

**ANALYSIS OF READING COMPREHENSION FINAL TEST AT ENGLISH
DEPARTMENT OF MUHAMMADIYAH ACEH UNIVERSITY**

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Abstract

The aim of this study is not only to analyze the model and the items test set by lecturer of Reading Comprehension subject but also the ability of students according to the item questions of each final test. This study analyzes the contents taken from the document test and it used descriptive quantitative approach. The gained data derived from three Reading subjects, they are: Intensive Reading Comprehension, Reading Comprehension III dan Academic Reading. The total number of the items from those three subjects is 60 items. The findings revealed that the kind of questions asked by lecturers varied, namely; Multiple Choice, Open-ended Question, Word Matching, and True and False. Based on the those documents the writer found that 6 questions about Main Idea, 16 questions about Vocabulary, 4 about references, 6 questions about inference and 28 questions about details. Then, the results of students' reading ability in answering the items were; main idea: 63.59%, Detail: 76, 92%, Inference: 44,04, Reference ; 86, 89% and Vocabulary : 73,45 %. From the five aspects students were better to answer questions in the Reference item. The implication of this research is to provide input to examiners and lecturers in giving material and in testing students at the end of the semester and to improve the ability to make test items.

Keywords: Analysis, Final Test, Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Many experts have given their definition about what reading really means. Reading is very important skill that the students must be mastered, because the reading cannot be separated in the process of teaching and learning. Reading is the most important activity in any class, not only as a source of information, but also as a means of consolidating and extending one's idea and knowledge of language (River:1968). According to Nunan (2003), reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. Mikulecky (2011) states that reading is a complex conscious and unconscious mental process in which the reader uses a variety of strategies to reconstruct the meaning that the author is assumed to have intended, based on data from the text and from the reader's prior knowledge. According to Grellet, Reading is an active skill.

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Moreover about reading, it is defined as a cognitive process that involves decoding symbols to arrive at meaning. Reading is an active process of constructing meanings of words. Reading with a purpose helps the reader to direct information towards a goal and focuses their attention. Although the reasons for reading may vary, the primary purpose of reading is to understand the text. Reading is a thinking process. It allows the reader to use what he or she may already know, also called prior knowledge. During this processing of information, the reader uses strategies to understand what they are reading, uses themes to organize ideas, and uses textual clues to find the meanings of new words. Each of the three components of reading is equally important.

In this study, the researcher wants to synchronize the items test and syllabus and to give input about students' difficulties, revise material and improve the ability to make up test items. Based on this explanation, the researcher wants to classify the reading comprehension items test and wants to know how well the students' ability in reading class.

Reading is one of other lessons has to be included in the language classroom. The students have to be able to read the English text, either for their study or their career. Reading also plays important role for language acquisition. When someone is reading an interesting text, the acquisition process will run well too. In reading a text, it gives a big opportunity for the students to get vocabularies, language structure, pronunciation model even more to write a sentence, paragraph and essay (Fauziati:2016). While reading comprehension is the act of combining information in a passage with prior knowledge in order to construct meaning. In addition, reading comprehension can be defined as a thinking process through which readers become aware of an idea, understand it in terms of their experiential background, and interpret it in relation to their own needs and purposes (Khoiriyah:2010).

Comprehension itself is the process of connecting what the reader knows and what she or he does not know, between the new and the previous information. It is constructing meaning from the printed material. Comprehension is an interactive process that requires using prior knowledge in combination with the printed material.

According Fitriawanati (2017) the aims of item test analysis are: (1) finding out the bad item or item that does not have good function; (2) increasing item test through three analysis components: difficulty level, difference level dan distractor; (3) increasing validity and reability; (4) revising the irrelevant itmes to taught material, marked by many students could not answer some particular items.

Reading comprehension test can be in open-ended form or objective one. The objective test is in form of true false, multiple choice, short response, and match up. While in open-ended form, the students, who are tested, are asked to answer the questions by writing or explaining the answer by using their own ideas. This kind of test consists of questions that need explanation. Fauziati, there are two kinds of essay test they are: (1) question which needs free answer and (2) question which needs connected answer (the answer is limited). In addition of this, Heaton in *Writing English Language Tests* mentioned that there are some test models in reading comprehension, namely:

1. Word matching
2. Sentence matching
3. True/ false reading test
4. Multiple choice items
5. Completion items
6. Rearrangement items
7. Cloze procedure
8. Open-ended and miscellaneous items
9. Cursory reading.

Meanwhile, Alderson (2000) stated that multiple choice items are common device for testing students' text comprehension. In this model, test designers are allowed to control the range of possible answers to comprehension questions and she/ he also can control students' thought processes when they are responding. Based on the information, the lecturer can select which test model that suitable to evaluate the students' reading comprehension ability.

