

## THE ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE CLASS OF GOC OF MAN 2 TULUNGAGUNG

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**Abstract:** This article is intended to discuss the English competence or the English mastery level of the social science students of Global Oriented Class (GOC) of MAN 2 Tulungagung as reflected from the score of their English proficiency test. The English proficiency test administered for this research is TOEFL preparation test developed by Pearson Longman Education incorporation. The research method employed is descriptive quantitative since the purpose of this research is to describe the current conditions of the students, in this case to describe to what extent the Social Science students of Global Oriented Class are proficient in English. The finding shows that the highest of their TOEFL Preparation Test is 440 and the lowest score is 323. The mean of their score is 361.8. The finding shows that in general the students' English proficiency level is still under the standard of 400 set up by the Ministry of Religion Affairs. Further, to be able to compete globally or internationally, the students still need to work hard since if it is compared to the standard score of the overseas university admission, their proficiency score is far below 500.

**Keywords:** English Proficiency, Global Oriented Class

The fast developing world demands visionary creativity of school managers to meet their graduates' need for the promising career. This is not only intended for the school's survival but also to ensure that the educational programs run are able to accommodate the development of the world in science and technology. This is also true to MAN 2 Tulungagung (Islamic Senior High School 2 of Tulungagung), which is striving to run in the world's competition by launching what so called by Global Oriented Class (GOC).

This class is aimed at providing the students with the competencies to compete in the global competition. Therefore, some of the main characteristic of this class are (1) it adopts the international curriculum, in this case the GOC adopts Cambridge international curriculum, (2) it uses English as the medium of instruction in the class, and (3) the subject materials are written in English.

Considering the characteristic above, surely to make all the process of teaching and learning run well, which in turn the objectives of this class can be achieved, the mastery of English, both for the teachers and the students, is a must. The mastery of English is considered vital since the materials of some important subjects such as economics are written in English, and the tests are also in English.

This article is intended to know and describe the English mastery level of the students of Global Oriented Class of MAN 2 Tulungagung. By describing and discussing the English proficiency

### **PROFICIENCY TEST**

The students' English mastery can be reflected from their English proficiency which means the level of language competence at a certain period of time (Creswell, 2008). Hughes (2003) defines 'proficient' as having sufficient command of the language for a particular purpose such as whether a student's English is good enough to follow a course of study at a British university. In other words, a student who is considered proficient in English must be able to attend any courses or lectures at universities of English spoken countries and survive in his daily life interaction. It can be said here that English mastery means English proficiency and so vice versa. Therefore, the students' English mastery level can be measured using proficiency test.

Language proficiency test is a test which is designed to measure learners' linguistic knowledge and skills apart from training they may have got in that language (Hughes, 2003). So, the language proficiency test can be administered to any students, regardless their grade, department, and whether they have taken some English courses or not.

Language proficiency test can be developed based on certain purposes. It can be developed to identify the students' problems in learning a language, to measure their communicative competence, to plan a teaching program, and even to evaluate the success of a teaching program.

The first purpose of administering the language proficiency test will benefit not only the teachers but also the students themselves. The result of the language proficiency test can be used as the diagnostic treatment. The result of the language proficiency test, simultaneously, is also giving the information about the language problems experienced by the students. As the result, the teachers will be able to take any appropriate measures to help the students solve their language problems and improve their language competence.

Further, the result of the proficiency test can be used by the decision makers to set up some plans related to this program, to evaluate the running of this program, and to take some strategic policies such as adding the facilities, sending the teachers to some training, and intensifying the teaching and learning process.

One of the mostly used English proficiency test worldwide is TOEFL. With the mean score 500 and the standard deviation 100, TOEFL is considered having high validity and reliability (Tucker, 2002). Therefore, TOEFL is worth trusted to measure the students' English Proficiency Test.

### **THE CONTENT OF THE TEST**

The proficiency test administered to the students of Global Oriented class of MAN 2 Tulungagung is the TOEFL Preparation Test developed by Pearson Longman Education Inc. (Philips, 2003). The language knowledge and skills measured through this test, in general, is grouped into three. They are Listening

Comprehension, Structure and Written Expression, and Reading Comprehension.

