

**INVESTIGATING ON THE EIGHTH SEMESTER
STUDENTS' ERRORS ON READING SKILLS FOR TOEFL
AT ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM FKIP RIAU UNIVERSITY**

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Abstract: *This research aimed to investigate the eighth-semester students' dominant errors on reading skills for TOEFL at English Study Program FKIP Riau University. The eighth-semester students of the English Study Program in the academic year 2020/2021 were the population of this research. Eighty six samples were selected using the proportional random sampling technique. This quantitative research used the Reading TOEFL Test as an instrument that was distributed via Google – form. The test consisted of 50 questions adopted from the TOEFL Best Preparation book by Shania Kaitlyn and Thomas Logan. The data from the Google form was analyzed to determine dominant errors by observing the number of wrong answers in each reading skill. This research revealed that the dominant errors on reading skills for TOEFL made by the eighth semester were the first on skill IV Implied Detail Question the percentage of error was 61.40%. Second, was on skill I Main Idea Question, with 58.47% of errors, and then skill II Stated Detail Question with 46.03% of errors.*

Key Words: *Investigating, Errors, Reading Skills, TOEFL.*

MENYELIDIKI KESALAHAN KETERAMPILAN MEMBACA UNTUK TOEFL PADA MAHASISWA BAHASA INGGRIS SEMESTER DELAPAN FKIP UNIVERSITAS RIAU

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kesalahan dominan mahasiswa semester delapan di program studi Bahasa Inggris FKIP Universitas Riau pada keterampilan membaca TOEFL. Mahasiswa semester delapan Program Studi Bahasa Inggris tahun ajaran 2020/2021 menjadi populasi dalam penelitian ini. Delapan puluh enam sampel dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik pengambilan sampel acak proporsional. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif sebagai pengumpulan data dan data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan test reading TOEFL sebagai instrumen yang disebarluaskan melalui Goole – Form. Tes terdiri dari 50 soal yang diambil dari buku TOEFL Best Preparation oleh Shania Kaitlyn dan Thomas Logan. Data dari Google form dianalisis untuk menentukan kesalahan dominan dengan mengamati jumlah jawaban yang salah pada setiap keterampilan membaca. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesalahan yang dominan pada keterampilan membaca TOEFL yang dilakukan oleh semester delapan adalah kesalahan pertama pada keterampilan IV pertanyaan detail tersirat persentasenya sebesar 61.40%. Kedua, keterampilan I pertanyaan ide utama dengan persentase kesalahan sebesar 58.47%. Kemudian keterampilan II pertanyaan detail yang dinyatakan dengan persentase kesalahan sebesar 46.03%.

Kata Kunci: Menyelidiki, Kesalahan, Keterampilan Membaca, TOEFL.

INTRODUCTION

English institutions offer some tests that can evaluate the students' English ability. TOEFL is a significant test that can assess the English proficiency of the students. Collins English dictionary in 2020 stated that TOEFL is an instrument to assess an individual's ability, intending to determine the English proficiency of somebody who does not use English as a first language or someone who studies English as a foreign language. By the TOEFL test, the student will know their English proficiency, excellent or poor.

TOEFL is one of the requirements that University students have to fulfill before graduating. University authorities set this requirement because they believe that TOEFL can assess students' capability and competence to comprehend English in academic tasks (Aliponga, 2013). Some universities in Indonesia, including Riau University, are committed to this policy. It requires students to pass the TOEFL standard score 450 and 500 for the English study program. In addition, the general public is aware that the TOEFL certificate is one of the requirements for scholarships, applying for jobs in various agencies and even government agencies. Consequently, this is going to be a new challenge for students.

The type of test obligatory to carry out is a TOEFL prediction, a TOEFL paper-based test. It assesses three English skills tested: listening comprehension, Structure, and Written Expression, and Reading comprehension. These three English skills have to be mastered, captured and can be used by the students. Although English students have studied English for some semesters, they still have many problems facing the TOEFL test. It proved that some English students have difficulty in the TOEFL test, as seen in the English and Art Laboratory; they cannot reach the minimum target score. Just four or five students can get 500 at a time. As Ras (2017) stated, the average TOEFL score of English Study Program students was 432. It means that the standard for applying the TOEFL score to the requirements before graduation seems difficult for students to obtain. One of the common problems with the TOEFL test is a lack of understanding of the question.

One of the most necessary skills in the English learning process is reading because success comes from the knowledge gained by reading (Ganie et al., 2019). However, according to the personal observation in the English Study Program FKIP Riau University, when taking Standardized English Test Preparation class in the academic year 2018-2019, almost all of the students in the class were worried about the reading section of the TOEFL test. They could not manage the time when the test was in progress; they were too lazy to read long passages and could not find answers quickly and correctly. Based on the researcher's experience, the researcher faced some problems while taking the TOEFL test and in the reading section, too, concerning the unfamiliarity of the topic discussed in the text. It was reinforced by the documentation of the English student scores from the integrated language service unit (July – December 2019), where the average conversion score of students reading section was 37. It means still a poor level of reading ability, and the reading section has a low score compared with other sections.