Reading a text and answering several questions' technique is eldest and the most general reading test used (Brown, 2004). A series of questions is usually used to know the understanding of reading comprehension. The common questions ask in this skill are about main idea (topic), vocabulary in context of the text, detail information, reference, and inference (implicit information from the text).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a library research which the items of Reding subject taken as data, from 60 items test. The source of data were from 3 Reading subjects, they are Intensive Reading Comprehension, Academic Reading and Reading Comprehension III.

This study is descriptive quantitative. It gives description about content of this research and uses simple formula to analyze students' ability in Reading Comprehension class. It is conducted in some phases includes collecting data, analyzing data and formulating the conclusion. This study also applied descriptive analysis method in analyzing the collected data obtained from documentation.

The data was taken from several test documents of Reading subjects from semester II, IV and VI of English Department at Islamic Studies Faculty of Muhammadiyah Aceh University as the instrument. The students from those semester were the object of this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In gaining the data of this study, the researcher informed the reading comprehension lecturers about the study purpose. She needed to collect the data on final items test to be analyzed. After the documents were handed over by the lecturers, those items test were classified.

There are three test documents which are analyzed by the researcher, they are: final of intensive reading comprehension, final of academic reading and final of reading comprehension III. From the document study of Intensive reading comprehension, the researcher found that 6 items in Multiple choice form, 11 items in open-ended form, and 5 items word matching for vocabularies. These items of questions are derived from 3 passages. For all items were classified in the table below:

Table 1. Classification of the Items in Multiple Choice from Intensive Reading Comprehension

No.	Question Items
1	Main idea
2	Inference
3	Details
4	Details
5	Reference
6	Details

Table 2. Classification of the Items in Open-ended Question from Intensive Reading Comprehension

No.	Question Items
1	Main Idea
2	Details
3	Details
4	Details
5	Inference
6	Inference
7	Details

8	Details
9	Inference
10	Details
11	Details

Furthermore, from Academic Reading final test, the items were in multiple choice and true false form based on two passages that represented by 18 items test. From the first passage, 10 items were in multiple choice form and 8 question in true and false about detail. The classification as can be seen as follow:

Table 3. Classification of the Items in Multiple Choice from Academic Reading

No	Question Items
1	Main idea
2	Reference
3	Details
4	Vocabulary
5	Details
6	Vocabulary
7	Vocabulary
8	Inference
9	Details
10	Vocabulary

From the last document, Reading Comprehension III, the researcher found that the lecturer compiled 20 questions derived from two passages in multiple choice form. The detail can be seen below:

Table 4. Classification of the Items in Multiple Choice from Reading Comprehension III

No	Question Items
1	Main Idea
2	Details
3	Details
4	Details
5	Vocabulary
6	Main Idea
7	Vocabulary
8	Inference
9	Vocabulary
10	Main Idea
11	Details
12	Reference
13	Vocabulary
14	Details
15	Vocabulary
16	Details
17	Vocabulary
18	Details

19	Reference
20	Vocabulary

From the table above, the lecturers did not have specific number of questions to be set in final test. The number of items test and its classification can be various and depend on the stated passages.

a. Multiple-choice question,

It's type of question plays a dominant model from the three subjects were analyzed. By multiple choice items of the test, students have full attention to provide the alternative answers. Based on table 1, 3 and 4, the final examination items can be classified into five questions items for measuring reading comprehension subjects, those types are:

The first item of reading final examination is asking about main idea. it is asked the point message of the text that a writer delivered to the readers, the writer found 10 % of main idea's question in this test, the example of questions such as:

What is the passage mainly about?

- A. *Faint dwarf stars*
- B. *The evolutionary cycle of the Sun*
- C. *The Sun's fuel problem*
- D. *The dangers of invisible radiation*

What does the passage mainly discuss?

- A. *The history of surveys in North America*
- B. *The principles of conducting surveys*
- C. *Problems related to interpreting surveys*
- D. *The importance of polls in America*

Next item is focused on detail, this question asked about important information from the text, after analysing all question the writer found that this item is more dominant than others item, amount of this item is 46,7 %, some of these question items are:

Why are very hot stars referred to as "ghosts"?

- A. *They are short- lived.*
- B. *They are mysterious.*
- C. *They are frightening.*
- D. *They are nearly invisible.*

How is the surface temperature faint blood-red dwarfs of?

- A. 10,000
- B. 100,000
- C. 4,000
- D. 2,000

The third aspect is inference, this question asks the students to pick up on information that is indirectly given, rather than being directly stated in the passage, the number of this item is 10 % from the total of all questions. The model of these question are:

It can be inferred from the passage that one reason that sociologists may become frustrated with questionnaires is that...

