THE LEVELS OF READING COMPREHENSION IN FOUR READING COURSES AND CASE STUDY BY THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021 FOR STUDENTS FROM TWO UNIVERSITIES IN BANDUNG

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on measuring the level of reading comprehension question in final examination in four reading courses in two universities in Bandung and identifying how student's ability in comprehending those level of questions. The level of reading comprehension which has the highest percentage in both questions and student's abilities is also analyzed in this research. This research was conducted by statistic descriptive method to describe and graphically display quantitative data. The data of this research are the English reading comprehension questions tested in final examination in four reading courses in two Universities and the population for analyzing case study by academic year 2020/2021 is all of students in those four reading courses. The researchers use the theory from Heilman (1988) as the main theory to test four reading comprehension skills. The result shows that from fifty reading comprehension questions in Final Examination, it is found that there are four levels found in *Campus A* which for Literal Level, there are 18 questions; for interpretive level, there 20 questions; for critical level, there are 5 questions; and for creative level, there are 7 questions. While in *Campus B* there are only three levels found from 50 reading comprehension questions in final examination. For Literal Level, there are 25 questions; for interpretive level, there 20 questions; for critical level, there are 5 questions; and for creative level, there is no question found from 50 questions. The level that

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mostly found in *Campus A* is in Interpretive Level which achieve 40% from 50 questions the level that mostly found in *Campus B* is in Literal Level which achieve 50% from 50 questions. The students' ability in Campus A is categorized as good comprehension. They achieved 85% in average. While in the Campus B, the students' ability is categorized as bad comprehension.

KEYWORDS : *level of reading comprehension questions, student's ability, Literal Level, Interpretive Level, Creative Level, Critical Level,*

INTRODUCTION

As language has become an international language that is used around the world, it becomes one of the most important subjects in Indonesia. Not only in University level, English has been one of compulsory lesson in all formal school, begin from Elementary school, Junior High School and Senior High School. While in some Kindergartens in Indonesia, English has also been thaught in some learning media, such children songs, picture, and daily conversation. Thus, English profisiency can be obtained in the education field, especially for University students.

The subjects focusing on English learning are varied in all universities. The name of the subject in one university can be different from other universities, eventhough the aim of the subjects are sometimes same. In those subjects, for all majors, the students at least have capability related to four following skill. Those four skill in English that are taught in University are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Reading is a skill that considered as the most necessary skill because reading can make students gain more knowledge in all kinds of learning. In other subjects (non-English learning subject), students are often obligated to read and resume the material from the book that used English as the language used in that book. It means, students at least have capability in reading English text to understand the whole text. Besides, Brown (2001) states that reading ability will be developed best in association with writing, speaking and listening activities. In addition, Nation I.S.P, (2009) argues that reading is a source of learning and a source enjoyment. It means the reading ability is most necessary field, not only for learning activity, but also for a kind of enjoyment, such reading novel, short story, etc. Related to this importance of reading ability for students, the researcher then decided to analyze the level of reading comprehension question found in the subject that the researcher are obligated to teach. Comprehension itself is one of the exercises that is aimed to test students in understanding the reading text. It is in line with what Nunan. D (2003) states that the goal of reading is comprehension. Beside, Brassell D & Rasinski T (2008) state that reading comprehension is the ability to take information from written text and do something with it in a way that demonstrates knowledge or understanding of that information. Thus, reading activity and reading

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comprehension is a package because the goal of reading activity is comprehension and answering comprehension shows how the reader understand the whole reading text.

In case of reading comprehension, there are considerations to leveling the question. There are some different considerations from theorists. But the researcher uses the theory of four reading skill in which there are four level of reading skill based on the theory of Heilman et al., (1988), they are Literal level, Interpretive Level, Critical Level and Creative Level.

Literal Level
Literal level is considered as the simplest level in four levels. In this level, the reader only need to reproduce the text as what the writer shows in the text. Kinds of question in this level are factual and detail. So the reader can find easily the answer of comprehension by reading the text. The reader needs to have some abilities refering to this kinds of question. Those abilities are knowledge of word meaning, reacalling of ideas directly stated or paraphrased in own word, understanding of grammatical clue; subject, verb, pronoun, conjunction, etc, recalling main idea explicitly stated, and knowledge of sequence of information presented in the text.

Interpretive level
In this level, the readers are required to go beyond information that the writer gave in the text. Besides, the readers are required to see the significance of data; note various relationships such as cause effect and relation of the part to the whole, to make comparison, to draw conclusion and inference and to make generalizations.

The interpretive level need the abilities in reasoning with the information presented to understand the writer's tone, purpose and attitude and inferring factual information, main ideas, comparison, cause-effect relationships not explicitly stated in the text.

