Problems Faced and Strategies Applied by Test-Takers in Completing the TOEFL iBT Test

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Abstract

The present study aimed at exploring strategies applied and the problems test-takers faced before, during, and after working on an integrated reading-listening-writing (IRLW) task. This narrative inquiry research employed 23 students taking a TOEFL iBT test in the Indonesian context using the purposive sampling technique. The respondents answered a questionnaire and written questions related to the problems they faced during the test and their strategies to solve the problems. The test-takers' responses from the interview were used to confirm the data from the responses to written questions. The researchers used an in-depth interview protocol to explore the test-takers' strategies to solve the problems they faced when doing the test. The interview process was conducted right after they finished the test. The data from the questionnaire, written questions, and interviews were further analyzed descriptively. The findings showed that the test-takers encountered internal and external problems in completing the IRLW of the TOEFL iBT test. They used different integrated writing strategies, depending on their learning styles, cognitive levels, experiences, abilities, levels of anxiety of each test-taker, and the environment of the test. The affective, cognitive, metacognitive, and test-wiseness strategies were all used in their own way to solve their problems. It implies that future test-takers need to learn and apply all positive strategies based on their learning styles. English teachers, therefore,

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should teach positive strategies of IRLW because students might not know the importance of the strategies and how to use them in the test.

Keywords: iBT, integrated reading-listening-writing task strategies, test-takers, TOEFL.

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic writing is an interaction between the readers and the writer via written texts for educational or scholarly purposes. The style of English academic writing is formal, and it is usually circulated within the academic world. Alharthi (2012) argues that when people already know what they want to write, they are competent writers. Competent writers are those who already have the writing ability to cover global issues (content and organization) and local issues (vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics) (Sulistyo et al., 2020). Without taking a writing class, they only need to write down their knowledge and ideas with excellent language proficiency. Unfortunately, writing for educational or scholarly purposes is difficult for ESL or EFL learners or test-takers. They have to pursue it intensely to accomplish a minimum standard in English performance tests, such as TOEFL, TOEP, IELTS, etc.

One of the English performance tests is TOEFL iBT, the latest TOEFL test that uses the Internet as its test medium to measure foreign language task performers' (learners') competence. One of its functions is to assess task performers' English proficiency for academic purposes. This type of test is becoming more popular in non-English speaking countries, partly because task performers need it to apply for scholarships or continue studying abroad (Mukminatien, 2015). More than that, TOEFL can be used as a requirement for university admission (e.g., applying for a doctoral degree program in English Language Teaching) and for career promotion and teacher or lecturer's certification, like in Indonesia. Thus, Indonesian foreign language task performers need strategies in completing this kind of test.

Different strategies used by ESL and EFL learners in writing processes become a challenge in academic writing contexts because writing is recursive steps allowing students to move forward and back in producing a good composition. In this case, effective writers apply more suitable strategies than ineffective ones (Sulistyo & Heriyawati, 2017). Therefore, investigating writing as a process primarily in studies conducted in ESL/EFL integrated writing process contexts becomes urgent. However, many studies related to writing performances mainly focused on non-integrated writing tasks (Alharthi, 2012; Sadi & Othman, 2012). For example, Alharthi (2012) found that the students were aware of writing strategies but still had problems with sentential (grammatical errors, use of wrong vocabulary, and misuse of punctuation) and intersentential levels (a clear meaning in general). Therefore, they have to plan, translate, and edit their writing. In other non-English speaking countries in Asia, particularly in Indonesia, several writing researchers conducted their studies on aspects related to the teaching of writing (Widiati & Cahyono, 2001) such as error analysis (Mukminatien, 2015), feedback provision (Budianto et al., 2020), and writing experiences (Sulistyo et al., 2020). However, their studies focused on non-integrated writing tasks.

The findings of the previous studies indicate many substantial questions related to the integrated reading-listening-writing topics still remain unanswered and need to be investigated further (Gebril & Plakans, 2014; Plakans & Gebril, 2017; Yang & Plakans, 2012). One of the questions is related to the task performers (their activities and performance). Interestingly, discussions on this topic still become a trend among researchers. Some are interested in integrated writing (Gebril & Plakans, 2014; Plakans, 2009a, 2009b; Plakans & Gebril, 2013), yet, research on integrated writing needs exploring further as it is still relatively scant (Yang & Plakans, 2012), particularly among EFL test-takers in the Indonesian contexts. If test-takers perform well on a TOEFL-iBT writing test task, they probably maximize their writing abilities for a discipline-specific task (Riazi, 2016). It makes sense, maybe because TOEFL iBT is relatively new for most Indonesian students and researchers. Accordingly, no previous studies focus on TOEFL iBT test test-takers completing an integrated writing test in Indonesia.