- A. respondents often do not complete and return questionnaires
- B. questionnaires are often difficult to read
- C. questionnaires are expensive and difficult to distribute
- D. respondents are too eager to supplement questions with their own opinions

What does the author say is especially important about the Sun at the present time?

- A It appears yellow
- B It always remains the same
- C It has a short history
- D. It is too cold

The fourth is about reference, this is very sample question, it asks about the meanings of pronouns and demonstratives such as they, it, he, she, which, who, that, and this. The percentage of this item is 6,7 % from the total of all questions, example of these items such as:

The word "they" in line 7 refer to?

- A. North Americans
- B. news shows
- C. interviews
- D. opinions

In line 15, to which of the following does "it" refer?

- A. Yellow "hump"
- B. Day
- C. Sun
- D. hydrogen fuel

Last item is about vocabulary, The model of these questions ask about the meaning of some words, in this case the item focus on synonyms model. The number of this question is 26,7 %. In the final Academic Reading questions on the number 4, 6, 7, 10 such as:

The word "precise" in line 11 is closest in meaning to...

- A. *planned* C. *required*
B. *rational* D. *accurate*

The word "exercise" in line 13 is closest in meaning to...

- A. *consider* C. *design*
B. *utilize* D. *defend*

b. Open-ended Question

This type of question requires a clear response in the form of phrases or sentences and cannot answer by yes or no, because teacher want to know students' understanding in getting more information from the text, this question got at intensive reading comprehension final test, such as:

What is the communicative purpose of the text?

Where is the natural bridge national park located?

c. Word Matching

It is a type of test item format provides a way for students to connect a word, in this case the teacher asked the students to find the synonym of the word from the text, there five questions about it, some of them are:

From the text above, find the synonym words of:

Achieve (line 2)

Garden (line 4)

d. True False Question

The last, True False Question There are 8 questions the lecturer asked in true false model the form of this question is about detailed information, some example of these question can be seen below:

*Write: **TRUE** if a statement agrees with the information in the text.*

FALSE if a statement disagrees with the information in the text.

NOT GIVEN if there is no information given about this in the text.

The largest mass balloon ascent ever occurred at the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta.

Different kinds of events have been introduced at the festival in the recent years.

After analyzing the final exam questions from the Reading subject, then the researcher also analyzed the students' ability according to the item questions of each test item. In reading ability there are 5 types of ability that are measured, they are the ability to find main ideas, information on reading content, vocabulary, reference, and inference information. Researchers share each type of score or form of questions and then averaged their abilities, here are the data from students' ability to understand English reading:

Table 5. Students' Understanding in Intensive Reading Comprehension Item Test

No	Student	Reading Items					Rata-rata
		Main Idea	Detail	Inference	Reference	Vocabulary	
1	Student 1	100	77	50	100	60	77,4
2	Student 2	50	62	25	100	80	63,4
3	Student 3	50	46	25	100	60	56,2
4	Student 4	0	62	25	100	80	53,4
5	Student 5	50	69	50	100	40	61,8
6	Student 6	100	77	75	100	100	90,4
7	Student 7	100	92	50	100	80	84,4
8	Student 8	50	62	25	100	80	63,4
9	Student 9	100	69	50	100	100	83,8
10	Student 10	0	69	0	0	40	21,8
11	Student 11	50	62	25	100	80	63,4
12	Student 12	50	54	25	100	60	57,8
13	Student 13	50	85	0	0	60	39
14	Student 14	50	62	25	100	80	63,4
TOTAL		800	948	450	1200	1000	4398
Mean Score		57,14	67,71	32,14	85,71	71,43	62,83

Table 6. Students' Understanding in Academic Reading Item Test

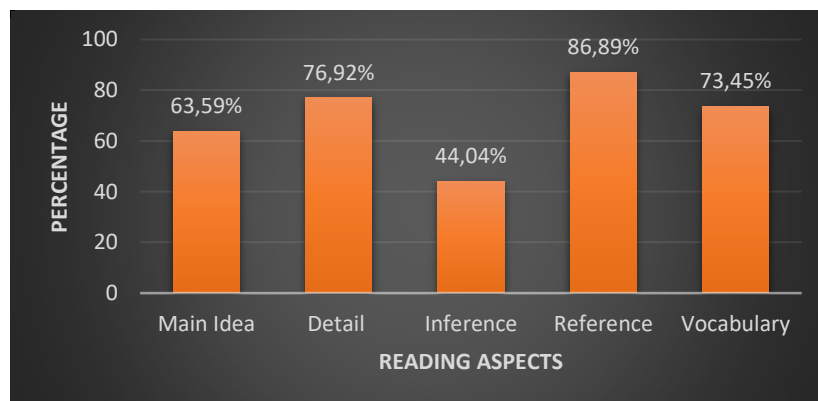
No	Student	Reading Items					Rata-rata
		Main Idea	Detail	Inference	Reference	Vocabulary	
1	Student 1	100	100	100	100	75	475
2	Student 2	100	73	0	100	75	348
3	Student 3	100	73	0	100	100	373
4	Student 4	0	73	0	100	50	223
5	Student 5	100	55	100	100	50	405

