESP especially EAP for humanities further research sources.