The Listening Comprehension section is to demonstrate the students' ability to understand conversation and talks in English in academic settings. There are three parts to this section: part A, measuring the ability to understand short talk, part B, measuring the ability to understand longer talk, and part C, measuring the ability to understand several longer talks.

The Structure section is measuring the ability to recognize the language structure and expression which is appropriate for standard written English. There two types of questions in this section, in which the first section is in the form of multiple choice and the second section in the form of identifying the one underlined word or phrase that must be changed in order for the sentence to be correct.

The Reading Comprehension section is designed to measure the ability to read and understand short passage similar in topic and style to those that the students are likely to encounter in English or American universities and colleges. This section contains reading passages and questions about the passages in the form of multiple choice.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method employed here is descriptive quantitative. Postlethwaite (2005) defines descriptive research as a research which provides information about conditions, situations, and events that occur at present. This research is intended to know and describe the current conditions, in the form of their English mastery or their English proficiency level, of the Social Science students of Global Oriented Class of MAN 2 Tulungagung.

The subjects of this research are the students of the Social Science major of Global Oriented Class of MAN 2 Tulungagung. The number of the subjects is 30 students who consist of 12 males and 18 females. The subjects are selected purposively since there is only one class of the Social Science major in Global Oriented Class of MAN 2 Tulungagung.

The data are in the form of scores. The data are collected using testing technique. The test used is TOEFL Preparation Test published by Pearson Longman Education Inc. (Philip, 2003). TOEFL Preparation Test is selected since it meets the criteria of English Proficiency Test proposed by Hughes (2003) and has been used worldwide. The data are then grouped into three components: listening, structure, and reading, and an overall proficiency. In addition, the data are also presented based the gender of the students. This gender basis is not intended to discriminate the students based on their gender, but it is just to know the different proficiency between male and female.

The data are then analyzed quantitatively to find out the frequency, the percentage, and the mean of the score.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 describes the students' English proficiency based on its components and the overall proficiency. The lowest score of the Listening comprehension is 32. The students of this lowest score can answer correctly only 8 or 9 questions

out of 50 questions. The highest score of the Listening Comprehension is 48. This score is gained by one student. This student is able to answer 25 or half of the questions. Anyway, the average number of the students get score 38.7. It is shown from the mean score of the Listening Comprehension. So, most of the students are able to answer correctly only 13 questions out of 50 questions. In other words, most of the students can answer correctly the Listening Comprehension question only 26%. This percentage indicates that most of the students' English proficiency level in Listening Comprehension is still under intermediate.

From 30 students, three students get the lowest score 26 in Structure and written expression. It means that these students can answer correctly only 6 questions out of 40 questions. While, most of the students get score 34.8 in Structure and Written Expression. It shows that most of the students can answer correctly 10 out of 40 questions. In other words, most of the students can answer correctly 25% of the questions. There is only one student who can answer correctly 19 or 47% of the questions.

The Reading Comprehension ability of the students is not different from the other components. Most of the students get score 35.1 or they are able to answer correctly 15 questions out of 50 questions. In other words, most of the students are able to answer correctly 30% of the questions. There are three students get the lowest score 28 or able to answer correctly 8 to 9 questions out of 50 questions. And, there is only one student who get the highest score 44 or able to answer correctly 25 questions or 50% of the questions. From the three components being tested, Structure and Written Expression is considered the most difficult, and then followed by Reading Comprehension and Listening Comprehension respectively.

The TOEFL score which represents the overall components reflects the students English proficiency level. Most of the students get TOEFL score 361.8. Compare to the lowest score 216 and the highest score 676, most of the students are in the middle range of the TOEFL score. The TOEFL score 361 can be categorized as pre-intermediate level of English mastery. Comparing to the standard of the TOEFL score for students of Islamic Senior High School set up by the Ministry of Religion Affairs, more or less 400, the students' achievement is still under the standard. Comparing to mean TOEFL score gained by the students of Public Senior High School in Indonesia, in which the mean score is 418 (Ministry of National Education, 1999), the students' mean score is also under the mean score by the students of public senior high schools.

