
AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STUDENTS' ABILITY IN TOEFL READING COMPREHENSION

Solpia Nuraini¹, Winda Trsinawati², Ridho Kurniawan³

Institution/affiliation;

Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo

e-mail: *1solpia@gmail.com, windatrisnawati@gmail.com, @ridhokurniawan@gmail.com,

ABSTRAK

Tes TOEFL diakui secara global sebagai alat evaluasi terkemuka untuk mengukur tingkat kemampuan berbahasa Inggris seseorang (Warfield, 2013:133). Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi kesiapan mahasiswa jurusan Bahasa Inggris untuk ujian TOEFL, dengan fokus khusus pada mahasiswa semester 4 yang terdaftar dalam kelas persiapan TOEFL di STKIP MB. Salah satu masalah yang diamati adalah kesulitan memahami bacaan yang dihadapi oleh mahasiswa dalam kelas ini. Kesulitan ini terutama berasal dari kompleksitas dan panjangnya teks, sehingga sulit untuk memahami inti dari bacaan tersebut. Selain itu, mahasiswa telah terpapar dengan Membaca Akademis dan Membaca Luas sebelum bagian Membaca tingkat lanjut (membaca TOEFL). Konteks ini menuntut keterampilan khusus seperti mengekstrak ide-ide kunci dari bacaan, menjawab pertanyaan langsung dan tidak langsung, dan meningkatkan kosakata (Phillips, 2001).

Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi hubungan antara pemahaman membaca dan teknik membaca. Patel dan Jain (2008:80) membedakan teknik membaca yang intensif, ekstensif, keras, dan diam, dengan mahasiswa kesulitan untuk mempertahankan fokus dan memahami teks secara efektif. Strategi yang tidak efisien seringkali mengakibatkan waktu yang terbuang dalam menjawab pertanyaan pemahaman membaca. Hambatan signifikan lainnya adalah bahwa mahasiswa cenderung membaca teks kata demi kata, menghambat kemampuan mereka untuk mengingat informasi. Harmer (2018:25) dengan tepat mencatat, "Membaca adalah latihan yang dikuasai oleh mata dan otak," dengan menekankan bahwa membaca berfungsi sebagai media untuk mendapatkan informasi dan memahami makna teks. Namun, kenyataannya mengungkapkan kekurangan dalam pemahaman kata-kata atau kalimat dalam bahasa Inggris di kalangan beberapa mahasiswa, yang menunjukkan pemahaman membaca yang tidak memadai dan keterbatasan kosakata. Penelitian ini juga menyoroti tantangan yang dihadapi oleh mahasiswa perguruan tinggi yang bersiap untuk

TOEFL, di mana tes-tes tersebut memiliki format yang beragam, menjadikannya signifikan berbeda dari tes-tes biasa. Banyaknya pilihan jawaban yang tampaknya benar seringkali membingungkan mahasiswa, yang mengakibatkan kebingungan dan ketidakonsistenan dalam memilih jawaban yang tepat. Selain itu, mahasiswa sering menghadapi kesulitan dalam penggunaan waktu dan keterbatasan kosakata dalam bahasa Inggris. Yang mencolok, pemahaman membaca selalu muncul sebagai bagian yang mendapat skor terendah dalam tes TOEFL. Sebagai kesimpulan, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengatasi kesulitan pemahaman membaca yang dihadapi oleh mahasiswa semester 4 STKIP MB dalam kelas persiapan TOEFL. Dengan mengkaji korelasi antara teknik membaca, strategi pemahaman, dan peningkatan kosakata, penelitian ini berusaha untuk memberikan solusi efektif untuk meningkatkan skor membaca TOEFL dan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris secara keseluruhan di kalangan mahasiswa.