Based on the preceding statement, it is possible to conclude that reading comprehension can be complicated and challenging when students lack knowledge and are unaccustomed to the topic covered in the reading comprehension section. Thus, it is

essential to investigate the eighth-semester students' errors on reading skills for TOEFL at the English study program FKIP Riau University.

The research problem is: What are the eighth-semester students' dominant errors on reading skills for TOEFL at English Study Program FKIP Riau University?

The research objective is to determine the eighth-semester students' dominant errors on reading skills for TOEFL at English Study Program FKIP Riau University.

METHODOLOGY

This study was applied a descriptive research design. In a descriptive research design, Williams (2007) stated that research design utilizes to verify a condition implicating identifying characteristics of an absolute miracle based on an observational foundation, factually, systematically, and accurately. This descriptive research consisted of one variable only: students' errors on reading skills for TOEFL.

Eighth-semester students of the English Study Program FKIP Riau University in the academic year of 2020/2021 or batch 2017 were the population of this study. The sample for this research consisted of 86 students from the population. A sample is a delegate of the group population from which it is drawn (Gay et al., 2012). Furthermore, to get the samples of the population, the researcher used the proportional random sampling method. It is said to be proportional because the students' taking in each class is determined by their number. It is said to be random because every student in the population has the same chance to be selected as a sample.

The instrument was in the form of a test. The test was the standardized reading comprehension of TOEFL. The test was adopted from TOEFL Best Preparation Book by Shania Kaitlyn and Thomas Logan (from the USA). The reading skills of the TOEFL questions were learned by the students in reading comprehension III and Standardized test class which related to skills of TOEFL reading comprehension by Shania & Thomas book. It had 50 questions and required 55 minutes to answer. Then, the results of the eighth-semester English students' reading section were processed as the data.

The researcher applied a quantitative method to accumulate and analyze data. The quantitative method entails gathering and analyzing numerical data to depict, clarify, indicate, and regulate phenomena of concern (Gay et al., 2012:7). Here, the numbers of students' errors on reading comprehension skills for TOEFL were analyzed by quantitative methods.

Due to the current situation of Covid-19, the data were collected online through Google Form. The researcher sent the research instrument to the students, who were already members of a WhatsApp group. Further, students clicked on the link sent to them then did it individually for 55 minutes. The researcher saw on reading skills which students made the dominant errors in their reading TOEFL test by looking at the number of the wrong answer of each skill.

The data from Google form was analyzed by applying Microsoft Excel 2010 in the form of a percentage of the score. Then the researcher classified the question items based on the reading skill to determine which skills students made many errors. It employed the following formula:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100 \%$$

(Sudjono, 2011)

The Point:

- P means The Percentage
 F means The Frequency of the wrong answer
 N means the total number of the students

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Result of Reading TOEFL Test

After distributed reading TOEFL test and analized incorrect answer the following table provides descriptive scores of errors in each skill.

Table 1. The Percentage of Students' Errors on Reading Skills for TOEFL Test

No	Skill in reading comprehension of TOEFL	Average Frequency	Percentage
1.	Skill 1 Main Idea Questions	50	58.47%
2.	Skill 2 Stated Detail Questions	40	46.03%
3.	Skill 3 Unstated Detail Questions	26	29.94%
4.	Skill 4 Implied Detail questions	40	61.40%
5.	Skill 5 Vocabulary in context questions	30	34.04%
6.	Skill 6 Reference Questions	21	23.95%
7.	Skill 7 Locating information questions	30	34.60%
Average		34	41.20%

Table 1 shows the TOEFL reading comprehension section includes seven skills based on Shania and Thomas' book: (1) Main Idea Questions; (2) Stated Detail Questions; (3) Unstated Detail Questions; (4) Implied Detail Questions; (5) Vocabulary in Context Questions; (6) Reference Questions; (7) Locating Information Questions. Students made an error on each skill with a different percentage. It means students have a different understanding of each skill. The highest error was on skill fourth Implied Detail Questions, the percentage was 58.47% of 86 students, and the lowest was on skill sixth Reference Questions, the percentage of error was 23.95% of students. The average of errors was 41.20%. Overall, students made an error on each skill.