Based on the gaps above, the researchers formulated the following research questions:
1) What are the problems faced by Indonesian test-takers in accomplishing the Integrated Reading-Listening-Writing task of the TOEFL iBT Test?
2) What strategies do the test takers apply to solve the problems they faced in completing the Integrated Reading-Listening-Writing task of the TOEFL iBT Test?

Correspondingly, research in the area of integrated writing is essential because to study at the university level in an English-speaking country, non-native speakers of English need to have adequate English academic writing skills. They have to write based on the reading text and the lecture they have listened to from their professors.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

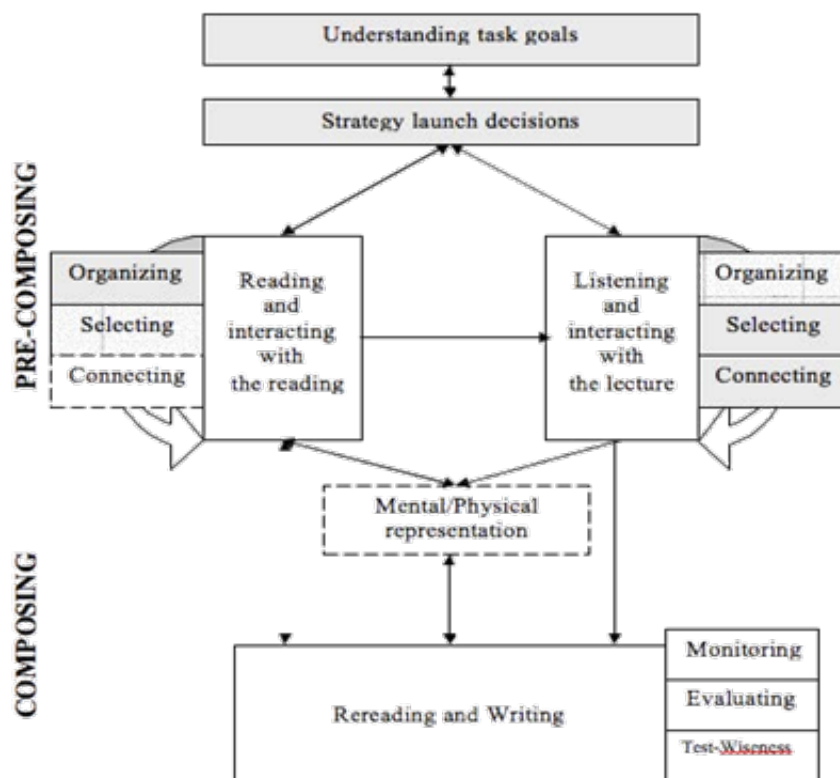### 2.1 Integrated-Reading-Listening Writing Strategies

The term strategy in writing means actions and behaviors administered by a writer to accomplish the process of writing (Shapira & Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2005), which strongly deals with the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) or learning strategies (Oxford, 1990). These actions and behaviors reflect four clusters: meta-cognitive, cognitive, social, and affective processes. Thus, writing strategy is the actions writers adopt to plan, generate, process, and present information, indicating the students' strategies to minimize their difficulties and anxiety when writing a text (Alharthi, 2012).

Metacognitive strategies, according to Oxford (1990), are thinking about what students have done, covering planning, implementing, and evaluating in accomplishing a certain task. Marhaban et al. (2021) confirm that metacognitive strategies are self-inventory activities. Thus, students have to assess what they have done by themselves independently. In contrast, cognitive strategies refer to specific techniques to accomplish a particular task (Oxford, 1990), such as reading and listening to instructional videos. Social strategies refer to a form of social communication that involves other people, which play important roles in the process of learning (Marhaban et al., 2021). For instance, students ask for information about

the topic being discussed with their friends, teachers, or other people. They involve other people in the learning process (Oxford, 1990). Lastly, affective strategies are non-academic in nature but very important factors in the learning process (Marhaban et al., 2021) covering motivation, self-esteem, attitudes, and emotions (Oxford, 1990). Accordingly, the students need to be aware of the importance of affective strategies that may affect their learning success.

The implementation of the strategies covering actions and behaviors applied by the writer to complete a writing task is different, depending on how writers (and future test-takers) use them. They need to apply appropriate writing strategies in accomplishing their writing tasks (Marhaban et al., 2021), and Sulistyo & Heriyawati (2017) claim that outstanding writers apply more suitable strategies than average ones.

