



An Analysis of Students' Reading Comprehension Ability of 2022 International Class Students of Geographic Education Department at Universitas Negeri Padang

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Article History

Submitted: 2023-11-21

Accepted: 2024-02-05

Published: 2024-02-05

Keywords:

Geography, factors contribute, reading, reading comprehension ability

Abstract

Reading comprehension ability is the crucial and a fundamental skill for academic success. This study aimed to find out the reading comprehension ability and to investigate the factors that contribute to variations of reading comprehension ability of the students of Geography Education Department international class. This research is a descriptive mixed-method research. The data were collected from 28 international class students of Geography education department of *Universitas Negeri Padang*. The instrument of this research was reading comprehension test which is TOEFL reading test and interview. The result shows that the students have an insufficient reading comprehension ability in reading English text, and there are some factors that contributed to the insufficient of reading comprehension ability of the students such as, home environment, socioeconomic status, prior academic experience and motivation. As the result, the reading comprehension ability were 57% failed, 36% inadequate, and 7% adequate. Furthermore, for the factors that contribute to their reading comprehension ability which are from the total of 28 students, 19 students said that they don't have supportive home environment in developed reading habits, 11 students said that their socioeconomic status are not appropriate enough, 20 students claimed the lack of prior academic experience and 19 student confess that they are not enjoy reading or less motivation in read. The findings suggest some program that needed to be improve in the international class program of Geography education department to provide more efficient and creative reading activities for the student to developed their reading interest and reading habits.

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How to Cite: Sinamo, F., & Syafei, A.R. (2023). An Analysis of Students' Reading Comprehension Ability of 2022 International Class Students of Geographic Education Department at Universitas Negeri Padang, 13. (1): pp. 38-44,

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension ability is a fundamental skill for academic success, particularly in higher education. The ability to comprehend academic texts is essential for students to learn and engage with their coursework, complete assignments, and perform well on exams. However, research suggests that many students struggle with reading at the college level, which can negatively impact their academic performance (Brozo et al., 2007; Hu & Schmeck, 2017; Klassen et al., 2019).

With the increasing globalization of higher education, English proficiency has become a critical factor for academic and professional success. In many countries, including Indonesia, English is the language of instruction in higher education, and students are expected to have a certain level of proficiency in the language to succeed in their academic pursuits. However, many of them are non-native English speakers and may face challenges in using English language for the medium of interaction, particularly in reading English text.

In the case of international class students at *Universitas Negeri Padang* in which using English as the medium of interaction, reading comprehension ability can be particularly challenging, as students may have different language backgrounds and varying levels of English language proficiency. Based on the informal observation on the students' of international class at Geography Department of *Universitas Negeri Padang*, there are some issue shows that there are some challenging that lecturer and the students face in teaching and learning geography material. Even though the student of international class program have been take a test as the selection to be able to join international class program. Some students said that they are struggling to understand and comprehend the textbook of their major, while the lecturers also said that it was not easy to teach materials by using textbook written in English to their students. Based on the informal interview with some lecturers that taught international class students, they said that students of international class have difficulties while read for the material which is using English material.

As reading comprehension ability is a crucial aspect of language proficiency, assessing international class students' reading comprehension ability can provide valuable insights into their English language proficiency levels. Furthermore, by examining the factors that influence international class students' reading ability, such as their prior knowledge and motivation to read, this study can provide suggestions for improving English language instruction for international class students at *Universitas Negeri Padang*.

Furthermore, the researcher found several studies that discuss the problem of reading English text on students who do not use English as their mother tongue. Aslina & Syafei (2022) in a research about the obstacles faced by *PGSD* international students

in using English as a medium of instruction said that the students had many obstacles in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is supported by An-Nashir & Syafei (2021) who conducting a study about the reading ability of *PGSD* international class students that showed that the students have the insufficient or low reading ability in reading English texts because lack of vocabulary, processing skills, reading strategies, background knowledge, discourse knowledge, and cognitive skills, so they interference their success in studying their major.

Moreover, the study conducted by Seiradakis (2019) stated that the reading difficulties faced by Greece learners are associated by two distinct EFL reading activity systems that have diverse goals, tools, values, and division of labour. Additionally, Song (2022) researched in Shanghai Institute of Technology and found out that participant of reading difficulties associated with different norms and conventions between Chinese Mainland and Taiwanese academic context which is described within two activity system.

Meanwhile, Javorčíková & Badinská (2021) investigated the abilities to evaluate some text critically such as to identify is assumed author, genre, organization of the text and also the importance of the text for the reader. Researcher proved that the students in Slovakia do not process a good command of reading skills for academic reading. Additionally, HAQ (2019) in University of Malaka and Pakistan found that the students has improved reading skills after taking admission in the university. Moreover, researcher concluded that English language is necessary and played pivotal role in the academic journey of the students dealing with other subjects in a teaching situation where the medium of instruction is English.