Kata kunci: *TOEFL, Kemampuan membaca, strategi membaca*

Abstract:

The TOEFL test is globally acknowledged as the foremost assessment tool for evaluating English proficiency levels (Warfield, 2013:133). This study explores the English department students' readiness for the TOEFL examination, with a specific focus on 4th-semester students enrolled in the TOEFL preparation class at STKIP MB. An observed issue pertains to reading comprehension difficulties encountered by students in this class. This difficulty primarily stems from the complexity and length of the texts, making it challenging to grasp the core ideas. Furthermore, students have been exposed to Academic Reading and Extensive Reading prior to the advanced Reading (TOEFL reading) section. This context demands specific skills such as extracting key ideas from passages, addressing direct and indirect questions, and enhancing vocabulary (Phillips, 2001).

This research identifies a link between reading comprehension and reading techniques. Patel and Jain (2008:80) distinguish intensive, extensive, Aloud, and Silent reading techniques, with students struggling to maintain focus and comprehend texts effectively. Inefficient strategies often lead to time-consuming responses to reading comprehension questions. Another significant hurdle is that students tend to read passages word by word, hindering their ability to retain information. Harmar (2018:25) aptly notes, "Reading is an exercise dominated by the eyes and the brain," emphasizing that reading serves as a medium to obtain information and understand the meaning of text. However, the reality reveals a deficit in understanding words or sentences in English among some students, indicative of inadequate reading comprehension and limited vocabulary.

This research also highlights the challenges faced by college students preparing for TOEFL, wherein tests exhibit varied formats, making them significantly different from typical assessments. The abundance of seemingly correct answer choices often perplexes students, leading to confusion and inconsistency in selecting the right answers. Furthermore, the students frequently grapple with tense usage and vocabulary limitations in the English language. Notably, reading comprehension consistently emerges as the lowest-scoring section in the TOEFL test.

In conclusion, this study aims to address the reading comprehension difficulties encountered by STKIP MB 4th Semester Students in the TOEFL preparation class. By examining the correlation between reading techniques, comprehension strategies, and vocabulary enhancement, the research strives to provide effective solutions to improve TOEFL reading scores and overall English proficiency among students.

Keywords : *Reading, Reading strategy , TOEFL.*

INTRODUCTION

i

TOEFL test is the most internationally recognized test for measuring a person's level of English Warfield (2013:133). To find out how English department our English level is, we can take the TOEFL test, because the TOEFL is a standard test used to measure English language. Especially STKIP MB 4th Semester Students In TOEFL Class there is a study of reading, listening, grammar, based on the previous observation and Research experienced it, the problem of reading aloud because reading comprehension this and too much of the reading and too long of the text, is difficult to determine the underlying idea of a text student have a hard time understanding and answering the reading comprehension.

Moreover, the students also have learned Academic Reading and Extensive Reading, Before taking the advanced Reading (reading fo TOEFL). In answering reading question, there are several skills that are needed. The examples of those skills are the skill of finding ideas of the passage, answering direct and indirect question, and vocabulary (Phillips:2001). Based on the students' problem mention earlier reading skill is related to reading technie. According to Patel and Jain (2008:80), the reading techniques are intensive, extensive, Alound, Silent reading. Student cannot focus on what they read during the reading activity and still have difficulty to get the ideas of the text. States answering reading comprehension test will be time consuming if they use inappropriate strategies. Another problem is that not every detail of information in the passage is needed to answer the reading question but sstudents usually read the reading

passage word by word. Reading a text also makes them quickly forget what they have read. According to Harmar (2018:25) "Reading is an exercise dominated by the eyes and the brain." Reading is process to get information and to understand the meaning of the some word from the text. Simple definition of reading is that one process and has been written. But in reality, no few students are still can understand the meaning of not even understand a word or sentence being read in English. It means that insight into reading (reading comprehension) inside their English is not good enough and vocabulary are their masters still very limited. Besides, collage students too found it difficult. The issue was always different every test so it doesn't have A shadow of TOEFL's test those. In reading education they find it difficult because of the choice of answers given almost everything is correct so they're confused about the answer that is correct and consistent with the reading. That was granted. Besides, so do they forgot about the use of tenses and vocabulary in English. The Lowest score in TOEFL test is reading comprehension.

