

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses about research context, research focus, research objectives, significance of study, definition of key terms and previous study.

A. Research Context

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is a test administered by ETS (Educational Testing Service). TOEFL is used to measure the proficiency of non-native English speakers in English language. TOEFL is the most eligible test in the world. It is proven by more than 5000 universities, colleges, and licensing institutions in 90 countries accept TOEFL scores as official test, including Indonesia.¹ In Indonesia, the TOEFL test is not only used by several companies as a requirement for job applicants with a certain minimum score. In general, TOEFL is also used as a criterion in obtaining scholarships, standard requirements for entering college, even some universities in Indonesia make the TOEFL as part of the criteria for graduation from college. It shows that the TOEFL is believed to be able to evaluate students' abilities and skills in English.²

IAIN Madura has a TOEFL EPT (English Proficiency Test) program which is used to measure abilities and skills in English in Unit Pelayanan Teknik Bahasa IAIN Madura. TOEFL is also one of the course that must be taken by 6th

¹ Zaidoon Abdul Razaq Abboud and Nagham Ja'far Hussein, 'The Difficulties Faced by Advanced Iraqi Foreign Learners in Passing ITP TOEFL Test', *Journal of Basrah Researches (Humanities Series)*, 36.4 (2011), 110–38.

² Tira Nur Fitria, 'An Analysis of the Students' Difficulties in TOEFL Prediction Test of Listening Section', *ENGLISH FRANCA : Academic Journal of English Language and Education*, 5.1 (2021), 95 <<https://doi.org/10.29240/ef.v5i1.2212>>; Anita Lovia Girsang and others, 'An Analysis of Reading Comprehension Difficulties in TOEFL Test By High School Students', *Linguistic, English Education and Art (LEEA) Journal*, 3.1 (2019), 132–37 <<https://doi.org/10.31539/leea.v3i1.1002>>; Foreign Language and others, 'Jsh Jurnal Sosial Humaniora, Vol 4 No.2, November 2011 195', 4.2 (2011), 195–212.

semester students of the English teaching learning program, so students are required to take the TOEFL EPT with a qualification target reaching scores 500 out of 677. Unfortunately, the test results show that most students do not achieve the required score. The test results show that from about 163 students only about 4 students can achieve the target score above 500, some of them even get very low scores. This is an interesting phenomenon at a time when the fact shows the results of the TOEFL EPT students' English Teaching Learning Program which have been undergone for six semesters focusing on all skills in English that still have low scores.³

Structure and written expression is the second section on the TOEFL that used to measure ability of non-native English based on English writing standart. Especially this section divide into two types they are structure and written question types with 140 questions.⁴

In this research, the researcher do an observation to the 6th semester students of English teaching learning program at IAIN Madura and the majority of students have difficulty in working on the second section of the TOEFL question that is structure and written expression. Some of the difficulties faced were that the student had never taken the TOEFL test before, limited time to work on it, and did not understand the topics contained in the TOEFL.⁵

Based on the phenomenon above the researcher is interested to conduct a research entitled "*Students' Difficulties in Completing TOEFL on Structure and*

³ Recorded From UPT Bahasa IAIN Madura from 16 March 2022 to 16 June 2022.

⁴ Deborah Phillips, *Longman Preparation Course For The TOEFL Test* (New York: Pearson Education, 2003).

⁵ Sixth semester students of English Teaching Learning Program IAIN Madura, Interview by message in Whatsapp (20-02 Oktober 2022)

Written Expression at The 6th Semester Students of English Teaching Learning Program IAIN Madura Academic Year 2021-2022”.

B. Research Focus

According to the phenomenon that happened above, the researcher has identified the research focus as follow :

1. What are the students' difficulties in completing TOEFL on structure and written expression at the 6th semester students of English teaching learning program IAIN Madura academic year 2021-2022?

C. Research Objective

Based on the research problem above, the researcher formulates two purposes of this research :

1. To know the students' difficulties in completing TOEFL on structure and written expression at the 6th semester students of English teaching learning program IAIN Madura academic year 2021-2022.