Critical level
This level requires students to learn to evaluate and judge information and the writer's use of language to guide the reader's interpretation. The readers must also have abilities in reacting to information in a text indicating its meaning to the reader, analyzing and evaluating the quality of written information in terms of some standards.

Creative level
In this level, the readers are required to involve the information presented as they use it to formulate or think more ideas of their own. The questions of reading comprehension can consist of open-ended queries which require the reader to include his own knowledge, view, and value.

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The readers must have abilities in knowledge of emotional response of literary techniques and knowledge of response of forms, style and structure.

After analyzing the reading comprehension question based on those level, the student's ability to comprehend all kinds of level found is also analyzed in this research. The reader's ability to comprehend the text can be seen from the score he/she get from the comprehension. In this case, the researcher uses the theory from Nunan. D, (2003). Nunan states that a fluent reader as one whose comprehension at least 70 %. Its parameter can be seen from the table below;

No	Score Range	Category
1	At least 70%	Good Comprehension
2	Below 70%	Bad Comprehension

Source : Nunan D.(2003). *Practical English Language Teaching*. New York, NY: McGrawHill inc.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, the researcher shows the previous researches related to the reading field. These previous researches investigated the case related to the reading comprehension, student's abilities, student's difficulties in comprehending the question, etc. The purpose of this section is to find the differences between this research and previous researches that have been done by some researchers. Here are some researches related to reading field;

First, the research was done by Arief Fakhruddin (2018). He analyzed the student's level of reading comprehension through some note written in the reading journal. The title of the research is *Reading Journal as a Way to Improve Student's Reading Comprehension*. The data of this research were 80 respondents who comes from three different classes in Majalengka University. The finding of this research showed that more than half of the data appear to understand the material well, and the task palys a certain role to improve student's understanding in reading comprehension.

Second, the research was done by Yolanda Melandita (2019). She studied *Students' Difficulties In Comprehending The English Reading Text At The Second Semester Of The Eighth Grade Of Smp Darul Falah Bandar Lampung In The Academic Year Of 2018/2019*. The data of this research was the eight grade of students in SMP Darul Falah Bandar Lampung. The amount of the data were 74 students from 3 classes. The questionare were used to support the research. The

result showed that most of respondents perceived that they were not sure whether they had difficulties in reading comprehension.

Third, the research was done by Dian Permata Sari (2015). She studied *Students' Reading Comprehension Based on The Four Levels Comprehension Skills (A Study at The Second Year Students of SMAN 10 Bengkulu Academic Year 2014/2015*. The data of this research were the students of the second year of Senior High School. The result of this research showed that only a small number of students were successfulto answer the reading comprehension questions in interpretive and critical level. The cause of this case was caused by the difficulties in finding the main ideas and drawing conclusion that is expressed indirectly. Most of students could answer the reading comprehension questions in literal and creative level because the information in literal level is directly stated. Thus, the creative level was on moderate percentage of student's ability in comprehending the text.

Fourth, the research was done by Ratnasari Dewi et al., (2020). The title of the research was *Reading Interest and Reading Comprehension: A Correlation study in Syarif Hidayatullah States Islamic University Jakarta*. The data of this research were 38 students that were selected by using simple random sampling technique by second semester. The result of the research showed that there was a positive correlation between reading interest and reading comprehension. The reading interest that was considered as "very high" is found in creative reading comprehension.

Fifth, the research was done by Wandi Syahfutra and Bakhtiar (2018). The title of the research was *Improving Reading Comprehension by Using SQ3R Method*. The data of the research were students. The result showed that students' reading comprehension could be improved by using SQ3R method.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This research is formulated to answer the questions:
First, what level of reading comprehension question found in the data based on Heilman's four comprehension skills?
Second, what level of reading comprehension question that mostly found in the data?
Third, what is the category of students' ability based on Nunan's category of comprehension in answering the questions?

METHODOLOGY
This research uses the qualitative descriptive method. According to Donald et al., (2010), *Descritive research is research that ask question about the nature incidence, or distribution of*

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variable; it involves describing but not manipulating variable. Because this research analyzes the data that is real existed, so it is a kind of descriptive research. While,

Johnson & Crhistensen (2014) state that qualitative research is a research that relies on the collection of qualitative data. Thus, the method used in this research is qualitative descriptive method. The main aim of this research is to identify the level of reading comprehension questions and for the case study, to find out the category of students' ability in answering the reading comprehension questions.

The source of data
In this research, the data was taken from the reading comprehension questions in final examination from 4 courses in two Universities in Bandung. Then, the score of students' ability is also analyzed to find out what category of their ability. The four courses are two : *English Proficiency Certification (EPC/TOEFL)* and two : *Reading for TOEFL*. The comprehension in each reading text consists of 8-12 questions.

