Multiple-Choice and Cloze Tests In EFL Reading Comprehension: What Do They Effectively Measure?

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Abstract

The research objective aimed to figure out the differences of multiple-choice and cloze tests in EFL reading comprehension and find out which one is the most effective measurement in EFL reading comprehension. The subjects were 85 adults EFL advanced learners at UNTIRTA. This research used quantitative. A causal comparative research was conducted to determine the effective measurement either multiple-choice test or cloze test in EFL reading comprehension. Data were collected by a random sampling technique. Data analysis used the comparison of independent samples test (T-test) and one-way Analysis of Variance. The independent samples comparison of CT is -0,06. A significant (sig) of F-test is 0,000. The sig F-test result is 0,000 which refers to p>0,05. It means that there is a diversity between multiple-choice test and cloze test. The sig (2-tailed) T-test result is 0,026 which refers to p>0,05. It means that there is diversity of comparison. The mean difference between multiple-choice test and cloze test is -0,89412. It means that multiple-choice test is lower than cloze test in EFL reading comprehension.

Keywords: Multiple-Choice Test, Cloze Test, EFL Reading Comprehension.

Introduction

Reading is one of the most important activities for the students to enrich their ability and knowledge. Also, reading gives pleasure because it can bring people the new experience by reading book. However, this is not as simple as it sounds. According to Cox (1999:268), reading is a part-to-whole process. First, the readers learn to recognize letter, followed by words, and the words in context, until he or she finally begins to understand what is read. Thus, the readers' job are to figure out the meaning of the text as it was intented by the author.

Reading is probably the most common of the four skills to be tested, and it may seem to be the easiest of the skills to test. However, testing reading does have difficulties, and there are issues that anyone testing reading should be aware of. How the ability to read text in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) might be assessed in a best way. According to Lee (2004), in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading comprehension tests, it is very common to include a series of related items that are based on the same reading passage. These items can be placed after a passage, as in traditional comprehension questions, for example multiple-choice and cloze test. One of the more complex tasks facing in the testing of reading comprehension especially in English as a Foreign

Language (EFL) is the selection of appropriate reading text. Day (1994) discusses seven factors which should be considered in the selection of texts. The most important factors concerning testing reading include: readability, cultural suitability and appearance.

Based on the data, 80% students in University of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa conducted their research as final project in bachelor degree only focus on techniques as the alternative ways to make students have a good reading comprehension. They are ignore to the assessment itself. Thus, there are some areas that students can explore in research especially test. Based on that problem, the researchers will conduct the research in the area of language testing. Based on Weir (1990) cited in Saleh (2015:89), to test reading ability, there are some techniques of test that the teachers can use, namely multiple-choice, short answer questions, cloze test, selective deletion gap filling, C-test, information transfer and conclusion, etc. In this research, the researchers only focus on multiple-choice and close test in EFL reading comprehension. The research objective aimed to figure out the differences of multiple-choice and cloze tests in EFL reading comprehension and find out which one is the most effective measurement in EFL reading comprehension.

The following research questions will be answered through this research:

1. Is there any differences between multiple-choice test and cloze test in EFL reading comprehension?
2. Which one of the most effective measure either multiple-choice or cloze tests in EFL reading comprehension?

The research hypothesis are:

Ho: There is no difference (p>0,5) between multiple-choice test and cloze test in EFL reading comprehension.
Ha: There is difference (p<0,5) between multiple-choice test and cloze test in EFL reading comprehension.

The statistical research hypothesis are:

Ho : $\mu_0 > 0,05$
Ha : $\mu_0 < 0,05$

Tests

Two areas of applied linguistic theories, reading and testing, come together when testers design a test of reading ability. In such cases, the test designer decides what she or he wants to test. For example, what she or he means by reading ability and finds a means of testing it. According to Alderson (2000:203), there is no "best method" for testing reading comprehension and no single test method fulfill all the purposes of tests. Based on the significant methods of testing EFL reading comprehension, one can refer to discrete-point (multiple-choice) and integrative (cloze) tests.

Discrete-point Versus Integrative Technique

Testers may know exactly what they want to test, and wish to test this specifically and separately. In other situations, they may simply want o test "whether students have understood the tect satisfactorily". On the other hand, they may wish to isolate one aspect of reading ability, or one aspect of language, whereas on the other, they want a global overview of a reader's ability to handle text. According to Alderson (2000:207), the differences between these two approaches can be likened to the contrast between discrete-point or analytic approach and integrative or integrated approach. In discrete-point approach, the intention is to test one thing at a time. In integrative approach, test designers aim to gain a much more general idea of how well students read. In the latter case, this may be because they recognize that "the whole is more than the sum of the parts". It may also be simply because there is not the time to test to thing at a time, or the test's purpose may not require a detailed assessment of a students' understanding or skills.