Yang and Plakans (2012) propose a theoretical framework of integrated-reading-listening writing because it has integrated several previous theoretical frameworks related to integrated operations (Spivey & King, 1989), integrated writing tasks (Plakans, 2009a), L1 (first language) and L2 (second language) writing, integrated writing, learning, and test-taking strategies (Cohen & Upton, 2007). The theoretical framework of IRLW adopted from Yang and Plakans (2012) is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The theoretical framework of integrated-reading-listening writing (source: Yang and Plakans, 2012).

The writing strategies the writers do to complete the IRLW task cover three types (Yang & Plakans, 2012): self-regulatory strategy (SELFS), discourse synthesis strategy (DSS), and test-wiseness strategy (TWS). SELFS concerns two factors: monitoring and evaluating, which play a pivotal role over the other strategies. DSS deals with three factors: organizing, connecting, and selecting.

Monitoring and evaluating are associated with processes in integrated writing, appearing when writers construct goals, make informed decisions, and create strategic plans to complete the task (Yang & Plakans, 2012). Evaluating happens when writers reexamine task effectiveness and fulfillment by reconsidering task requirements, ideas, written texts, and revisions to improve the texts (Esmaeili, 2000).

The last strategy is TWS (test-wiseness strategy), where the test-takers have to find suitable responses to the questions rather than the cognitive answers test designers expect (Plakans & Gebril, 2013). For instance, some test takers wrote down their previous writing models, filled in some keywords, or copied the verbatim from source materials (Braine, 2010; Cumming et al., 2005). Also, less effective writers frequently apply copying and revising strategies (Gebril & Plakans, 2009) to complete integrated writing tasks.

In order to avoid getting wedged in the process of writing, writers should not concentrate too much on the writing mechanism (Prijambodo, 2008). Writers should focus on the aesthetic sense of their writings and not-for-profit writing purposes because it will automatically come with the quality writing they produce. It shows that writers need to consider the aesthetic of the text, such as a combination of artistic, cultural references, literary devices, and finding their own voice; they should not think of the profits they get from the writing activities.

There are three significant discourses to compose reading materials in synthesis processes: organizing, selecting, and connecting (Spivey & King, 1989). Organizing is writers' efforts to make meaning of the texts based on their background knowledge. Selecting is writers' main thoughts from less critical details related to task goals, demands, purposes, or specifications. And, connecting is writers' ideas to gather different sources and develop the ideas from an integral point of view.

2.2 Strategy Inventory for Integrated Reading- Listening-Writing

Yang and Plakans (2012) developed Strategy Inventory for Integrated-Reading-Listening-Writing (SIIW) to apply strategies for accomplishing an integrated writing task in TOEFL iBT. According to Yang and Plakans (2012), SIIW, as seen in Figure 1, is reflected in the writers' strategies in accomplishing the task to compose a text covering three sections: pre-writing, whilst-writing, and post-writing. Pre-writing consists of organizing, selecting, and connecting reading and listening activities to plan what the students will write. Whilst-writing is the main activity in composing the text by drafting, rereading the draft, revising, and editing the text. Last but not least, post-writing is checking again the text in terms of content, organization, grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary of the text. If needed, the writers make some revisions before submitting the text.

The items in SIIW are in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire. The writing strategies, from pre-writing, whilst-writing to post-writing from Yang and Plakans (2012) are shown in the following tables.

Table 1. Yang and Plakans' (2012) pre-writing strategies.

No.	Strategies
1.	I reread the task requirements carefully.
2.	I thought about the type of essay I wanted to write.
3.	I tried to summarize the overall ideas from the whole reading passage in my mind.
4.	I wrote down keywords from what I heard in the lecture.

Table 1 continued…

5.	I tried to understand the relationship between the ideas of the reading and the lecture.
6.	I tried to memorize some ideas from the lecture.
7.	I made a writing plan (e.g., outlines, notes, keywords).
8.	I wrote down the main ideas and important points from the reading passage.
9.	I searched for connections among sentences.
10.	I tried to understand the content according to how information is organized in each paragraph.
11.	I tried to understand the organization of the reading passage or the lecture.
12.	I summarized ideas from the lecture in my mind.
13.	I searched for connections among paragraphs.
14.	I planned to copy good sentences from the reading or lecture in my writing.
15.	I predicted the content of the lecture after reading the passage.

Table 2. Yang and Plakans' (2012) whilst-writing strategies.