METHOD

This research used descriptive quantitative research because the researcher wants to 'analyze students' Ability in TOEFL reading comprehension case students English Departments STKIP MB. According to Borg and Gall (1989:15) Quantitative Research methods based on positive philosophy, used to examine on specific populations or samples, specializing in sample are generally taken random, data colleting using research instruments, Quantitative data analysis with instructions to test a prescribed hypothesis, The Researcher gave reading test to the students to measure the students in reading comprehension. By giving the reading test, the researcher tried to find out

1 for the students can answer the test well or

not. the right and the wrong answer from the students were used as an indicator whether the students find the difficulties or not. the researcher also used five aspects of reading comprehension in this test. Population is subject that has some qualities and characteristics chosen to be learnt and to be concluded by the researcher. According to Gay (1992:140) population is the group to which a researcher would like the results of a study to be generalizable. Population is used more generally; it refers to any collection of entities, of whatever kind, that is the object that have certain characteristics and it becomes the source data that was used by researcher in the study. The population of this research is TOEFL students the total of population 4th Semester students STKIP MB. In order to study the population more effectively, the researcher selected the sample. According to Gay (1992:123), sample is the individual selected comprise. It means that selecting of a sample is very important step in conducting a research study. A good sample is one that representative of the population from which it was selected. Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the large group from which they were selected Gay (1992:123). The purpose of the sampling is to get information about a population. Sampling technique can facilitate the selection of samples randomly but on the basis of certain reference. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to find the individual or sample. Purposive sampling is a technique of taking sample by definite consideration from the researcher. Purposive sampling belongs to non probability sampling. The Total sample, are 19 students at TOEFL, 4th Semester Students. Instrument has important function in a research. To collect the data, the researcher used instrument. According to Creswell (2008:157) an instrument is to measure, the variables in the study may not be available in the literature or commercially. According to Sugiyono (2014:148) instrument is a device that measure the observed natural and social phenomena. this research use TOEFL Reading Test as an instrument. This reading comprehension test Takes From *Long Complete Course For the TOEFL Test Book*

(Debra Philips). This TOEFL reading comprehension test consist of Question about the ideas of the passage, Directly answer question, indirectly answer question, Vocabulary question, overall review question.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted out by using descriptive quantitative research. According to Sugiyono (2014:208), Descriptive research involves collecting data in order to answer question concerning the current status of the study. The population of this research was the five year students of English Education Department students in STKIP Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo. There were 19 students from 4th Semester Students. For collecting the data, the researcher uses TOEFL Reading Comprehension test as the Instrument.

This research was conducted at the STKIP Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo. This Research only focused 4th semester students. The research there are five aspects reading comprehension Questions about the ideas of the passage, Directly Answered Questions, Indirectly answered question, Vocabulary Question, Overall Review Question. The test had 50 questions as the same as the real test in reading TOEFL. In real TOEFL test, the test taker were be given 55 minutes to answer the reading questions. 1 The analysis of the test a. The Students' Ability in Answering Vocabulary Question. The writer created four Question for finding Vocabulary Question. The question items for getting the Vocabulary Question are questions 1 until 10. For Indirectly Answered Questions, there are four question. The questions items for Indirectly Answered appeared in question 11-20. For detail, it is at the following table. Answering Indirectly Answered Questions The result shows that 19 of the students (30) answered question number 5 and 9 only 1 in 10 questions, which means 2

students have difficulty answering the TOEFL test, and also, question student number 2,6,18 can only answer 2 out of 10 questions, which means that 3 of these students have difficulty answering the TOEFL, Based on the Table, showing only 1 student number 10 can 5 questions. That it's Indirectly Answered Questions hard enough for students to answer.