Some argue that a discrete approach to testing reading is flawed, and that it is more appropriate not to attempt to analyze reading into component parts, which will perhaps inevitably distort the nature of reading. They believe that a more global unitary, approach is more valid. Some claims that the cloze test is ideal for this

because it is often difficult to say what the cloze technique tests. Others are more sceptical and say that it is precisely because they do not know what the cloze tests as a whole tests that they cannot claim that it is testing a unitary skill.

Multiple-Choice

Multimple choice questions are a common device for testing students' reading comprehension. Despite of their popularity, the value and validity of multiple-choice method is under question. According to Kobayashi (2002:193-220), and Alderson (2000), these tests popularity as a test format for assessing EFL reading comprehension. They have a significant drawback in that tests takers can guess the right answer without fully understanding the reading passage and thus test validity is questionable.

According to Xu (2011:219), multiple-choice is just one of the testing techniques resulting from the psychmetric-structuralist approach. This approach believes that testing can be objective, reliable and scientific. This led, on the other hand Van Els (1984:325), to the development of techniques to make traditional tests more reliable, and, on the other hand, to the development of tests with multiple-choice questions. Although testing theories have advanced over the last few decades, MC has been inherited thereafter as a valuable testing technique. The convenience brings to test designers can be generalized into four points: First, MC is scientific and reliable as it measures reading comprehension with the psychometrics. Second, the grading of MC is very easy and can be done even by non-professionals and grading machines. Besides, candidates' score are not affected by such subjective factors as graders' mood, health conditions, etc. Third, it can cover many reading skills at a time, thereby making MC option more representative and valid. Last, it not only measures candidates' familiarity with reading material, but also their competence in understanding the material and using reading skills, such as their inferential and deductive abilities.

Reading comprehension MC consists of stem sentences and options of words to fill a blank, and options include distracters and a key. According to Xu (2011:219), MC construction is a tough and technical job about which the constructor has to drink carefully because it involves several complicated factors, such as testing point, stem and distracters, among which the construction of distracters is the hardest as it must meet many concrete requirements. According to Heaton (2000:8), the design of the questions for the reading comprehension MC should base on the information provided by the reading material such as the candidates cannot choose the key according to their background knowledge, the options should not be copied from the original material and the wording be attached more importance to, not only the superficial information but the implicature of the reading material should be tested,

try to avoid testing the accurate information, such as date, figure, etc, refrain from providing more than one key, the length of the options should almost be same as the one of the structure and every option should be grammatical.

Cloze Test

According to Alderson (2000:207), cloze test is typically constructed by deleting from selected texts every word and simply requiring the test-taker to restore the word that has been deleted. It means that a text as a cloze test there are many empty places that have distance and to find the deleted word is demanded the test-taker's ability to understanding the reading text, to make relation a word with a part of reading text before or a whole of reading text. The cloze teste can be used as an instrument in teaching English. The function is to develop the student reading skills. By doing the cloze test, the students are trained to use their vocabulary, knowledge, and the grammar at the discourse level.

According to Oller (1979), those different purposes of cloze test used by teacher and linguists are (a) to judge the readability of textual materials; (b) to estimate ability in reading comprehension; (c) to study the native of contextual constrains; (d) to estimate over all language proficiency; and (e) to evaluate teaching effectiveness. There are two kinds of deletion with their own purposes. It was by hypothesized that the use of these two kinds of deletions would increase the interest and involvement of the students.

The first kind is single words deletion. In this type of deletion there are varieties in the class of words deleted. It can delete content words as well as words on grammatically focus such as conjunction, article, pronoun etc. From this type of deletion, it hopes that there will be a discussion of grammar and vocabulary. The second is sentence deletion. The most of discussion would be about syntax and discourse rather than about lexical choices. To give the student help to reconstruct the missing sentence, it gives them three or four content words for each deletion as prompts. So by using these prompts student will discuss what the missing sentence might be the prompts given the usually are content words, will lead the discussion about syntax, discourse, and lexical items. From the explanation above the researcher concluded that there are two kinds of manner to design a close test, first is single words deletion and the second is the sentence deletion.

The advantages of the cloze test are stated by Mulyati and Harjasudjana (1986) cited in Hermanto (2009:8-9) among others such as (a) it investigates the readability of a test; (b) this test can be used to measure the understanding of the test; (c) as a formative test, cloze test can immediately measure the understanding of a certain material as a feed back of our classroom performance; and (d) it can cover a large group of student at one time. Doing the cloze test especially in-group work,

generated discussion among the member of the group. So though interaction they develop their language proficiency.