6	Student 6	0	82	0	100	100	282
7	Student 7	0	73	0	100	75	248
8	Student 8	100	82	100	100	50	432
9	Student 9	100	100	100	100	75	475
10	Student 10	100	82	100	100	75	457
11	Student 11	100	82	0	0	75	257
12	Student 12	100	100	100	100	100	500
13	Student 13	0	73	0	100	50	223
14	Student 14	0	82	0	100	50	232
TOTAL		900	1130	600	1300	1000	4,930
Mean Score		64,28	80,71	42,85	92,85	71,43	70,424

Table 7. Students' Understanding in Reading Comprehension III Item Test

No	Student	Reading Items					Rata-rata
		Main Idea	Detail	Inference	Reference	Vocabulary	
1	Student 1	67	100	100	100	86	453
2	Student 2	67	88	100	50	100	405
3	Student 3	100	100	100	100	86	486
4	Student 4	34	75	0	50	43	202
5	Student 5	100	75	100	100	86	461
6	Student 6	67	88	0	100	71	326
7	Student 7	67	63	0	100	86	316
8	Student 8	67	75	0	50	57	249
9	Student 9	67	88	100	100	71	426
10	Student 10	34	88	100	100	86	408
11	Student 11	34	75	0	50	71	230
12	Student 12	100	75	100	100	100	475
13	Student 13	100	88	100	100	85	473
14	Student 14	67	75	0	50	57	249
TOTAL		971	1153	800	1150	1085	5159
Mean Score		69,35	82,35	57,14	82,12	77,5	73,69

Based on the results of the analysis of students' reading skills from the 5 items, it can be seen that the average scores are as described in the chart below:



Reading comprehension can be defined as the ability to understand vocabulary to paraphrase and summarize information from the text (Karen, Mirriam, Melaney, & Ryland, 2015). This is an activity to reconstruct messages from written symbols into language forms, and involves many cognitive processes and combines the process of decoding and inferential activities so that the reader can truly understand the text (Kendeou, Muis, Fulton 2011).

In the teaching and learning process, lecturers must evaluate their students by carrying out tests. By highlighting this, the test items must reach the learning objectives. Therefore, lecturers need to choose the right test model to evaluate their students' abilities. Item analysis is a process, which tests students' responses to individual test items (questions) to assess the quality of the item and the overall test. Item analysis is very valuable in increasing items that will be used again in further testing, but can also be used to eliminate ambiguous items in one test administration. In addition, item analysis is very important to improve the skills of testers in developing tests, and to identify specific areas of specific content that require greater emphasis or clarity. From the data obtained, these questions represent the types of points that need to be classified, such as main ideas, vocabularies, references, inferences, and detailed information.

CONCLUSION

Reading is an important skill that has to be mastered by every student. This because the reading cannot be separated in the process of teaching and learning, it works together with other skills in language learning. It requires the combination of information from the text and the students' background knowledge to get the whole meaning from the given text.

This study used descriptive quantitative data. It described the content of this research and used simple formula to analyze students' ability in Reading Comprehension class. It applied descriptive analysis method in analyzing the collected data obtained from documentation.

The data was taken from several test documents of Reading subjects from semester II, IV and VI of English Department at Islamic Studies Faculty of Muhammadiyah Aceh University as the instrument. Those test documents from the three subjects are evaluated which are analyzed by the researcher, namely: final of intensive reading comprehension, academic reading and reading comprehension III.

From the document study of Intensive reading comprehension, the researcher found that 6 items in Multiple choice form, 11 items in open-ended form, and 5 items word

matching for vocabularies. Besides, from Academic Reading final test, the items were in multiple choice and true false form based on two passages that represented by 18 items test. From the first passage, 10 items were in multiple choice form and 8 question in true and false about detail. From the last document, Reading Comprehension III, the researcher found that the lecturer compiled 20 questions derived from two passages in multiple choice form.

Through the data gained, the test items should be set in a proper way by lecturers. The test items should cover the learning objectives. Therefore, lecturers need to choose the right test model to evaluate their students' abilities. The Item test analysis is very important to select items that will be used again in further testing, or it can also be used to eliminate ambiguous items from the test.

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