



ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' PROBLEMS ON THE READING SECTION OF TOEFL

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abstract

In the present study, TOEFL as a standardize test is used UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin as one of the requisites to complete study. This study aims to analyze the most difficult reading skills for students of the English Education Department (further glossed by EED) and their problems on the reading section of TOEFL. It employed a case study in which 22 EED students were involved in the TOEFL test carried out by Language Development Center, UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten. There were three instruments used: the archival record of TOEFL test, questionnaire, and interviews. The findings of this study found that finding main idea was the most difficult reading skills. Meanwhile, some problems of EED students on the reading section of TOEFL test were limited vocabulary mastery, lack of grammatical knowledge and reading skills, unfamiliar with the topic, as well as low concentration, physical endurance, and limited time.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is inevitably one of the prominent language competencies that offers significant benefits for students to support their success in academics (Brown 2018; Menadue & Jacups, 2018; Sullivan, Allice, Brown & Matt, 2015;). Underwood & Batt (1996) state that “reading is the fundamental skill for formal education and for an individual success in society.” Basically, all EED students want to have a good English proficiency, including reading, because “reading is the primary avenue for knowledge” (Roldan, 1975, p.25) and is “the heart of education” (Farr, 1984, p.5). To equip EED students with adequate reading skill, EED has provided some reading courses into its curriculum, such as literal reading, interpretative reading, critical reading, and extensive reading. In addition, EED also offers one special course, namely advanced English, where the course is designed to improve students' language proficiencies whose materials and skills are mostly adopted from TOEFL.

As a matter of fact, the courses have not been able to improve students' reading skills. The low ability of EED students in reading skill is reflected in the results of the TOEFL test. The TOEFL test is used in UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten as one of requisites to

complete study. As a standardized test, the TOEFL test is prepared by a qualified institution (ETS) and has been used widely in university level. This test has been appreciated worldwide (Warfield, Larabee & Geyer, 2013). Nowadays, the reliance on the TOEFL test has reached such a point that some universities have employed this standardized test as a part of graduation requirements. The authority of universities set this precondition because they believe that “the TOEFL test is able to evaluate students’ ability and skills to understand English in academic tasks” (Aliponga, 2013, p. 73). In line with the previous statement, Pyle (2001:3) also reveals that “TOEFL is an exam that determines whether a student whose native language is not English has strong enough English skills to succeed in courses at a college”.

Based on the archival record of the TOEFL test which obtained from Language Development Center, UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten in academic year 2019/2020, it shows that as many as 63 EED students took the TOEFL test and out of 50 questions in the reading section, there were 19 EED students (30%) who can answer reading questions correctly with less than 20 items, 31 EED students (49%) can answer reading questions correctly with less than 30 items, and 13 EED (20%) can answer reading questions correctly with less than 40 items. This indicates that the reading section of TOEFL is not easy and “it is considered as a difficult section” (Abboud & Husein, 2011).

Studies on TOEFL are still blooming and interesting to be discussed up to now, some studies have been done by scholars (Abboud & Hussein, 2011; Fahim, Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010; Hale, 1988; Samad & Fitriani, 2016) deals with TOEFL in various variables.

Hale (1988) investigated the interaction of student major-field group and text content in TOEFL reading comprehension. This study was derived from a hypothesis that at a student’s major-field area interact with the text content in determining performance on TOEFL reading passages. To assess the hypothesis, the study examined performance on the reading passages in TOEFL forms used in four operational test administrations. The results revealed that students in the two major-field groups namely humanities/social sciences and the biological/physical sciences performed significantly better on passages related to their own groups than on other passages, for three of the four test forms examined. In addition, this study also disclosed that although the was statistically significant for most of the test forms. However, the effect was relatively small, as expressed in terms of points on the TOEFL scale. Thus, a distinction must be drawn between practical significance and the statistical significance of the interaction effect. Practically, the effect appears to be relatively small with

typical TOEFL reading passages, perhaps because they are drawn from general readings rather than specialized textbooks.