D. Significance of Study

The significance of research consist of scientific or theoretical uses and social or practical uses which contain reasons for the feasibility of the problem to be studied. So the research carried out must have a contribution to the development of science or solving social problems so that it is worthy of research.⁶ The result of this research are expected to give some beneficial contributions for theoritical significan ces and practical significances :

⁶ Tim IAIN Madura, 'Pedoman Penulisan Karya Ilmiah', 2020.

1. Theoritically

- a. This research is expected to decrease students' difficulties in completing TOEFL especially about structure and written expression section.
- b. This research is expected to be a new reference in the library of IAIN Madura about the TOEFL discussion.

2. Practically

a. For Teacher

For lecture or teacher, this research can become guideline to know about the students' difficulties in completing TOEFL on dtructure and written expression so that it can be reference to make the lecture can improve their teaching strategies and motivate the students.

b. For Students

For students this research can help them to know and evaluate their ability in completing TOEFL on structure and written expression. Moreover, this research can motivate them to improve their spirit in learning TOEFL.

c. For Researcher

This research is expected to add insight and knowledge especially about passing TOEFL on structure and written expression.

E. Definition of Key Term

The researcher needs to define these following key terms :

1. Difficulty is a condition something being difficult or hard to do.⁷
2. TOEFL is an abbreviation of Test of English as a Foreign Language, which is a test conducted to test or measure a person's ability to master English.
3. Structure and written expression is the second section that is tested on the TOEFL. This section is intended to assess the participants' ability in terms of recognizing errors in written sentences and understanding of English grammar.⁸

F. Previous Study

The researcher gives some previous studies related with this research. The first come from Tira Nur Fitria entitled "*An Analysis of the Students' Difficulties in TOEFL Prediction Test of Listening Section*". The result of this research showed that the students' difficulty in doing TOEFL listening caused two factors are external and internal factors. In external factors include the speaker's accent, speed, intonation or emphasis, pause in pronouncing a sentence, the choice of words and foreign terms conveyed by the speaker, the sentence structure conveyed by the speaker is too complex, audio interruption causes the audio sounds less/unclear. Then, in internal factors are include of students do not have previous experience answering TOEFL, having lack of practice in TOEFL listening, having limited time in doing TOEFL listening test, feeling a lot of listening questions which consist of 50 questions, not

⁷ 'Longman Dictionary of American English' (London: Pearson Education, 2000), p. 518.

⁸ Phillips.z

have hearing impairment in listening, having memory limitations when listening to TOEFL, having lack of motivation and enthusiasm, having lack of concentration or focus, having limited mastery of unfamiliar vocabularies, feeling boredom when listening, feeling easily distracted by sounds or other thing, tending to translate any unfamiliar vocabularies when listening section, having problem catching or finding keywords, and students are busy along with other activities when listening, such as playing writing instruments, and taking notes or doing other things.⁹

The second research is “*Difficulties Faced By The Students In Answering Toefl Test Questions*” written by Nurfitriyah Halim and Sri Yulianti Ardiningtyas. This research has purpose to identify the difficulties faced by the students in answering TOEFL questions. This research used descriptive method with qualitative research type. The population of this study was the seventh semester students of the STKIP YPUP English Department who had taken the TOEFL for any purpose, and the sample consisted of 30 students who were selected using homogeneous sampling. By collecting data using an open questionnaire. Data collection was ordered from the stages of registering the target population, selecting sample subjects, distributing questionnaires and collecting questionnaires. This research was focused on knowing students’ difficulties in answering questions test. The findings of this research showed the difficulties questions faced by the students in

⁹ Fitria.

answering the TOEFL questions were students only have basic skill, less motivation, less practice and students' individual differences.¹⁰