No.	Strategies
16.	I double-checked to see if my writing met the task requirements.
17.	I reread the reading passage to look for the main ideas.
18.	I wrote some phrases based on a writing template I had memorized before the test.
19.	I thought about mentioning the authors in my essay.
20.	I copied the sentences from the reading passage and revised them.
21.	I tried to write about my knowledge or my own experience in the essay.
22.	I used different words or phrases to describe ideas from the reading passage or lecture.
23.	I reread what I had written to see if I was using correct English (e.g., grammar, spelling).
24.	I checked if I used the same phrases or sentences as the authors.
25.	I revised the sentences to make my writing clear.
26.	I thought about a word, phrase, or sentence before I wrote it down.
27.	I first wrote out a writing template I had memorized before and filled in some ideas from the lecture or the reading passage.

Table 3. Yang and Plakans' (2012) post-writing strategies.

No.	Strategies
28.	I checked if I used examples to support my main ideas.
29.	I reread my essay and changed the content that didn't express what I meant.
30.	I added new points based on the reading or the lecture.
31.	I reread my essay and made sure my English was correct.
32.	I checked if I had connected the ideas from the lecture to the ideas from the reading passage.
33.	I made changes to the phrase to ensure I didn't copy the exact phrase.

As seen in Tables 1-3, the Yang and Plakans' SIIW consists of 34 items to capture test-takers' mental behavior and behavioral activities related to specific stages (pre-writing, whilst-writing, and post-writing strategies) in the process of completing an integrated reading-listening-writing task (Yang & Plakans, 2012, p. 85).

2.3   TOEFL iBT Test

The National Council on Testing English as a Foreign Language in the United States developed the TOEFL test in 1963 (Barkaoui, 2015). It has evolved from paper-based tests to computer-based tests and, in 2005 to Internet-based tests (Alderson, 2009), the TOEFL iBT. It is the latest TOEFL that uses the Internet as its test medium to measure foreign language task performers' (learners') competence. Today, it is one of the worldwide tests administered to examine one's English proficiency for different

purposes, such as academic purposes before one goes abroad to continue studying (Mukminatien, 2015).

According to Sulistyo (2009), the TOEFL test has three successive major formats: pBT, cBT, and iBT. Initiated by an American council on the testing of English as a foreign language in early 1962, TOEFL and its historical development can be viewed from two angles: the development and the technology use. Barkaoui (2015) explains that TOEFL has evolved from a paper-based test to a computer-based test and, in 2005, to an Internet-based. The last version has been applied globally.

The new internet-based TOEFL, TOEFL-iBT, in 2005 consisted of two writing test tasks: 1) an integrated task that covers reading, listening, and writing and 2) an independent task involving writing prompts. This test requires test-takers to complete the IRLW task (Barkaoui, 2015; Riazi, 2016). Therefore, future students planning to study overseas need to ensure that they have IRLW skills for the TOEFL iBT test. When doing the TOEFL iBT test, test-takers respond to the independent and integrated writing tasks in the TOEFL iBT activities, and the results depend on the test taker's English language proficiency (Barkaoui, 2015).

3. METHOD

3.1 Research Design

The present study explored the strategies used and the problems faced by Indonesian test-takers before, during, and after working on an IRLW task, primarily based on Yang and Plakans' (2012) theoretical framework of IRLW. This study employed a narrative inquiry research design because the type of data collected in this study was descriptive (qualitative) information. This design fits with the purposes of this study which aimed at exploring the strategies used by Indonesian test-takers and the problems they faced in completing an IRLW task. The researchers could not directly examine test-takers' strategies and problems because the researchers did not have access to their actual integrated writing process. Thus, the researchers relied on the test-takers' recall of memory/reflection/introspection during the completion process of IRLW.

3.2 Source of Data

The data of this study were statements of the respondents related to the strategies used by task-takers and the problems they faced in accomplishing an IRLW task. The data were from the Indonesian task-takers' responses to (1) the questionnaire, (2) written questions, and (3) interviews. Because of the difficulty of finding the actual practice of integrated reading- listening-writing tasks in the EFL classroom, this study involved 23 respondents (15 males and 8 females) of TOEFL iBT test-takers from different study disciplines using purposive sampling. The TOEFL iBT test-takers were selected as the source of data because they had the experience of being confronted with the IRLW task. The respondents were asked to fill out the questionnaire related to the IRLW strategies listed in Yang and Plakans' (2012) SIIW. They were also asked to answer the written questions and responded to the interview to further inquire about the strategies applied while taking the test.