Fahim, Bagherkazemi & Alemi (2010) examined the relationship between test takers' critical thinking ability and their performance on the reading section of TOEFL. The findings showed that there was high positive correlation between two variables. In other words, it indicated a statistically significant advantage for those with greater thinking skills. This study also has several significant implications, one of them was to ask second language reading instructors to develop critical reading skills if they want to enhance the efficiency of their course because this can limit critical reading strategy training.

Abboud & Hussein (2011) conducted a study on the difficulties faced by advanced Iraqi foreign learners in passing the ITP TOEFL test. The findings of this study exposed that of three sections in the ITP TOEFL test, listening is the most difficult section for advanced Iraqi foreign learners with the percentage 57%, 32% for structure and written expression section, and 22% for reading section. Moreover, Abboud and Husein (cited in Samad et., al, 2017, p.30) also assert that "the difficulty in reading section of TOEFL test which experienced by test takers was caused by the limitation of time when taking the test, lack of knowledge related to the reading passage.

Another study was carried out by Samad & Fitriani (2016), who explored the importance of English proficiency in facing ASEAN Economic Community. One of findings of this study was most students at Syiah Kuala University failed to achieve the required score to complete their study. They found that out of 1916 TOEFL test takers, only 53 students or 2.77% were able to achieve a TOEFL score of 450 – 497. In short, the result of this study indicated that most students at Syiah Kuala University still have not been able to achieve the TOEFL score that has been set by the authority.

Unfortunately, little rigorous study has been carried out to explore the most difficult reading skills on TOEFL and some students' problems on the reading section of TOEFL. Therefore, the researchers assume that there must be efforts should be made to analyze what reading skills are the most difficult for EED students and what problems they usually experienced when taking the TOEFL test, especially in the reading section. As for the implication of this study is the reading lecturers should teach some applicative strategies and effective tips to EED students to overcome reading problems when taking the TOEFL test.

Reading Comprehension

Reading and comprehension are two words that have a very close relationship because reading activities have the main goals that is understanding the text that is being read. On the one hand, the definition of reading can be obtained from various perspectives. Firstly, reading is defined as “an active process of constructing meaning from printed or written messages” (Day & Bamford, 1998; Finnochiaro & Bonomo, 1973; Weaver, 1994). Secondly, reading is described as interaction between author(s) and reader(s). “Reading is not as a reaction to the text but interaction between author(s) and reader(s) mediated through a text” (Widowson, 1979) or as an interaction between reader(s) and texts (Alderson, 2000; Klinger, Vaugh & Boardman, 2007) which has a significant contribution to the reading fluency of reader” (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 154). On the other hand, the word comprehension is simply defined as “the ability to understand something” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2001, p.369).

In practice, “reading activity involves at least three components, namely the writer, the text, and the reader. Out of three components are bound by comprehension” (Ma'mur, 2006, p.5). Several years earlier, Harris & Smith (1972:239) had stated that the word comprehension refers to the effort to obtain or capture the meaning of the reading. Undeniable, the preceding statement indicates that “comprehension is center of reading and the heart of reading process” (Tankersley, 2003, p.90).

In academic context, reading comprehension is a complex, active process of constructing meaning from text and involves knowing how to read words accurately and automatically, accessing previous knowledge, understanding vocabulary and concepts, making inferences, and linking key ideas (Thompson & Vaugh, 2007, p.114). To acquire information from the text, “students should be able to pass the process of meaning construction” (Snow, 2002, p.132). the process of constructing meaning will lead students to a comprehension. And “students comprehend the text better when they fully understand the information in the text” (Fitriani, 2015). In brief, reading comprehension is an active and complex activity because this activity involves not only the reader's body parts (e.g., eyes, head, hands, etc.) but also mental activities (e.g., remembering and thinking to understand the text) so that the reader can capture the message which contained in the text.

Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension

Reading is classified as a receptive language skill by Harmer (2001:199). However, receptive skill in this sense is not passive. Because reading is an active and complex activity which involves not only physical activities (e.g., movements of eyeballs, head, hands, and other parts of body) but also thinking activities (e.g., understanding between letters, words, and sentences) so that the reader can capture the gist of information which contained in a text that is being read. Nevertheless, the ability of each reader to comprehend the text is varied. Several factors can affect reading comprehension are “vocabulary mastery, interest, eye fixation, level of interpretation, previous background knowledge, Intelligence Quotient (IQ), familiarity with text, reading purpose, and flexibility of reading rate” (Soedarso, 2010, p.58-59).

Furthermore, Whiteley (2004:65) has also the same opinion about “how well the reader comprehends a text is influenced by several factors such as reading level and vocabulary mastery, prior knowledge of the topic, concentration, motivation, and reading strategies as well as memory capacity to retain information”. Not really different from the previous statement, “the quantity and quality of reader’s comprehension is affected by some factors such as reading speed, purpose of reading, material layout, and the environment in which the reader performs reading activities” (Wainwright, 2007, p.36). To sum up, there are two main factors affect reading comprehension, both internal (e.g., motivation, interest, concentration level, IQ, breadth of vocabulary mastery, background knowledge, reading speed) and external factor of reader (e.g., the layout of material, ambient temperature, environmental atmosphere, reading position, and the light level in a room).

Reading Difficulties

Numerous studies have revealed some reading difficulties for EFLs, one of the most common difficulties faced by EFLs is determining main idea. The main idea is difficult because “the reader has to look at several pages of text by using the given amount of information and relate it to previous knowledge, as well as predict the underlying message” (Duffy, 2019, p.138).

In a study conducted by Floris & Divina (2009:41), recognizing text organization is revealed as the most reading difficult skill for EFLs in Indonesia setting. It was because “many Indonesian students were not trained to activate recognizing text organization after

they read a passage. Commonly, they need only to answer some set of questions after reading a particular text. As consequence, they did not get adequate exposure to master this skill.” Another reading difficulty is answering stated detail questions. “Correct answers for stated detail questions are seldom the same, words for words, as information in the passage; they often contain synonyms, and use different grammatical structure” (Rogers, 2014, p.217).

Unpredictably, many EFLs also often failed to find pronoun referents correctly. “This happen because the pronoun often occurs in a long complex sentence that made it difficult to identify its referent” (Sutarsyah, 2015, p.146-147). Other researchers, Oakhill, Cain & Elbro (2015:61) state that determining appropriate meaning of the words is also one of common reading difficulties experienced by EFLs. “When words are strung together, the links between their meanings are usually based on only some aspects of the full meanings of the words, this easily seen with words that have many potential meanings. It is much more likely that the reader understands the word in the context if the reader already knows the particular meaning or potential meaning. However, rich vocabulary knowledge is certainly also important understanding the combined meaning of different words.”

In sum, there are some reading difficulties for EFLs. Based on the previous studies, the difficulties are in determining main idea, recognizing text organization, answering stated detail questions, finding pronoun referents correctly, and determining appropriate meaning of the words.

Test of English as a Foreign Language

Test of English as a Foreign Language (widely-known as TOEFL) is “a test to measure the level of English proficiency of non-native speakers of English” (Phillips, 2001, p.xiii). it is probably the most often used examination as one of requirements for foreign students to continue study in English speaking universities such as in the United States. Recently, “TOEFL is also required by someone who want to apply for a particular job abroad, scholarship, and as one of requirements for students to complete their study in some universities in Indonesia” (Samad, 2016).

TOEFL is a trademark of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) which designs and administers test (<http://www.ets.org/toefl/test-takers/ibt>). Today, the TOEFL test is available in the form of a paper-based test and the internet-based test. In UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, the TOEFL test is administered by using a paper-based test. The paper version of the TOEFL test has four sections (Test Taker Handbook, 2016, p.3) namely “(1)

listening comprehension; (2) structure and written expression; (3) reading comprehension; and (4) test of written English". Kaplan (2009:36) outlines that "all questions are presented in multiple-choice format with four options per question and every question has different instructions based on what it is being asked (e.g., understanding the meaning of word, basic comprehension test, and understanding of detail presented in a passage)".