Dominant Errors of the Students

After describing the students' errors in general, the researcher found the dominant errors based on the highest percentage of errors and sorted them as follow:

Table 2. The Percentage of Students' Dominant Errors in Reading Skill for TOEFL

No	Skills in Reading Comprehension of TOEFL	Average of Frequency	Percentage
1	Skill IV Implied Detail Questions	40	61.40%
2	Skill I Main Idea Questions	50	58.47%
3	Skill II Stated Detail Questions	40	46.03%

Table 2 indicates the dominant errors made by the eighth semester English Study Program FKIP Riau University. The highest error was in skill IV for answering implied detail questions with a percentage of 61.40% of errors. The second was skill I for answering the main idea question with 58.47% of error percentage. Then, the last was in skill II for answering the stated detail question with 46.03% errors.

DISCUSSIONS

This research was aimed to investigate the dominant errors made by the students in reading skills of TOEFL by looking at the wrong answer choice of each number. In this research, the main part of the reading skills of TOEFL that students realized as the most challenging skills was divided into three aspects. The dominant errors were sorted from the highest and lowest reading skills in answering the TOEFL of the students. Although there were seven skills acknowledged as the errors in TOEFL readings, the most errors made by students were in skill 4 of implied detail question, skill 1 of main idea question, and skill 2 of stated detail question.

Skill 4 in this research is the most challenging aspect of reading skills in answering TOEFL reading skills. Skill 4 is determining the answer to implied detail questions in the TOEFL test. Students mostly make mistakes in answering this part of the test. Implied Detail Question asks the students to answer the question by concluding a specific detail in a passage. However, many students find it challenging to answer the question about implied detail questions. Students need to critically comprehend some of

the explanations presented in the passage and draw conclusions to answer the question. According to Samad (2017), the findings stated that the most difficult reading skill is correctly finding implied detail questions. It can be concluded that answering the question related to skill 4 of determining implied detail questions is the most challenging skill students need to learn regularly.

The following error made by students in answering the reading test of TOEFL is skill 1 of finding the main idea question. The second skill is one of the main errors students made while answering the question in the TOEFL test. Main idea question inquiries the main point of the passages. Almost all of the main ideas are at the beginning of each paragraph. However, most students still struggle to locate the primary concept of the question because they have to resume every paragraph to receive the passage's main idea. Oktarina (2018) also found that a problematic skill faced by students was looking for the main idea in the reading text. It can be stated that finding the main topic of the passage is considered the skills that students need to be mastered to answer the question related to the skill correctly.

The last error categorized as the most challenging reading skill is skill 2 of the stated detail question. The stated detail question requests a specific portion of explanation in the passage rather than the passage as a whole. The correct answer frequently reveals the same ideas as those expressed in the text, but the words are different. This case makes the students consider it too easy because they can find the answer in the information of the passage only. They ignored its details. According to Risa Asrida (2019), English students at Universitas Negeri Padang had difficulties with thirteen of the five topics assessed, and answering stated detailed questions is one of them. It can be concluded that students pay less attention to answering questions related to the skill and need to practice it.

Although reading in the English Department of FKIP Riau University is taught until five semesters, there is no guarantee that the students do not make any errors in every question of reading the TOEFL test. All questions have the error, although it is different. The most common errors in the TOEFL reading test are answering the implied detail question, answering the main idea question, and answering the unstated detail question. As a result, to improve the students' comprehension of reading TOEFL, students have to pay more attention to the aspect of reading skill that is a problem, particularly in these three types of error.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The eighth-semester students did the dominant errors English Study Program FKIP Riau University on their reading TOEFL test was skill IV implied detail question; the percentage of error was 61.40%. Then followed by skill I answering the main idea question, the percentage was 58.47%. Then the last, skill II stated detail questions; the percentage of error was 46.03%. Shortly, the students' dominant errors in reading skills for TOEFL were skill IV answering implied detail questions; skill I answering the main idea questions; skill II answering stated detail questions.

By doing this research, it was found that the students made the dominant errors. The students did not have enough skills to answer implied detail, main idea, and stated detail questions. Therefore more intensive teaching and learning in those three skills are needed to reduce the errors.

Recommendation

The researcher would like to give some recommendations, according to the finding of the research. First, the Students should pay more attention to every element in reading skills for TOEFL by practicing, in particular the reading comprehension section of TOEFL. It is necessary to understand reading skills to avoid wrong answers and then get a good score. The students need to practice more, in particular the reading comprehension section of the TOEFL test. Students can learn from internet sources to know how to answer these reading skills correctly. Especially on the dominant errors, namely skill IV implied detail questions, a skill I answering main idea questions, skill II answering stated detail questions. Students should learn the characteristics and how to answer questions quickly and correctly of these three reading skills. Second, the next researcher will support the following research conducted on the same topic. It could be used as one of the references, particularly in the Reading Skills for TOEFL topic, and it will provide new inspiration to the next researcher. It is recommended that the next researcher conduct reading skills research in more samples, more in the analysis, do pre-test and post-test to get promising findings.

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