3.3   Data Collection

The researchers received official permission from Yang and Plakans (2012) to collect the data using their Strategy Inventory for Integrated Reading- Listening-Writing (SIIW) for the IRLW task. Yang and Plakans' (2012) theoretical framework of integrated reading-listening-writing (IRLW) strategies were used because it is developed based on the empirical finding of integrated writing relevant to the context of the current study. SIIW is in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire ranging from very rarely (1), rarely (2), occasionally (3), often (4), and very often (5). The researchers added an extra (0) to indicate 'never' because real task performers might not use the strategies listed in Yang and Plakans' (2012) SIIW, despite that this SIIW is known easy to use and covers major strategies used by IRLW writers. Hence, the questionnaire was open-ended to allow the respondents to add more strategies not yet listed in the SIIW. Before using SIIW as a research instrument, the researcher had searched for its validity and reliability evidence. It involved a literature review and experts' validation process. The instrument was then tried out to see its suitability and applicability to this research context, i.e. Indonesian test-takers.

Other instruments used in this study were written questions and an in-depth interview protocol derived from SIIW. The written questions and the interview asked the same questions. The written questions provided the task performers to answer the questions in the writing format, while the interview process provided the task performers to answer the questions verbally. The researcher used these two different types of answers (written versus verbal) to address task performers' learning style differences and for data triangulation purposes. The interview was also used to dig for more information from the task performers that might not be expressed through written answers, such as as the problems they faced, the way they used note-taking strategies, and the way they solved the problems were asked to the respondents.

The interview process was conducted right after the test with the help of eight enumerators having English backgrounds. The session was recorded, and the recordings were transcribed. Before data collection, the researchers trained these enumerators and attended a tried-out session of the interview. The data from the written questions and interviews then was further analyzed through descriptive analysis (Nassaji, 2015).

4.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1   Problems Faced by the Test-Takers

Based on the result of the open-ended questionnaire, the researchers identified some problems faced by Indonesian test-takers while completing the IRLW task, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Problems faced by the test-takers while completing the IRLW task.

No.	Types of problem	Respondents	Total respondents
1.	Grammar and structure	R2, R4, R5, R6, R9, R12, R13, R14, R20, R21, R23	11
2.	Listening comprehension	R2, R4, R9, R11, R12, R15, R16, R17, R19, R22	10

Table 4 continued…

3.	Lack of vocabulary	R2, R4, R5, R6, R9, R16, R17, R20, R22, R23	10
4.	Synthesizing information	R6, R7, R9, R11, R12, R17, R19, R21	8
5.	Paraphrasing	R1, R4, R9, R15, R17, R18, R23	7
6.	Developing main ideas	R1, R4, R5, R6, R13, R21, R23	7
7.	Reading comprehension	R2, R9, R12, R16, R17, R19	6
8.	Lack of time	R8, R14, R15, R16, R20	5
9.	Topic familiarity	R1, R2, R3	3
10.	Internal distractor	R10, R22, R23	3
11.	External distractor	R5, R21	2
12.	Multi-tasking (taking notes while listening)	R7, R10	2
13.	Rhetorical writing pattern	R2, R20	2
14.	Paragraph and essay organization	R12, R20	2
15.	Memorizing	R9	1
16.	Connecting main ideas	R8	1
17	Too many words	R8	1

Those 17 problems are grammar and structure, listening comprehension, lack of vocabulary, synthesizing information, paraphrasing, developing main ideas, reading comprehension, lack of time, topic familiarity, internal distractor, external distractor, multi-tasking problems, rhetorical writing pattern, paragraph and essay organization, memorizing, and connecting main ideas. Among the problems, the test-takers faced the main problems regarding grammar and structure, listening comprehension, lack of vocabulary, synthesizing information, paraphrasing, and developing main ideas. The rest of the other problems, even though minor, seemed to influence the test-takers' strategies in completing the task. The aspects of internal and external distractors influenced the strategies applied by the test-takers while completing the integrated reading-listening-writing task.

These findings are strengthened by the responses of the respondents from the written questions and interview data. A respondent (R4) expressed that:

(1) When listening to the audio, there was a sound from outside that distracted my efforts in comprehending the audio in the listening session. I got frustrated. (R4)

Essentially, R4 complained that noises from outside of the audio distracted him from taking the test quietly, thus, ruining his concentration. The noises came from his peers' who were also taking the test. This external distractor also influenced the outcome of his test.

Another respondent (R7) claimed:

(2) I got stuck before starting the writing session. I did nothing for some minutes. I was shocked that listening and speaking parts made me nervous. I was not sure about the results. Too hard for me. Yet, I tried hard to do the writing session.

Meanwhile, R7 posed internal distractors that weakened his ability to do the test, which were competence and anxiety. This finding corresponds to the writing process model developed by Flower and Hayes (1981), which put the task environment (internal and external factors) as the factors contributing to the process of writing. It

indicates that one's writing ability is not the single factor affecting the quality of a text he/she produces.