Reading comprehension test of TOEFL is "designed to measure students' ability to read and understand short passages similar in topic and style to those that students are likely to encounter in English speaking universities" (Philips, 2001, p. 343). There are five aspects to the TOEFL reading comprehension test. These aspects are divided into 13 skills. The first aspect is questions about the ideas of the passage. This aspect has two skills, namely: answer main idea questions correctly and recognize the organization of ideas. The second aspect is directly answered questions. This aspect consists of three skills, namely: answer stated detail questions correctly, find unstated details, and find pronoun referents. The third aspect is indirectly answered questions. This aspect composed of two skills, that is answer implied detail questions correctly and answer transition questions correctly. The fourth aspect is vocabulary questions. This aspect has four skills, namely: find definition from structural clues, determine meanings from word parts, use context to determine meanings of difficult words, and use context to determine meanings of simple words. The fifth aspect is review questions. This aspect comprises of three skills, that is determine where specific information is found and determine the tone, purpose, or course (Philips, 2001, p. 268-441).

METHOD

This study adopted a case study that aims to analyze the most difficult reading skills on the TOEFL and students' problems on the reading section of TOEFL. Since this was a case study, it concerns to investigate contemporary phenomena (the case) in depth within a unit of something. This unit can be a learner, a teacher, a particular class or a program in a school" (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, p.8). As many as 22 EED students were involved in this study.

To collect data, the researchers used archival record, questionnaire and interview. Archival record was taken from the TOEFL test. The researchers checked the worksheet of EED students carefully then analyzed the worksheet one by one to (1) classify students based on their understanding; (2) calculate the percentage of difficulty; (3) interpret level of difficulty in percentage from each reading skills.

Moreover, the researchers provided close-ended questionnaire which consist of 8 questions which developed from the top five most difficult reading skills. This questionnaire was adopted from *Guttman Scale* by only providing two alternative options, namely “Yes” or “No”. For the response “Yes” was given a score of 1 and response “No” was given a score of 0.

In addition, the researcher also conducted unstructured interview to EED students so that the interviewees can answer freely without feeling restricted. Two EED students were involved in this interview, they were NB and MS (for the sake of confidentiality, their names are written with initials only). Both NB and MS represent their respective classes. NB represents the upper class and MS for the lower class. In practice, the data from questionnaire was cross-checked with the results of interview and then transcribed verbatim before being categorized based on students’ problems on the reading section of TOEFL. The three data in practice will be codified systematically (e.g., AR for Archival Record, Q for Questionnaire, and I for Interview) and they will complement each research finding.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following table presents the data of students understanding level after taking the TOEFL test. The data were taken from reading section only.

Table 1. Students Understanding Level

| No | Initial Name | Total Item | SCORE | | | Interpretation |
|-------------------------------|--------------|------------|-------------|--------|-------|------------------------|
| | | | TOEFL Score | Answer | | |
| | | | | True | False | |
| Students’ Low Score | | | | | | |
| 1 | HS | 50 | 373 | 8 | 42 | Very Low Understanding |
| 2 | AS | 50 | 383 | 18 | 32 | Low Understanding |
| 3 | LS | 50 | 397 | 19 | 31 | Low Understanding |
| 4 | MI | 50 | 377 | 13 | 37 | Low Understanding |
| 5 | MS | 50 | 400 | 15 | 35 | Low Understanding |
| 6 | LHA | 50 | 370 | 15 | 35 | Low Understanding |
| 7 | IR | 50 | 393 | 15 | 35 | Low Understanding |
| 8 | M | 50 | 333 | 15 | 35 | Low Understanding |
| Students’ Medium Score | | | | | | |
| 9 | EN | 50 | 413 | 26 | 24 | Medium Understanding |
| 10 | UH | 50 | 427 | 24 | 26 | Medium Understanding |
| 11 | SP | 50 | 430 | 21 | 29 | Medium Understanding |
| 12 | RP | 50 | 410 | 21 | 29 | Medium Understanding |