c. The Students' Ability in Answering Questions about the ideas of the Passage. There are eleven question items asking the students to find out the most main ideas in text,for the calculation of percentage of ability for undestanding Questions about the ideas of the passage, the result is presented in the following tabl e. The percentage of the students' ability in undestanding Questions about the ideas of the passage varied. The results showed that 19 students answering the Questions about the ideas of the passage problem was quite difficult,it was evidenced that 1 student was unable to answer test TOEFL, and 1 students again could answer 1 in 11 of the questions was difficult for the student,besides,6 out of 19 of the students only answered 2 out of 11, it can be concluded that the questions are categorized difficult questions for students in answering Questions about the ideas of the passage.

d. The Students' Ability in Answering Overall Review Question. The result shows that 19 of the students (38)answered 10 questions, 3 out of 19 students to answer as many as 6 would be easy for students to answer, Furthermore, it is not 7 out 19 students to answer the question, 3 out of 10 these question would means that the question of Overall Review Question is difficult to answer for the student, Moreover, it 1 student can only answer 1 in 10 of the question means that the student can not understand the

question. Based on the calculation of percentage of ability, it found that the ability item percentage for The resercher provided four question items to find out the Ability in Answering Overall Review Question. The question items number for overall review question appeared in question 32-41.The following table presents the ability item mean score for overall review question. this type of question only (38) out of four question items.It means that the question are categorized difficult for students in answering Overall Review Question. e.The Students' Ability i Answering Directly Answered Questions. For detail information, there are Nine questions provided by the researcher (42-50), The following table provides the percentage of ability item Directly Answered Questions. Based on the table above, if found that 3 of the students answered question out of answer 4 questions,this means that these questions are difficult for the students,there are 2 of the students who answer the questions incorrectly arejust 1 and 2. This means that the question is difficult in addition,2 students also answered this only 5 out of 10 this question means that students have difficulty answering, Moreover, 9 out of the 19 students who answered 3 questions out of 10 on this statement provides that the level of difficulty for the students.Furthermore, the calculation of the percentage of difficulty item that the students have for Directly Answered Questions is (29). it means that the students do not have a lot diffiulty in answering Directly Answered Questions.

4.1.2 Students' Ability in Reading

Comprehension TOEFL Test

After getting the distribution frequency of reading ability, the patterns of ability distribution reading skill type questions and were also calculated into Mean Score. There were five skill types in this research: Question about the ideas of the passage, Directly Answered question, Indirectly Answered question, Vocabulary question, and Overall Review question. After collecting the data and getting the distribution of the students' ability in each reading skill types, the scores were also grouped into rating criteria by Suharsimi (in Kurniawan 2020:596). The following table shows the rating scale of students' ability in answering reading TOEFL questions in individuals.

Based on the table above, it can be seen that based on Suharsimi (in Kurniawan 2020:596) the average skills of the participants were rated in Sufficient, Poor and Very Poor. Overall review question as the highest mean (38) of the five types of skills were put in Sufficient. Meanwhile, Indirectly Answered Question (30) and directly Answered Questions (29) were put in Poor. For the last two skills; Vocabulary Question (27) and Questions about the ideas of the passage (26) were put in Very Poor criterion. Moreover, the average value

of the individual score of all of the students was which categorized in poor. The table also shows that the students face problems mostly in Indirect question and Questions about the ideas of the passages. This problem is related to reading comprehension in the area of Indirectly Answered questions. Moreover, they claim that they often misunderstand a text or an answer because they lack in making inference the meaning in the text. In reading, there are many questions where the answer in multiple choices is the paraphrasing of the answer in the text. Due to the paraphrasing, it often makes them confused or even leads them to wrong answer. Furthermore, the lack of vocabulary was also the reason of the students' difficulty in comprehending the reading TOEFL test. The first question aimed to find out the students' ability. The findings that have been obtained from the analysis of students' reading comprehension were poor because the average score of the students was (36). It can be concluded that the third-year students who learn advanced reading subject are not good enough in comprehending reading in TOEFL. It was proved in table above. In Indirectly Answer Question category, the average value of