4.2   Strategies Applied by the Test-Takers

After analyzing the data from the written questions and interviews, the researchers found out that the whole picture of the IRLW process could be derived from test-takers' strategies used before and whilst writing the essay. It is not surprising that almost all Indonesian task performers respondents used the same strategies as found by Yang and Plakans (2012). However, it is interesting that some strategies were not listed in Yang and Plakans' SIIW, but the respondents jot them down in the questionnaire and written questions and claimed to have used them. Perhaps this is because the Yang and Plakans' subjects of the study were non-real task performers and their cultural backgrounds were different from the subjects of this present study. Yang and Plakans (2012) employed 161 non-native-English-speaking students enrolled in a large southwestern university in the United States. They came from different countries, including Brazil, China, Egypt, France, Iran, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Taiwan, Turkey, and Vietnam. Thus, they had experiences in using the English language in their daily activities. In contrast, this present study involved 23 respondents (15 males and 8 females) of TOEFL iBT test-takers from different disciplines. All came from Indonesia and had to take the TOEFL iBT test as one of the requirements before they continued their study in the United States, so it was a high-stakes test. In fact, they rarely used English in their daily lives; their use of this language was limited to formal settings such as in classes, meetings, conferences, or academic gatherings/events.

4.2.1 Before writing strategies

Before writing the essay, the test-takers applied strategies related to processing information input from the reading passage and the lecture. Thus, strategies before writing the essay are classified into reading strategies, listening strategies, and outlining strategies which happen right after the completion of the listening stage.

In the reading stage, the test-takers applied four strategies. First, predicting the content of the reading passage was a strategy that was a part of the knowledge acquisition process (McCrindle & Christensen, 1995), which linked the new knowledge about the topic and prior personal knowledge of the task performers. Thus, when the test-takers started reading the title of the reading, the information they got could be connected to their prior personal knowledge (Widiati & Cahyono, 2001), so that they could predict or guess the content of the reading passage. The importance of predicting or guessing the forthcoming information input could be found in Yang and Plakans' SIIW as they put 'predicting the content of the lecture after reading the passage'. However, they did not put 'predicting the content of the reading after reading the title of the passage', which is substantially the same aspect of the information process through connecting their prior (previously acquired) knowledge with their new knowledge.

Second, the test-takers focused on the reading passage to overcome the anxiety that affected their concentration in processing the information input from the reading passage as suggested by Al Faruq (2019) reading anxiety does not need an instant response but students need to focus on the concrete text. A respondent (R4) said:

(3) The texts were so difficult since I was not familiar with the topics. It was very hard to comprehend them. But I tried to get the main ideas and some important clues from the texts.

This strategy was categorized as an affective strategy (Oxford, 1990). The absence of this strategy in Yang and Plakans' SIIW was because Yang and Plakans' (2012) research setting was not a high-stake test. Thus, the writers might not experience the anxiety feeling like what has been experienced by a respondent in this study. Staying focused on the task was essential to do to process the information input from the reading text. Failure to use this strategy would affect the comprehension of the reading passage.

Finding main ideas and essential information from the reading passage was another strategy found in this study. This finding was in line with what has been found by Spivey and King (1989) that there are three significant discourses to compose reading materials in synthesis processes: organizing, selecting, and connecting. Organizing is the writers' approach to making meaning of the texts based on their prior knowledge; selecting is writers' key ideas from less important details based on task goals, demands, purposes, or specifications; and connecting is writers' ideas to link information from different sources and elaborate the ideas from an integral perspective (Spivey & King, 1989). Finding main ideas here could be categorized as sorting key ideas from less critical details based on task goals or purposes. Finding main ideas and writing down main ideas were two different activities. The study conducted by Yang and Plakans (2012) did not include main ideas as a distinct strategy because task performers may have different learning styles.

Finally, the current study found that categorizing the main points in the reading passage as a distinct cognitive strategy is incomplete; it was a personal strategy enabling the writer to process and transform the information. There is a need to include this strategy in SIIW. In line with Weinstein and Mayer (1986) on cognitive strategies, they identified three types of cognitive strategy, one of which was organization strategies, in which the task performers reorganized information to be learned to make it more meaningful. To be more meaningful here could refer to the writers' strategy to categorize the main points in the reading passage into either positive or negative and either agreement or disagreement points to be more meaningful. Meaningful information from the reading, then, could be elaborated through the synthesizing process, which linked the new knowledge (from the reading) and the test-takers' prior knowledge (experience) (McCrindle & Christensen, 1995).