Research Methodology

This research was conducted in English Department, Univeristy of Sultan Ageng Titayasa (UNTIRTA). The subjects of the research were 85 adults both female and male EFL advanced learners. The subjects were in the second semester of English Department in year of 2016/2017.

The instrument consisted of 15 numbers of multiple-choice test and 15 numbers of cloze test. There were three passages of multiple-choice test. The first passage was about *a Pioneer in Modern Dance* which consisted of five numbers. The second passage was about *Jazz Musicion* which consisted of six numbers. The last passage was about *a Choreographer* which consisted of four numbers. The cloze test consisted of two kinds of test in a passage. The passage was about *the Conversation Class*. The first kind test was a multiple-choice which consisted of seven numbers. The last kind test was cloze which consisted of eight numbers. The used scoring method for both of the multiple-choice and cloze tests was exact word method. This method was objective so that obtained score were reliable. The multiple-choice and cloze test were scored had one point per each number.

This research used quantitative approach. A causal comparative research was conducted to determine the effective measurement either multiple-choice test or cloze test in EFL reading comprehension. Data were collected by a random sampling technique. Data analysis used the comparison of independent samples test (T-test) and one-way Analysis of Variance.

Result and Discussion

To answer the first research question, Table 1 shows the results of paired T-test and calculated correlation between multiple-choice test and cloze test in EFL reading comprehension. MC means multiple-choice test. CT means cloze test.

Table 1 Paired Samples Correlations

		MC	CT
MC	Pearson Correlation	1	-,006
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,957
	N	85	85
CT	Pearson Correlation	-,006	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,957	
	N	85	85

Based on the Table 1, the result of correlations between multiple-choice test and cloze test is -0,06. It means that there is low correlation between multiple-choice test and cloze test in EFL reading comprehension. It is because the

multiple-choice test and cloze test is an indepentent samples. The independent samples comparison of MC is 1. The independent samples comparison of CT is -0,06. Because of that, it can be concluded that there is a differences between multiple-choice test and cloze test in EFL reading comprehension. The hypothesis of the first research question is accepted. Ha : $\mu_0 < 0,05$ is accepted. To investigate the degree of go togetherness of the two

tests, a corellation analysis was perfomed of which the result is also shown in the chart below.

To answer the second research question, after scoring, for the ease of comparison all the score were calculated out of 100. Descriptive statistics of independent samples test for both multiple-choice test and cloze test are represented in Table 2.
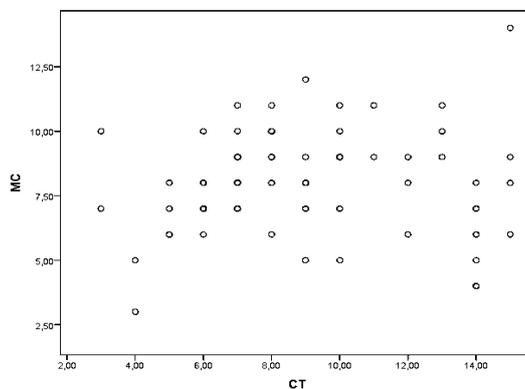

Table 2 Independent Samples Test (T-test)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
EFL Reading Comprehension	Equal variances assumed	20,722	,000	-2,253	168	,026	-,89412	,39677	-1,67,742	-,11081
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,253	1,39,502	,026	-,89412	,39677	-1,67,859	-,10965

Based on the Table 2, F-test used to see a diversity between multiple-choice test and cloze test. A significant (sig) of F-test is 0,000. The result of sig in F-test is 0,000 which refers to p>0,05. It means that there is a diversity between multiple-choice test and cloze test. To find out whether a diversity of comparison or not, the researchers used T-test. The sig (2-tailed) result is 0,026 which refers to p>0,05. It means that there is diversity of comparison. The mean difference between multiple-choice test and cloze test is -0,89412. It means that multiple-choice test is lower than cloze test in EFL reading comprehension. It can be concluded that cloze test is more effective than multiple-choice in measuring EFL reading comprehension.

Conclusion

Reading comprehension multiple-choice consists of stem sentences and options of words to fill a blank, and options include distracters and a key. Cloze test is typically constructed by deleting from selected texts every word and simply requiring the test-taker to restore the word that has been deleted. There is low correlation

between multiple-choice test and cloze test in EFL reading comprehension. There is a differences between multiple-choice test and cloze test in EFL reading comprehension. The hypothesis of the first research question is accepted. Ha : $\mu_0 < 0,05$ is accepted. The multiple-choice test is lower than cloze test in EFL reading comprehension. It can be concluded that cloze test is more effective than multiple-choice in measuring EFL reading comprehension.

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