Due to the finding of several research above, it shows that the non-native speaker students has many obstacles in reading English text because of their low reading comprehension ability, such as lack of vocabulary, processing skills, reading strategies, background knowledge, discourse knowledge, and cognitive skills, differences of goals, tools, values, and division of labour in learning process, also the differences of norms and conventions of students. There are a lot of difficulties and obstacles that faced by non-native students and only some of the previous research that shows or reflects the reading difficulties of the non-native students.

Concerning those findings of previous study above, the researcher is interested in conducting the research entitled “An Analysis of Students’ Reading Comprehension Ability of year 2022 International Class Students in Geographic Department at *Universitas Negeri Padang*. This research will analyze the current reading comprehension ability of International Class students. Seeing the conditions described from several previous studies above, *international class students in Geographic Education Department 2022 at Universitas Negeri Padang* are assumed to face the

same problem due to their insufficiency in using and reading also comprehend English text.

According to some previous research that also conduct the research about reading ability, the international class of Geographic Education year 2022 also assumed to have some factors from other kind of environment that also give impact for their reading comprehension ability problem. The researcher interested to conduct this research in the field of Geographic Education International Class students of year 2022 because they are still as the new students in the Geographic Education which also assumed that they still in the process of make some adaptation for the international class program.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design for this study is a mixed-methods design that combines both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Mixed methods is another step forward, utilizing the strength of both qualitative and quantitative research (Creswell, 2018).

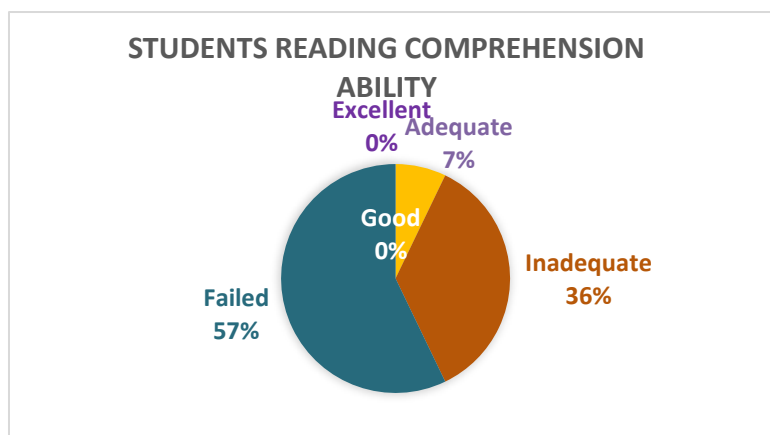
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Students Reading Comprehension Ability

STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY		
PARTICIPANT	SCORE	GRADE/LEVEL
R1	70	Adequate
R2	48	Failed
R3	62	Inadequate
R4	50	Failed
R5	48	Failed
R6	60	Inadequate
R7	58	Failed
R8	48	Failed
R9	54	Failed
R10	54	Failed
R11	60	Inadequate
R12	64	Inadequate
R13	56	Failed
R14	56	Failed

R15	60	Inadequate
R16	68	Inadequate
R17	52	Failed
R18	62	Inadequate
R19	58	Failed
R20	62	Inadequate
R21	66	Inadequate
R22	52	Failed
R23	46	Failed
R24	54	Failed
R25	62	Inadequate
R26	70	Adequate
R27	50	Failed
R28	54	Failed

Figure 1. Students' Reading Comprehension Ability



Based on the table 1 and figure 1. above, it can be seen the reading comprehension ability of 2022 international class students of Geography department. Most of students, 16 students were in failed level (57%). Then, there are 10 student were in inadequate level (36%). On the other hand, there were only 2 students, R1 and R26 were in adequate level (7%).

From the interview, the researcher found that factors that contribute to their insufficient reading comprehension ability showed that there are four factors that contribute significantly on their reading comprehension ability. Those factors were home environment, socioeconomic-status (SES), prior academic experience and their motivation. Those factors contribute significantly because of the inappropriate of those factors caused the insufficient reading comprehension ability of the international class students of Geographic education department of *Universitas Negeri Padang* year 2022.

CONCLUSION

The result of this research indicated that the reading comprehension ability of 2022 international class students of Geographic Education Department of Universitas Negeri Padang has below good level reading comprehension ability in reading English text. There are no students reach the excellent and good level of reading comprehension ability. Which are the reading comprehension ability level were in failed (57%), inadequate (36%), and adequate (7%) level. Furthermore, there are some factors also significantly contribute to the lack of reading comprehension ability of the international class students of Geography education department year 2022. Those factors were home environment, socioeconomic status (SES), prior academic experience, and motivation. From the total of 28 students, 19 students said that they don't have supportive home environment in developed reading habits, 11 students said that their socioeconomic status are not appropriate enough, 20 students claimed the lack of prior academic experience and 19 student confess that they are not enjoy reading or less motivation in read.

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