students' ability was (30) which was categorized in poor. Directly answered questions was also categorized in poor with the average value (29). There were two skills which classified in very poor, which were Question About the ideas of the passage (26) and vocabulary questions(27). Meanwhile, overall review were the highest skills which were able to answer by the student and it is classified as sufficient with the average value was (38).This research finding was in line with According to Oktarina (in Kurniawan 2018:597). her results, it was proved that from the ranges of correct answer 1-3,4-6 and 7-8/9,almost all of students could answer correctly only in the range of 1-3 correct answer.While for the higher range there were less or even no students could answer correctly.There was an exception only for skill of Where question.She found that there are four difficult skills. They were Finding Main Idea,Implied Detail Question,Unstated Detail and Stated Detail Question and Vocabulary Question.In contrast, the skill of Where Question could be said that it was the easiest difficult to be answered by students. The second research question aimed to find the problems faced by the in comprehending the reading TOEFL test. From the finding,it was found that the students faced

most problems in Question About the ideas of the passage type and Vocabulary question type. Question About the ideas of the passage and Vocabulary question were two skills which classified in very poor with the average value (26) and (27). In conclusion, the third year-students' ability in comprehending reading TOEFL test was poor. It was also found that the students faced most problems in Question About the ideas of the passage and Vocabulary question type. Overall,these finding indicates that the third-year students at English Education Department STKIP Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo not quite understand about reading in TOEFL test..

4.2 Discussion On the Result of Data Analysis

Finding of te research conducted by the reseacher focuses in the Students' Ability in TOEFL Reading comprehension. The following table Reading Scale of reading Skill the students' correct answer and score in reading comprehension test Based on the above table, it shows that 4th Semester Students STKIP Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo could not answer all of question correctly.Only 2 of 19 students could answer 20 until 21and the Lowest 10 reading comprehension's question correctly from the

total; of 50 questions. Moreover, the mean score of all students is 36. Thus, it indicates that the students have lower ability in answering reading comprehension. To find which types of question items are students' ability, the question items were divided into five aspects that are Questions about the ideas of the passage, Directly Answered Questions, Indirectly answered question, Vocabulary Question, Overall Review Question. Based on the above table, semester students 4 number 19 students only 5 (26%) students get in the Poor Category, and the other 14 (73%) students get in the Very Poor, showing that the students' 4th Semester of STKIP Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo is Reading TOEFL don't Ability of Reading TOEFL is Very Poor.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of the research is to analyze the English Education Department students' ability in TOEFL reading comprehension (Case Study of English department STKIP Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo). There were 19 students from the students' ability were related to the question types of reading comprehension test. After analyzing the data gained from the TOEFL test, the writer concluded the 4th semester students of STKIP Muhammadiyah Muara

Bungo, have ability in answering TOEFL reading comprehension Test. From five aspects Questions about the ideas of the page, Directly Answer Questions, Indirectly answer question, Vocabulary Question, Overall Review Question from Longman. The test had 50 questions as the same as the real test in reading TOEFL. In real TOEFL test, the test taker used given 55 minutes to answer the reading questions. Question About passage are: Question about the ideas of the Passage : 11 item, Directly Answered Questions : 9 item, Indirectly Answered Questions : 10 item, Vocabulary Question : 10 item, Overall Review Question : 10 item.

The students' ability faced by the students are ability in answering Vocabulary Question (27), Questions about the Ideas of the. Indirectly Answer Question (30), Directly Answer Question (29), Overall Review Question (38). Therefore, the most difficult aspect faced by 4th semester students is reading for getting overall review question with (38). This can be seen from the mean score of the students type Question About The Ideas of the Passage Very Poor (26) for in TOEFL Reading Comprehension Test. This study also provided how is English Education Department Students' Ability in TOEFL Reading

Comprehension with these Question. Mostly, the students failed in the reading comprehension tests because of poor vocabulary, poor mastery of grammar, understand long sentences and text and lack of knowledge about strategies and Ability of TOEFL reading comprehension.