Table 1. The Students' Score Based on Each Component

Components	Number of Students	The Lowest Score	The Highest Score	Mean
Listening	30	32	48	38.7
Structure	30	26	43	34.8
Reading	30	28	44	35.1
TOEFL	30	323	440	361.8

Table 2 shows that in Listening Comprehension no students get score under 30. While in Structure and Reading Comprehension, 4 students or 13.3%

under 30. It indicates that Listening Comprehension is not the most difficult test. Most of the students or 43.3% get Listening score in the range 41-45. It means that they can answer correctly 15 to 21 questions out of 50 questions. Different from Listening Comprehension, in Structure and Written Expression, the majority of the students or 46.6% get the score in the range 36-40 or they are able answer correctly 12 to 16 questions out of 40 questions. Likely, 40% of the students are able to answer correctly 16 to 20 questions out of 50 questions in Reading Comprehension. Most of them get Reading Comprehension score in the range 36-40. Again, this finding emphasizes that Structure and Reading Comprehension are considered more difficult than Listening Comprehension.

Talking about the overall English proficiency, most of the students or 69.8% are in the position of under intermediate level. 26.6% or 8 students are in the position of intermediate level because they get TOEFL score in the range 376-400, and the rest, only 1 student, is in the upper intermediate level since he get TOEFL score more than 450.

Table 2. The Students' Score Based on The Score Range

Components	The Score Range	The Frequency	The Percentage (%)
Listening	<25	0	0
	26-30	0	0
	31-35	7	23.3
	36-40	9	30
	41-45	13	43.3
	46-50	1	3.3
Structure	<25	0	0
	26-30	4	13.3
	31-35	11	36.6
	36-40	14	46.6
	41-45	1	3.3
	46-50	0	0
Reading	<25	0	0
	26-30	4	13.3
	31-35	11	36.6
	36-40	12	40
	41-45	3	10
	46-50	0	0
TOEFL	<325	2	6.6
	326-350	8	26.6
	351-375	11	36.6
	376-400	8	26.6
	401-425	0	0
	426-450	1	3.3
	451-475	0	0
	476-500	0	0
	≥500	0	0

Table 3 below tries to describe the students' English proficiency based on their gender. The finding shows the English proficiency between male students and female students is not significantly different. In Listening Comprehension

the male students are very slightly better than the female ones. The mean score of the male students is 39.0 while of the female is 38.4. The proficiency of Structure and Written Expression between male students and female students can be said the same since the mean score of the male students is 34.7 and of the female are 34.8. This finding shows that structure and written expression are considered difficult by both the male and the female students. In Reading Comprehension, it turns out that the female students are very slightly better than the male ones. The mean score of the female students is 35.5, while the mean score of the male is 34.5. In general, the English proficiency between the male students and the female students can be said the same. The mean score of the TOEFL gained by the male students is 360.6 and the female students get the mean score 362.6. These mean scores confirm that in learning English or in the case of the English proficiency male is not superior to female and so vice versa. Therefore, in the teaching and learning process male and female students must be treated equally.

Table 3. The Students' Score Based on Gender

Components	Number of M/F	The Lowest Score	The Highest Score	Mean
Listening	M 12	32	48	39.0
	F 18	32	45	38.4
Structure	M 12	26	43	34.7
	F 18	29	40	34.8
Reading	M 12	28	44	34.5
	F 18	28	42	35.5
TOEFL	M 12	323	440	360.6
	F 18	326	400	362.6

## CONCLUSION

From this research it can be concluded that (1) the English proficiency level of the Social Science students of GOC of MAN 2 Tulungagung is in the level of pre-intermediate and still under the national standard set up by the Ministry of Religion Affairs, (2) Structure and Written Expression is considered the most difficult test comparing to Reading and Listening. Listening is considered the least difficult. This finding is against teacher's assumption that Listening Comprehension is the most difficult test. The last, (3) it turns out in the case of English proficiency, female students are not significantly different from the male students. Therefore, in the process of English teaching and learning female and male students must be treated equally.

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