| 13 | AN | 50 | 387 | 30 | 20 | Medium Understanding |
|----------------------|-----|----|-----|----|----|-------------------------|
| 14 | IE | 50 | 423 | 22 | 28 | Medium Understanding |
| 15 | RAF | 50 | 380 | 30 | 20 | Medium Understanding |
| 16 | YK | 50 | 450 | 23 | 27 | Medium Understanding |
| 17 | AR | 50 | 397 | 29 | 21 | Medium Understanding |
| Students' High Score | | | | | | |
| 18 | NT | 50 | 537 | 32 | 18 | High Understanding |
| 19 | NB | 50 | 513 | 33 | 17 | High Understanding |
| 20 | DF | 50 | 470 | 34 | 16 | High Understanding |
| 21 | RAI | 50 | 463 | 35 | 15 | High Understanding |
| 22 | YZ | 50 | 633 | 43 | 7 | Very High Understanding |

The data from table 1 then used to classify students based on percentage of understanding in graphical form as follows:

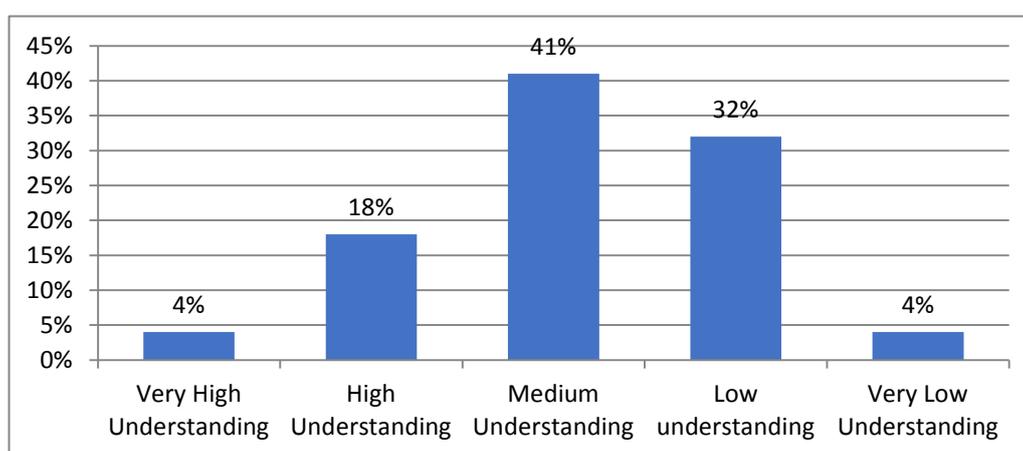


Figure 1. Percentage of Students Understanding Level

The graphic 1 illustrates obviously 4% of students have very high understanding, 18% high understanding, 41% medium understanding, 32% low understanding, and 4% very low understanding.

Having presented the data of students understanding level, then the researchers provide the percentage data of the most difficult reading skills on TOEFL test in table 2:

| Aspect | Skill number | Reading Skills | % |
|--------|--------------|---|------|
| I | 1. | Answer main idea correctly | 27.5 |
| | 2. | Recognize the organization of ideas | 7.5 |
| II | 3. | Answer stated detail question correctly | 2 |
| | 4. | Find unstated details | 6.5 |
| | 5. | Find pronoun referents. | 1 |

| | | | |
|------------|-----|---|------|
| III | 6. | Answer implied detail questions correctly | 18 |
| | 7. | Answer transition questions correctly | 12 |
| IV | 8. | Find definition from structural clues | 3 |
| | 9. | Determine meanings from word parts | 1.5 |
| | 10. | Use context to determine meaning of difficult words | 15.5 |
| V | 11. | Use context to determine meanings of simple words | 1.5 |
| | 12. | Determine where specific information is found | 2 |
| | 13. | Determine the tone, purpose, or course | 2 |
| | | Total | 100 |

(Source: Archival record of the TOEFL Test, Language Development Center UIN Banten)

Table 2 illustrates that there are five aspects of questions in reading section of the TOEFL test, namely (1) questions about ideas of the passage; (2) directly answered questions; (3) indirectly answered questions; (4) vocabulary questions; and (5) overall review questions. The five aspects have 13 reading skills. In this case, the top three most difficult reading skills by percentage were “(1) answer main idea correctly (27.5%); (2) answer implied detail questions correctly (18%); and (3) use context to determine meaning of difficult words (15.5%).