Then, in the listening stages, the majority of the test-takers used the listening and outlining strategies as listed in Yang and Plakans' (2012) SIIW. Two respondents, however, reported not using strategy items number 14 and 15. Strategy item number 14 is 'planning to copy a good sentence from the reading or lecture in the essay', while strategy item number 15 is 'predicting the content of the lecture after reading the passage'. This finding could be explained by Yang and Plakans (2012), who found that verbatim strategy negatively correlated with the writing score (Gebril & Plakans, 2009). Thus, R6, who did not use strategy item number 14, might be a high-achieving writer.

R14 did not use strategy item number 15 because he did not know that he could predict the lecture's content after reading the passage, which could help him understand the lecture's content. Thus, the test-takers needed to learn strategies to use in the integrated reading-listening-writing task of TOEFL iBT (Yang & Plakans, 2012). English teachers, therefore, need to teach positive strategies of IRLW because

students might not know the importance of the strategies and how to use them in the test.

This study also found some strategies not listed, yet, in the SIIW. Those strategies were focusing on the lecture, trying to identify the main ideas and important points from the lecture, using a symbol for note-taking, guessing the main points from the lecture, categorizing main points or essential information from the lecture, and creating a comparison table/matrix of the lecture and the reading passage. Previous studies did not identify these strategies because of the research subjects' different characteristics (learning styles) and cultural backgrounds (Yang & Plakans, 2012).

The test-takers' efforts to have total concentration were needed while processing the information from the reading passage and during the processing of information input from the lecture. It was urgently needed when there was a potential of having external or internal distractors like what has been found in this study that a respondent experienced an external distractor while processing the information input from the lecture. The distractor was the noise made by the other task performers who were completing the speaking test in the same room as those listening to the lecture. In this case, the task performer could use a metacognitive strategy to focus his concentration on the listening task (Shapira & Hertz-Lazarowitz, 2005). This external distractor could not be tolerated because it could affect the test-takers' listening comprehension and their scores.

It was also found that the test-takers used symbols such as keywords for note-taking while processing the information input from the lecture. This finding was in line with previous research findings by Flower and Hayes (1981), who found that during writing, the writers were involved in the planning process to build an internal representation in the writers' minds.

Flower and Hayes (1981, p. 373) preferred to use the term "translate" over "transcribe" or "write" because they believed that the information generated during the planning stage "may be represented in a variety of symbols systems other than language, such as imager". They further stated that when writers move from planning to translating, they try to develop a representation encoded in one form, and sometimes it cannot be expressed in words. Thus, it can lead to huge confusion and often obliges the writer to form good English sentences (Flower & Hayes, 1981).

Another test-wiseness strategy that was not listed yet in Yang and Plakans' (2012) SIIW was guessing the main points from the lecture. Guessing was also categorized as part of processing information input. However, in this context, there were two types of guessing or predicting. The first one was positive guessing, which made the task performers easily comprehend the information input to their prior knowledge and helped them process it. The test-takers could confirm the prediction when they finished reading the whole text or listening to the whole lecture, increasing the meaningfulness of the information processed (Weinstein & Mayer, 1986).

This study also found that categorizing main points was used in information input from the reading passage and the lecture. Like in the reading, this type of strategy could also be categorized as a cognitive strategy found by Weinstein and Mayer (1986). Categorizing main points from the lecture into positive or negative information or agreement or disagreement was part of reorganizing the information to be learned to make it more meaningful which fell into analyzing the level of cognitive (thinking) skills. If it is viewed from the perspective of the cognitive level of Bloom's taxonomy, it is clear that there is a distinction between knowing, comprehending, analyzing,

synthesizing, and evaluating. In an integrated reading-listening-writing task, task performers' cognitive strategies used could be identified by their activities such as knowing the information (e.g., by note-taking), understanding the content (by comprehending), analyzing (by categorizing the content), and synthesizing (by connecting the reading passage and lecture).

4.2.2 Whilst writing strategies

It is not surprising that almost all respondents used most of the whilst writing strategies listed in the questionnaire proposed by Yang and Plakans (2012). However, it is essential to know that two respondents (R11 and R12) reported that they did not use strategy item number 22, which was 'trying to write about their knowledge or their own experience in their essays'. In contrast to independent writing, the integrated writing task required the test-takers to write based on the content from the reading and the passage, not based on the task performers' experience (Guo, 2011). Thus, that R11 and R12 did not use strategy item number 22 might be because they knew that in integrated writing, task performers did not need to use their personal experience in their essay, or it might be because they did not have any previous experience or knowledge related to the topic of the essay. However, other respondents reported using strategy number 22. It means that it was substantial for EFL teachers to teach their students to avoid strategy item number 22 in the integrated reading-listening-writing task of TOEFL iBT.