Instrument
After the data had been collected, the researchers do analyzing based on the main theory in the previous chapter. The reading comprehension questions are analyzed based on Heilman's four level of comprehension skill (1988). The collected data are then identified by those levels. Thus, the highest percentage of the reading comprehension levels will be also identified and implemented to the case study by the academic year 2020/2021 for students from 2 Universities in Bandung. The clues of question in each level can be seen from the example below;

Sample phrases or questions in Literal Level;
- What is ……….
- How old ………..
- When …………..
Sample phrases or question in Interpretive Level;
- Why ………
- What evidence ……….
- What you can conclude …….
Sample phrases or questions in Critical Level;
- Judge ………
- What would be the result of ……
- How would you describe ……..
Sample phrases or questions in Creative Level;
- What would you do if ………

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- Make up ……….
- What does the text tell you about ………..

These categories/levels are used to answer the first and second reseach question in this research. While, to answer the third research questions, the parameter of categorizing students' ability is from Nunan (2003). The students' ability must achieve at least 70% to be categorized as good comprehension.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher will show the result and discussion about analyzing the data. It will be described based on the research question.

First Research Question : What level of reading comprehension question found in the data based on Heilman's four comprehension skills?

The result for this research questions can be divided into two point based on each campus.

Campus A
The level of reading comprehension question found in *Campus A* based on Heilman's four reading comprehension skill can be seen from the table below;

Table 1: The Level of Reading Comprehension Question in Campus A

No	Level of comprehension skill	Amount of Question
1	Literal Level	18
2	Interpretive Level	20
3	Critical Level	5
4	Creative Level	7
Total		50

From the table above, it can be seen that in *Campus A* there are 4 four levels found from 50 reading comprehension questions in final examination. For Literal Level, there are 18 questions; for interpretive level, there 20 questions; for critical level, there are 5 questions; and for creative level, there are 7 questions.

Campus B
The level of reading comprehension question found in *Campus B* based on Heilman's four reading comprehension skill can be seen from the table below;

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Table 2: The Level of Reading Comprehension Question in Campus B

No	Level of comprehension skill	Amount of Question
1	Literal Level	25
2	Interpretive Level	20
3	Critical Level	5
4	Creative Level	0
Total		50

From the table above, it can be seen that in *Campus B* there are only three levels found from 50 reading comprehension questions in final examination. For Literal Level, there are 25 questions; for interpretive level, there 20 questions; for critical level, there are 5 questions; and for creative level, there is no question found from 50 questions.

Second Research Question : What level of reading comprehension question that mostly found in the data?
To answer this research question, the researcher show the result in the chart below;
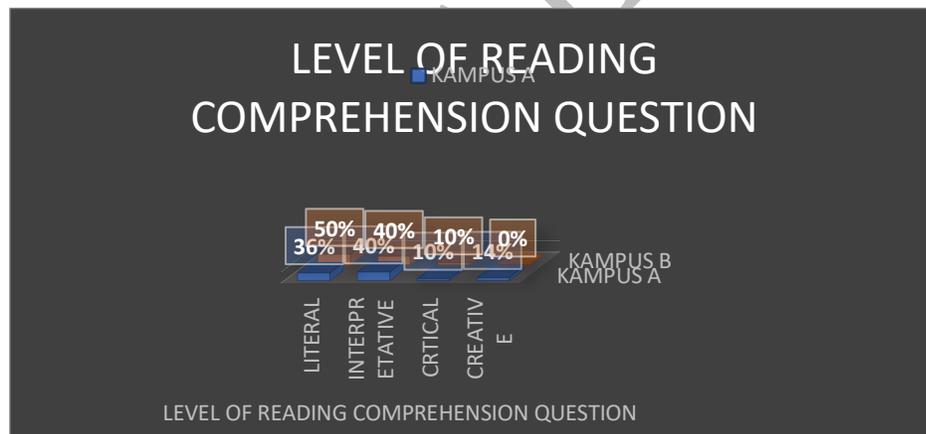

Diagram 1: The Level of Reading Comprehension Question in Campus A and Campus B

From the chart above, it can be seen that there is difference between *Campus A* dan *Campus B*. In *Campus A*, the highest percentage of reading comprehension's levels is in Interpretive Level which achieve 40% from 50 questions and the lowest percentage is in Critical Level which achieve 10%. Different from *Campus A*, the highest percentage in *Campus B* is in Literal Level which achieve 50% from 50 questions, and the lowest percentage is in Critical Level which achieve only 10%.

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Third Research Question : What is the category of students' ability based on Nunan's category of comprehension in answering the questions?

To answer this question, the researcher uses the parameter from Nunan (2003) who states that the students' ability must achieve at least 70% to be categoried as good comprehension. While if the students' ability only achive under 70%, it is categorized as bad comprehension.