In addition, the following table shows the result of questionnaire on students’ problems on the reading section of TOEFL. The main objective of this questionnaire is to complement the AR data findings and it was developed based on the table 2. The questionnaire was distributed into 3 major aspects which consist of 8 questions.

Table 3. The difficulties encountered by EED students

| Aspect | Questions about the ideas of passage | Yes | No | Total | % |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------|-----------|--------------|----------|
| I | 1. I have difficulty to find the main idea in a text | 20 | 2 | 20 | 91 |
| | 2. I have difficulty to identify the organization of ideas | 13 | 9 | 13 | 59 |
| Indirectly answered questions | | Yes | No | Total | % |
| III | 6. I have difficulty to answer implied detail question correctly | 18 | 4 | 18 | 82 |
| | 7. I have difficulty to answer transition questions correctly | 16 | 6 | 16 | 73 |
| Vocabulary Questions | | Yes | No | Total | % |
| IV | 8. I have difficulty to find definitions from structural clues | 4 | 18 | 4 | 18 |
| | 9. I have difficulty to determine meaning from words parts | 3 | 19 | 3 | 14 |
| | 10. I have difficulty to use context to determine meanings of difficult words | 17 | 5 | 17 | 77 |
| | 11. I have difficulty to use context to determine meaning of simple words | 2 | 20 | 2 | 9 |

The data from #AR1 and #Q1 show that some EED students have difficulty to answer questions about ideas of passage. Especially reading skill number 1 was a specter for almost all EED students. In the interview, MS and NB exposed their feelings regarding reading skills number 1 and 2. NB said:

“My problem when answering question about finding the main idea in a text was when I had to choose an option whose answers were almost the same. That was a very tricky question. Meanwhile, to answer reading skill number 2, I usually try to link the first paragraph with the following paragraphs” (#I_NB1)

Meanwhile, MS admitted that she has many problems when answering reading skill number 1 but she was able to answer questions on reading skill number 2:

“To be honest, in the reading section, there were many discourses that I do not understand the topic because I do not master many vocabularies or technical terminologies and have prior knowledges related to the text. Meanwhile, regarding to question about identify the organization of ideas, I usually look at conjunctions between paragraphs to recognize how the information was presented in the text” (#I_MS1).

Finding main idea correctly was difficult skill because “the reader has to look across several pages by utilizing a number of available information in the text, connecting to prior knowledge, and predicting the underlying message” (Duffy, 2009, p.138). The similar finding also happened in a critical study of comprehension strategies and general problems in reading skills faced by EFL in Saudi Arabia. In this study, Nezami (2012) revealed that “some EFLs in Saudi Arabia are difficult to comprehend the text due to limited knowledge and skills”. In short, to answer reading skill number 1, the students must have sufficient prior knowledge, a broad vocabulary to understand the topic is being read and carefulness to determine the most appropriate main idea.

The second most difficult reading questions were indirectly answered questions (#AR6 & #AR7). These questions have two types, namely answer implied detail correctly and answer transition question correctly. Both NB and MS share their feelings and experiences when answering these skills. NB revealed that

“Frankly speaking, reading skill number 6 was one of the most difficult reading skills for myself. Because the answer of this question was not written clearly in the text. I

often have difficulty to find keywords or phrases that can lead me to make an inference before selecting an option”. However, reading skill number 7 was fairly easy for me, to answer this type of question I just need to look at preceding or following paragraph” (#I_NB2).

On contrary MS expressed her confusion when answering reading skills number 6 and 7 as follows:

“In my opinion, answer implied detail question correctly is the hardest reading skill because the answer of this type of question is not directly stated. I myself must read the text three times to understand the meaning of passage before drawing a conclusion from the information which given in the text. It’s so tiring. Meanwhile, regarding to reading skill number 7, I had trouble to link related ideas between sentences in a paragraph. Furthermore, for me this type of question is something new, because the questions in reading that I often encounter started with 5W and 1 H” (#I_MS2).

