

A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE THIRD YEAR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM FKIP UNIVERSITY OF RIAU IN COMPREHENDING ENGLISH NEWS ARTICLES

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study is to find out the third year students' ability of English Study Program in comprehending English news articles. This research focuses on finding factual information, finding main ideas, locating the meaning of vocabulary in context, identifying references, and making inferences based on English news articles. Data were collected using reading comprehension test with multiple choice type. The test contained 30 items. The try out was conducted to check the validity and reliability of the test. The research findings are as follows. First, the ability of the students in comprehending English news articles is 67 which is in Average to Good level. Second, the students' mean score in finding factual information is 71, the mean score in finding main ideas is 59, the mean score in identifying references is 73, the mean score in making inferences is 61, and the mean score in locating the meaning of vocabulary in context is 67. Third, the highest score obtained by the students is in identifying references that falls into Average to Good ability level, and the lowest score that the students get is in finding main ideas that falls into Poor to Average ability level.*

Keywords: *Ability, Comprehending, News Articles.*

SUATU PENELITIAN TENTANG KEMAMPUAN MAHASISWA TAHUN KETIGA PROGRAM STUDI PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS FKIP UR DALAM MEMAHAMI ARTIKEL BERITA BERBAHASA INGGRIS

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Abstrak: Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk meneliti kemampuan mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris dalam memahami artikel berita Bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini berfokus pada kemampuan memahami informasi faktual, memahami ide pokok, memahami makna dari kata-kata sulit, mengidentifikasi reference, dan memahami inference. Data diperoleh dari tes pemahaman membaca dalam bentuk pilihan ganda yang terdiri dari 30 soal. Uji coba dilakukan untuk memperoleh validitas dan reliabilitas tes yang baik. Hasil penelitian yang diperoleh adalah sebagai berikut. Pertama, kemampuan mahasiswa dalam memahami artikel berita berbahasa Inggris secara keseluruhan adalah 67 yaitu pada level Average to Good. Kedua, nilai rata-rata mahasiswa dalam menemukan informasi faktual adalah 71, menemukan ide pokok adalah 59, mengidentifikasi reference adalah 73, memahami inference adalah 61, dan memahami makna kata-kata sulit adalah 67. Ketiga, nilai tertinggi diperoleh mahasiswa adalah dalam memahami makna kata-kata sulit, yang masuk dalam kategori Average to Good. Sedangkan nilai terendah yang diperoleh oleh mahasiswa adalah dalam memahami ide pokok, yang masuk dalam kategori Poor to Average.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan, Pemahaman, Artikel Berita.

INTRODUCTION

English as an international language is used by many peoples around the world. It is used to exchange information in many aspects such as science, technology, culture and social. Because of the importance of English, the Indonesian government determines English as a compulsory subject starting from Junior High School level to University level. The aim of this subject is to enable students in use English effectively and efficiently. Therefore, students should learn the four language skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking.

In learning English, one of the main skills that students need to acquire is reading. According to Burnes and Page (1991), reading is an interactive process; a process in which the reader engages in exchange of ideas with an author via the texts. It can be inferred that there are four components in reading; reader, writer/author, reading texts and author's message. The writer transfers his message to readers through the texts.

Since English is not the first language in Indonesia, the students especially English Study Program students are facing difficulties in comprehending the ideas of reading passage as well as answering the questions based on the text. In the curriculum of English Study Program, the purposes of reading comprehension are: (1) students are expected to be able to identify the meaning and the use of unfamiliar lexical items, topic and main idea, supporting details of various types of texts, (2) students are expected to be able to develop the competency in interpretive and affective reading non-fictional text in pre-advanced level, (3) students are expected to be able to develop the competency in reading of various types of texts. Therefore, the writer uses English news articles as the material to know the ability of the students in comprehending the texts.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive research in which has only one variable. Gay (2000) stated that descriptive research involves the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data in order to develop a specific description of a sample's behavior or personal characteristics. Gay (2000) stated that the descriptive research is carried out to find out the answer to questions concerning the current status of the study. It is useful for investigating a variety of educational problems. Therefore, this research only describes the ability of the third year students of English Study Program FKIP UR in comprehending English news articles.

The population of this research is the third year students of English Study Program FKIP Riau University. The total number of the students is 75 students that is divided into 3 classes: A, B, and C. The writer took samples by using cluster sampling for this research. To choose the sample, the writer used lottery technique. The sample of this research is class A with 25 students.

To get the data, the instrument used is reading test with multiple choice. In collecting the data, the writer ask the students to read and answer the text given. The issues of the news are about technology, health, economy, environment, sport and politic. The test takes about 45 to 60 minutes for the students to read the news and to answer the questions.

THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this research is to show the ability of the third year students of English Study Program FKIP UR in comprehending English news articles. The writer finds out the highest as well as the lowest scores for all of components comprehending English news articles.

Before administrating the test, the writer tried out the test to 26 students of English Education Department of UIN SUSKA RIAU on September 2015. The result are analyzed to find out the difficulty level of each item and reliability of the test. To find out the difficulty level of each item, the writer calculated the discrimination index and the facility value of the test.