Here are the result for students' ablity in answering the reading comprehension questions based on levels of those questions;

Campus A

Table 3: Case Study of The Reading Comprehension levels in Campus A

No	Level of reading comprehension				Average
	Literal Level	Interpretive Level	Critical Level	Creative Level	
1	82%	87%	86%	86%	85%

From the table above, it can be seen that students' ability in answering all levels of reading comprehension question is categorized as good comprehension. They achieved more than 70% in comprehension. The highest percentage of students' ability is in Interpretive Level which achieve 87% and the lowest percentage of students' ability in Literal Level which achieve 82%. Although in Literal Level, students' ability is in the lowest percentage, but it is still categorized as good comprehension because they achieve more than 70%.

Campus B

Table 4: Case Study of The Reading Comprehension levels in Campus B

No	Level of reading comprehension				Average
	Literal Level	Interpretive Level	Critical Level	Creative Level	
1	26%	45%	38%	0%	35%

From the table above, it can be seen the significant difference between *Campus A* and *Campus B*. in Campus B, the students' ability in answering all levels of reading comprehension questions is categorized as bad comprehension because they only achieved 35% in average which the minimum percentage to be categorized as good comprehension is 70%. The highest percentage of students' ability is in Interpretive Level which achieve 45% from 50 total questions. And the lowest percentage of students' ability is in Literal Level which achieve only 26%. For Creative Level, there is no question categorized as creative level.

To compare the students' ability in both campus, it can be drawn in the chart below;
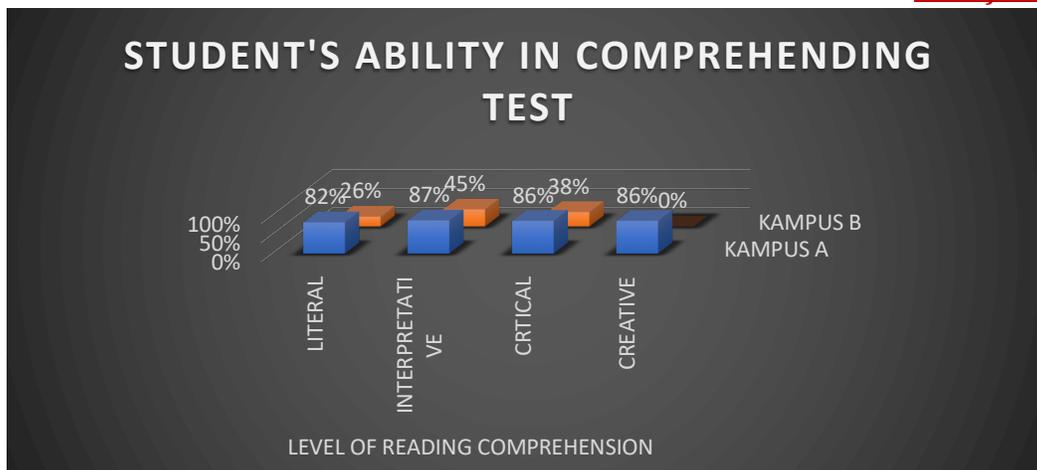
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Diagram 2: Students' Ability in Comprehending Test in Campus A and Campus B

There is significant difference between *Campus A* and *Campus B* in answering the reading comprehension questions in Final Examination of the courses.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result and discussion in the previous section, it can be concluded as the point below; From fifty reading comprehension questions in Final Exampination of the course, it is found that there are four levels found in Campus A which for Literal Level, there are 18 questions; for interpretive level, there 20 questions; for critical level, there are 5 questions; and for creative level, there are 7 questions. While in *Campus B* there are only three levels found from 50 reading comprehension questions in final examination. For Literal Level, there are 25 questions; for interpretive level, there 20 questions; for critical level, there are 5 questions; and for creative level, there is no question found from 50 questions.

The level that mostly found in *Campus A* is in Interpretive Level which achieve 40% from 50 questions the level that mostly found in *Campus B* is in Literal Level which achieve 50% from 50 questions.

The students' ability in Campus A is categorized as good comprehension because they achieve more than 70% of comprehension. They achieved 85% in average. While in the Campus B, the students' ability is categorized as bad comprehension because they achieve under 70% of comprehension in which they only achieved 45% in average.

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Limitation of The Study

In fact, it can not be ignored that nothing is perfect in the world, and so is this research. The limitation of this research is that the data of this research are taken from two universities in Bandung which the courses are Reading for TOEFL and EPC. The process of collecting data was done by online, it is because of the pandemic of Covid-19. So that, the researcher found the difficulties to control directly how students did the reading comprehension as final examination.

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