The third research is "*EFL Learners' Difficulties in The Structure and Written Expression Section of TOEFL Test in An Indonesian University*" written by Saiful Akmal. This research aims to find out the difficult topics for English for Foreign Language (EFL) learners in the structure and written expression of TOEFL Prediction Test, and the reasons the students find these topics difficult. This research used a mixed methods design. Participants were fifteen students of the seventeenth semester of English Education University of Ar-Raniry Islamic State selected through a purposive sampling mechanism that followed the TOEFL Prediction Test to identify the difficulties faced by those students. The results show that most of the students have difficulty on the topic of determinants, conjunctions, adjective clauses, appositional phrases, and reduced clauses in the structure section. The difficulties in the written expression part are connecting adverbs, subject-verb agreement, and concession clauses, relative clauses, and quantifiers. The factors behind these difficulties are lack of practice, grammatical incompetence, lack of vocabulary, time management, and low self-confidences.¹¹

The fourth research is written by Titin Hajri, Jufrizaland Delvi Wahyuni with the title "*An Analysis of Difficulties in Answering Structure and Written Expression of TOEFL Made by English by English Students of*

¹⁰ Nurfitriyah Halim and Sri Yulianti Ardiningtyas, 'Difficulties Faced By the Students in Answering Toefl Test Questions', *ETERNAL (English, Teaching, Learning, and Research Journal)*, 4.2 (2018), 219 <<https://doi.org/10.24252/eternal.v42.2018.a7>>.

¹¹ Saiful Akmal and others, 'Efl Learners' Difficulties in the Structure and Written Expression Section of Toefl Test in an Indonesian University', *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities*, 7.2 (2020), 164 <<https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v7i2.6472>>.

Universitas Negeri Padang". The purpose of this research is to find the students' difficulties in completing TOEFL structure and written expression and to find reasons of errors for the students' mistakes. This research consisted of 25 students majoring English at University of Padang. This descriptive research used two instruments in the research; structural subtitles and interviews. This descriptive research used two instruments in research; structural subtitles and interviews. This research used proportional stratified sampling to select samples. This research found that students had problems with 11 items out of 18 items evaluated. Three most difficult questions; and negations, reduced forms, and parallel structural items. The reasons behind the students' mistakes is ignorance, carelessness, doubt, unconsciousness and mischoice. The first two reasons are the biggest caused of students' mistakes.¹²

And the next research is written by Joko Slamet and Sulistyaningsih with the title "*Students' Difficulties in Answering "Structure and Written Expression" TOEFL-like at STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo*". This research aims to determine the types of questions that are difficult in TOEFL-like and to find students' difficulties in answering the 'Structure and Writing Expression' of the TOEFL-like. The subjects of this research were fifth semester students of the English Language Education Masters Study Program (S2 MPBI) STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo who had a TOEFL-like test as a placement test in taking a master's degree. This research used a qualitative descriptive method with research

¹² Titin Hajri, Jufrizal, and Delvi Wahyuni, 'An Analysis of Difficulties in Answering Structure and Written Expression of TOEFL Made by English Students of Universitas Negeri Padang', *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 7.1 (2018), 93–105 <<http://ejournal.unp.ac.id/index.php/jelt/article/view/8957/7219>>.

instruments using students' TOEFL-like test results and interviews. The data is taken from the Longman Complete Course for TOEFL written by Deborah Phillips. The results showed that there were 18 items (45%) which were categorized as 'difficult'. Meanwhile, there are 22 items (55%) which are categorized as 'very difficult'. Some of the reasons students had difficulty in answering questions were first, there was no prior preparation. Second, students lack vocabulary. Third, the test is considered difficult because the students are taking the TOEFL for the first time. The last, there was a limited time provided in doing the test.¹³

There are some similarities and differences between the researchs above with the research that will be carried out by researchers. The similarity of this research with the research above is the same in discussing the topic of students' difficulties in taking the TOEFL and especially students' difficulties in doing the TOEFL in the structure and written expression section. While the differences of the research are different objects and locations and also this research discusses students' difficulties in completing the TOEFL on the structure and written expression section with a focus on the most difficult skill (types of questions) about structure and written expression in the student perspective without discussing the reason behind that difficulty.

¹³ Joko Slamet and Sulistyaningsih Sulistyaningsih, 'Students' Difficulties in Answering "Structure and Written Expression" TOEFL-like at STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo', *E-Structural*, 4.01 (2021), 17–27 <<https://doi.org/10.33633/es.v4i01.4410>>.