5.2 Recommendation

From the conclusion above, the writer tries to formulate some recommendation for the 4th semester students STKIP Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo, they should learn more about the reading comprehension such as reading skill, reading strategies, and for reading test that can be useful when they deal with reading comprehension.

Moreover, frequent practice in reading and doing reading comprehension test may assist the students to have reliable comprehension and be familiar with the Reading test, so it may minimize the students' difficulties in reading comprehension test. Meanwhile, for the lecturers, it is expected that they teach the students how to improve their students' ability in TOEFL reading comprehension, especially skill and strategies in reading comprehension test.

order to help the students to overcome difficulties in reading comprehension of English test. The lecturers should provide an interesting material to improve students' reading ability, such as providing the students with authentic material. For the current research also offers a recommendation for further the result of this research can be used as one of the ways to develop the researchers' knowledge and experience.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Breiset, (2016). The Uses of e-book to improving reading comprehension among year 4 pupils. *Journal of English Education* 3.1;23-32

Browns, (2006). Exploring EFL Teachers' in Teaching Reading Comprehension. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan* Vol.11, No.2.

Elizabeth, (2005). Students Ability in Mastering Reading Comprehension. *Getsempena English Education Journal*. Vol.5 No.1, 127

Grabe & Stoller (2018). An analysis of reading comprehension difficulties in TOEFL Test. *Linguistic English Education and Art Journal* 3 (1): 132-137.

Hock and Mellard, (2005), Reading comprehension, what we know A Review of Research. *Language Testing in Asia* Vol 2, No 1

Jacobe, (2012), Fostering Main Idea Comprehension among EFL Learning through Cognitive And Metacognitive Strategies. *International Journal of Humanities and social science* Vol.2. No 14

Kopitki, M. (2007). Exploring the teaching of inference skill (A capstone submitted

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of master of art in

English As a second language)
Minnesota: Hamline University Linguistic

English Education and Art Journal
3(1):132-137

Kurniawati,A., & Fitrawati, F. (2020). An Analysis of Students' Ability in Comprehension TOEFL Reading Test at English Department Universitas Negeri Padang. Journal Of English Language Teaching,9(3),593-588

Logan,j. (2002). reading and study skill: seventh edition.Atlanta cape community college published by McGraw-Hill Companies. New Your.

NISA, R.,Safura,S., &Wicoksono, D. F.(2018).Students Ability in Mastering Reading Comprehension.Getsempena English Education Journal,5(1),24-30

Nordquist, (2012),Effect of instruction in location of Topic Sentence on Academic

Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in Reading Comprehension.

International Journal of Education and Psychological Reseach Vol.7

Patel & Jain, (2008).The Humor Story in Teaching Reading Comprehension.Journal

Of Advances English Studies, vol.2,
No.2, 77-87

Phillips,(2001),Longman Complete Course for the TOEFL Test: Longman

Sari,D.P.(2016).An analysis of Students reading comprehension Based on the four levels comprehension Skill (A study at The Second Year Students of SMAN 10 Bengkulu Academic Year 2014/2015). Linguists: Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching,3(1).

Sharpe, J.P. (2005).How to prepare the TOEFL Test 11'h Edition:ohio

Snow, (2002). Improving reading comprehension using the survey,Question,predict,

Read, Respond, summarize strategy.
English education journal 7(4),549.

Sugiyono,(2014). Metode Penelitian Pendidikan. Bandung:Alfabeta.

Warfield (2013). An analysis of reading comprehension difficulties in TOEFL Test. Penelitian Pendidikan Vol.11,No.2.

Weawer,(2010),ExploringEFL Teachers' in Teaching Reading Comprehension