This study also found some strategies not listed, yet, in Yang and Plakans' SIIW are comparing and contrasting points of view in the paragraph and combining the content in the lecture and the reading passage. Comparing and contrasting essential points of view in the essay was also considered a strategy that involved test-takers' cognitive skills. Using this strategy was an indication that the writers were at the level of analysis (indicated by the ability to compare and contrast the information). This strategy was necessary because one of the functions of academic writing was to reinforce or challenge concepts or arguments (Yakhontova, 2003).

Another interesting finding from this study was that cognitive strategies happened during the processing of information input (before writing) and during the writing (while writing). Combining the content of the reading passage and the lecture in the essay was also considered a cognitive strategy called linking previous knowledge from the reading and newly learned knowledge through listening to the lecture as stated by a respondent, R14 in (4).

(4)   I tried hard to focus on the writing session more seriously. I recalled my background knowledge while writing. I added some details which I had not thought about at the beginning of writing. Sometimes, ideas appeared suddenly. I was not a good writer.

Based on Weinstein and Mayer (1986), this could be categorized as a cognitive strategy. The content in the lecture and the reading passage could be combined by connecting sentences using the appropriate conjunctions.

4.2.3 After writing strategies

This study also found other strategies not listed yet in the 'after writing' strategies of Yang and Plakans' SIIW. They were checking the completeness of the

content of the essay, checking the connection of ideas among paragraphs, and reorganizing the writing.

The test-takers checked the completeness of the content of the essay during the revising stage. It was in line with the finding of Murray (1980) who recognized the last stage of writing as revising or evaluating the writing product (Sadi & Othman, 2012). The evaluation here could include checking spelling, punctuation, and the completeness of the content of the essay. Checking the completeness of the content of the essay was a distinct strategy that was different from the strategies listed by Yang and Plakans in their 'after writing' strategy classification (see Table 3). Thus, it was essential to be added to Yang and Plakans' SIIW.

The test-takers also checked the connection of ideas among paragraphs that were significant to uphold the writing quality (Hessamy & Hamedi, 2013). This strategy could be done after writing to make sure that the essay was coherent. Thus, checking the organization or connection of ideas among paragraphs needed to be added into Yang and Plakans' SIIW post-writing stage (evaluation) category.

This study also found that a task performer used re-organizing strategy after writing the draft. It happened to a respondent, R4, who claimed:

(5) I re-read my draft many times to make sure that I had written all ideas I planned in the beginning part of the writing. Then, I added or revised some parts before finishing my text. Even I edited some misspellings or punctuations as well as capitalization.

This finding was in line with Murray's (1980) finding that the writer edited, developed, cut, and reordered the information in the written task during the evaluation process. It was because for some people it was difficult to make meaning with written language 'by looking backward from a finished page…It is possible, however, for us to follow the process forward from blank page to final draft and learn something of what happens' (Murray, 1980). Thus, future test-takers could use the strategy of reordering information in the written task.

The strategies of each test-taker could be different based on some reasons, such as their cognitive levels, experiences, abilities, and levels of anxiety of each test-taker besides external factors and even learning styles. However, Sulistyo and Heriyawati (2017) claim that outstanding writers commonly apply more appropriate strategies in accomplishing a writing task.

5.   CONCLUSION

The test-takers encountered internal and external problems in completing the integrated reading-listening-writing (IRLW) of the TOEFL iBT test. The test-takers use affective, cognitive, metacognitive, and test-wiseness strategies to solve their problems. The use of these strategies depends on their learning styles and cognitive skill levels. The test-takers need to learn and apply all positive strategies based on their learning styles to solve their problems in completing the IRLW task of the TOEFL iBT test.

The test-takers are different from one another in using integrated writing strategies. Some task performers reported using strategies listed in the Yang and Plakans' Strategy Inventory for Integrated Writing (SIIW), while some others reported not using the strategies listed in the SIIW. Other strategies not listed yet in Yang and

Plakans' SIIW supports the need to revise this framework into a more comprehensive assessment instrument to elicit integrated writing strategies. It implies that future test-takers need to learn and apply all positive strategies based on their learning styles. Therefore, teachers have to empower their students with some strategies for accomplishing such as the TOEFL iBT test and the like.

Due to the possible limitations of this recent study, such as the inability to access the test-takers' TOEFL iBT writing scores, further research needs to investigate the relationship between task performers' strategy use and their writing performance on the real test of TOEFL iBT to understand more about integrated reading-listening-writing strategies. Furthermore, the respondents of this research were only 23 test-takers, thus, future research should involve more respondents in data collection from other areas in Indonesia. A comparative study with other EFL test-takers out of Indonesia is also feasible for future related research.

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