In order to calculate the reliability of the test, the writer has to find out the mean of the students' score and the standard deviation. As a result of the try out, the writer found out the mean of the students' score is 19. The result of the Standard Deviation is 3.3. The value of the mean score and standard deviation are used in calculating the reliability of the test. The reliability of the test is 0.61.

After revised some rejected items, the writer administrates the real test to the respondents (Third year students of English Study Program FKIP UR). In general, the students of English Study Program are able to comprehend English news articles. The result of the students' ability in comprehending English news articles can be shown in the tables below. The data research findings can be seen in the following.

Table 4.1
The Frequency of Students Ability in Comprehending English News Articles

No	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability
1	80-100	1	4%	Good to excellent
2	60-79	21	84%	Average to good
3	50-59	3	12%	Poor to average
4	0-49	0	0%	Poor
Total		25	100%	

Table 4.1, shows that 1 students (4%) belong to **good to excellent** level, 21 students (84%) belong to **average to good** level, 3 students (12%) belong to **poor to average** level, and nobody belongs to **poor** level.

From the students' score, the writer finds out that the mean score of the students in comprehending English news articles is 67. It can be concluded that the ability of the third year students of English Study Program FKIP UR in comprehending English news articles is categorized into **average to good** level.

Table 4.2
The Students' Score Classification in Finding Factual Information

No	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability
1	80-100	11	44%	Good to excellent
2	60-79	10	40%	Average to good
3	50-59	4	16%	Poor to average
4	0-49	0	0%	Poor
Total		25	100%	

Table 4.2 shows that from 25 students who took the test, 11 students (44%) belong to **good to excellent** level, 10 students (40%) belong to **average good** level, 4 students (16%) belong to **poor to average** level and nobody belongs to **poor** level.

The students mean score in finding factual information is 71. From the description above, it can be concluded that the ability of the third year students of English Study Program FKIP UR in finding factual information of English news articles is in **average to good** level.

Table 4.3
The Students' Score Classification in Finding Main Ideas

No	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability
1	80-100	1	4%	Good to excellent
2	60-79	14	56%	Average to good
3	50-59	7	28%	Poor to average
4	0-49	3	12%	Poor
Total		25	100%	

Table 4.3 shows that from 25 students who took the test, only 1 students (4%) belong to **good to excellent** level, 14 students (56%) belong to **average to good** level, 7 students (24%) belong to **poor to average** level, and 3 students (12%) belong to **poor** level.

The students' mean score in finding main ideas is 59 as stated in **Appendix 9**. From the description above, it can be concluded that the ability of the third year students of English Study Program FKIP UR in finding main ideas is **poor to average** level.

Table 4.4
The Students' Score Classification in Identifying the Reference

No	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability
1	80-100	11	44%	Good to excellent
2	60-79	10	40%	Average to good
3	50-59	4	16%	Poor to average
4	0-49	0	0%	Poor
Total		25	100%	

Table 4.4 shows that from 25 students who took the test, 11 students (44%) belong to **good to excellent** level, 10 students (40%) belong to **average to good** level, 4 students (16%) belong to **poor to average** level, and 0 students (0%) belong to **poor** level.

The students mean score in identifying the reference is 73 as stated in **Appendix 10**. From the description above, it can be concluded that the ability of the third year students of English Study Program FKIP UR in identifying the reference is in **average to good** level.

Table 4.5
The Students' Score Classification in Identifying Inferences

No	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability
1	80-100	1	4%	Good to excellent
2	60-79	17	68%	Average to good
3	50-59	4	16%	Poor to average
4	0-49	3	12%	Poor
Total		25	100%	

Table 4.5 shows that from 25 students who took the test, only 1 student (4%) belong to **good to excellent** level, 17 students (68%) belong to **average to good** level, 4 students (16%) belong to **poor to average** level, and 3 students (12%) belong to **poor** level.

The students' mean score in making inferences is 61 as stated in **Appendix 11**. From the description above, it can be concluded that the ability of the third year students of English Study Program FKIP UR in making inferences is in **average to good** level.

Table 4.6
The Students' Score Classification in Locating the Meaning of Vocabulary

No	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability
1	80-100	6	24%	Good to excellent
2	60-79	14	56%	Average to good
3	50-59	5	20%	Poor to average
4	0-49	0	0%	Poor
Total		25	100%	

Table 4.6 shows that from 25 students who took the test, 6 students (24%) belong to **good to excellent** level, 14 students (56%) belong to **average to good** level, 5 students (20%) belong to **poor to average** level, and nobody belongs to **poor** level.

The students' mean score in locating the meaning of vocabulary is 67 as stated in **Appendix 12**. From the description above, it can be concluded that the ability of the third year students of English Study Program FKIP UR in locating the meaning of vocabulary is in **average to good** level.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study is to measure the ability of the third year students of English Study Program in comprehending English news articles. In this study, the students are asked to answer a multiple choice test. Based on the research finding, it can be said that the students of English Study Program FKIP UR who have learned many kinds of texts, still face the problem in comprehending it. It can be concluded that the third year students' ability in comprehending at English Study Program FKIP UR is in Average to Good level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the ability of the third year students of English Study Program in average to good level, the improvement is needed. Students should practice their reading skill more. They can use English news article as their alternative learning material. The students are expected to learn the five components of reading comprehension to help them in reading, especially in finding the main ideas.

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