A same case also occurred in a study which conducted by Samad, Janah & Fitriani (2017). The study showed that identifying implied detail questions correctly was the highest percentage (26%) of all students answer incorrectly. They express that most EED students of Syiah Kuala University cannot answer this question correctly due to limitation of vocabulary and knowledge.” Undeniably, “mastery of a rich vocabulary and broad background of knowledge are important aspects for drawing a conclusion” (Oakhill, Cain & Elbro, 2015, p.78). In this type of question “the answer is not directly stated and the students must draw a conclusion from that information” (Phillips, 2001, p.398).

Meanwhile, dealing with answer transition question correctly, this skill is rather complicated because in this question is “asked to demonstrate that students understand that good writing contains transition from one paragraph to the text” (Phillips, 2001, p.402). Sutarsyah (2015:108) asserts that some EFLs in Indonesia have problem to connect the related ideas among sentences in a paragraph. This happens because students do not have sufficient linguistic knowledge, especially on sentence structure or grammar. He adds that understanding linking devices is not easy because each linking sentence has its own meaning that should be mastered.

However, the findings of this study indicate several factors that become students' problems in indirectly answered questions. They were the answer was not clearly stated, difficulty to find keywords to draw a conclusion, difficulty in understanding the text that leads them to become fatigue, and unfamiliarity of students with transition question.

Vocabulary questions were the third most difficult reading skills which experienced by EED students. The data from #Ar10 & #Q10 show that 77% of students have difficulty to use context to determine meanings of difficult words. Meanwhile, the rest of reading skills were relatively easy for EED students (#AR08, #AR09, #AR11, #Q8, #Q9, & #Q11). NB stated that

“In the TOEFL test, this section is a reading skill that I really like, because I don't need to read the whole text but just look at the particular word to guess what its synonyms or find specific information about the meaning of the text which provided in the passage” (#I_NB3).

However, MS told that reading skill number 11 was easy for herself but still faced difficulty to answer 8 and 10. NB said that

“With all the limited vocabulary that I have, I can still answer questions on reading skill number 11. However, my problem is when answering questions that require me to look for definitions from structural clues. This is because my concentration has already run down after doing on listening test in session 1 as well as structure and written expression in session 2. Besides, the limitation of time allocation also makes me in hurry to choose the right answer which sometimes deceive (#I_MS3).

The same finding also happened in a study which conducted by Parry (1991). He exposes that there were no respondents can guess word meanings from context successfully. Although, they had already tried to guess word meanings from context but their answers often turned out be wrong. Another researcher, Chawwang (2008) investigated the English reading problem of Thai 12th Grade students in Nakhonratchasima, this study indicates some similarities that the main problems in reading were in recognizing difficult words, unfamiliar topic or main idea of the passage, as well as limitation of vocabulary mastery. These problems make students unable to catch the meaning and to comprehend a text.

To conclude, more or less this study has similarities from previous studies (Chawwang, 2008; Duffy, 2009; Floris & Divina, 2009; Parry, 1991; Nezami, 2012; Samad, Janah & Fitriani, 2017). However, this study has more complex and detailed findings because these findings are associated with students' problems on the reading section of TOEFL. Majority of the EED students said that the most difficult reading skill was finding the main idea in a text, answer implied detail question correctly, and use context to determine meanings of difficult words. Surprisingly, based on data of AR, Q, and I, some EED students easily answered vocabulary questions (e.g., reading skill number 8, 9, and 11).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion on previous subchapters, the researchers draw two main points in conclusion. The first conclusion deals with the most difficult reading skills on the TOEFL for EED students, UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten was finding main idea correctly with a percentage of 27.5%. With the respect to second conclusion, students' problems on the reading section of TOEFL were limited vocabulary mastery, grammatical knowledge, reading skills and unfamiliar with the topic of passage. Besides, other factors may affect students' problems were weak concentration and endurance, as well as time management in doing the TOEFL test.

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