**Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Batanghari Jambi** e-ISSN: 2549-4236, p-ISSN: 1411-8939
Lembaga Penellitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat
Vol 24, No 2 (2024): Juli, 1290-1296
DOI: 10.33087/jiubj.v24i2.5253

# A Comparison of Using Multiple Choice and Cloze Tests on Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension at Second Semester of English Department of FKIP Batanghari University

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***Abstract.*** *The purpose of the study was to find out the comparative achievement of multiple choice test and bracket test in reading comprehension in the second semester of the department of english, University of FKIP Batanghari. This study used a mixed method approach. The subject of the test would be second semester english students of FKIP Batanghari University. Data was collected through two instruments, which were a test and an interview. Based on the results of this study, the author found that students scored higher in the cloze test than in the multiple choice test. The result of the interview showed that the students preferred to answer the question in the cloze test than in the multiple choice question because they were easier to understand. These perceptions confirm the differences in student scores on the first research question. However, the result also showed that the multiple choice test is a better measure of students' reading comprehension. The students' impressions and opinions about the tests and their own performance were recorded and considered. Implications of results and recommendations further research is needed to obtain detailed and usable information to improve students' reading comprehension and achievement in the future.*

***Keywords:*** *Multiple choice, cloze test, students'achievment, reading comprehension*

## INTRODUCTION

In all educational settings, including primary schools, secondary schools, and even universities, reading is widely employed. Success in school, the workplace, and society is largely dependent on reading (Wynn, 1996). It helps people comprehend both their own situation and the world around them. Reading is more than just pronouncing words; it's also about understanding what the written material is trying to express. If a reader reads but doesn't understand what they are reading, they are merely attracting attention to themselves. If readers wish to succeed at reading, they must understand the meaning of the words. It implies that digesting the text in order to understand its meaning is the primary goal of the reading process.

Reading comprehension is a crucial component of reading. Understanding what you read is what makes reading a process. The capacity of the students to comprehend the material being read was used to measure their reading proficiency. They may deduce details from the writing and establish a connection with the author. Wilson (1982) asserts that comprehension is the capacity to give words that are not easily recognized by sight meaning and understanding. It is essential to comprehend the text. As a result, readers comprehend the meaning of every word in the chapter in addition to reading by sight. One option for assessing kids' reading proficiency was to administer a test. According to Palupiningsih (2011) study, testing is crucial in language learning because it can reveal areas in which students struggle, track students' progress or reflect their achievement in a given subject, and provide a general idea of the students' level of proficiency in the target language. This implies that a test may be used to gauge how well a language lesson went.

Reading is given more weight in the teaching and learning process in accordance with the English language's status as a foreign language in Indonesia. It was similar to what Eskey stated in Hesham (2005) numerous learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), for instance, hardly ever speak the language in daily life, but they might have to read it to obtain the wealth of information recorded solely in the language." As a result, the English curriculum for senior high school in Indonesia. Indicated that graduates were required to acquire an informative level since they were ready to enroll in university. At the informational level, learners were supposed to be able to obtain information through its language

Numerous methods were available for assessing reading comprehension, including multiple choice questions, cloze procedures, sentence matching, word matching, sentence matching, true/false reading tests, and more. In this specific investigation, the investigator attempted to evaluate the kids' reading comprehension using a multiple-choice exam and a closure test. A multiple choice test, according to Parviz and Sorayya (2012), is one in which the test taker selects an option from a list of options to demonstrate their ability to read. On the other hand, a cloze test consists of a paragraph with standard-length gaps in place of certain deleted words, which students must fill in with the appropriate words or their counterparts.

The reasons for selecting those testing methods were as follows: (1) Lems et al (2010) stated that those methods were deemed appropriate for assessing students' reading comprehension because they aligned with the student body's existing knowledge of metacognition, Henry et al (2005), schema theory, and contextual word meaning—all of which are crucial components of reading comprehension; and (2) those methods were useful.

Tests have been created for a wide range of specialized measuring objectives, including evaluating performance in different academic subject areas, personality and cognitive traits, and occupational aptitudes. Each student in this class ought to make an effort to comprehend the reading comprehension materials. Particularly when it comes to responding to the reading comprehension test. In addition, educators are free to select any appropriate assessment to evaluate students' reading proficiency and reading comprehension skills. Teachers do have the ability to select common assessments that they believe are pertinent. However, the students themselves are ultimately responsible for the test's success. It doesn't matter if they comprehend the examinations, how they respond to the questions, or even which tests the kids would rather take.

The writer believes that multiple choice tests can aid students in comprehending the book more fully, which is why she selected these two assessments. The question's structure, which is likely to ask about the text's main idea, purpose, and similar meanings of words, among other things, forces readers to consider a wide range of options before selecting a response because the answers directly refer to the text. In this case, this means that readers must comprehend the text in order to select the correct response that aligns with what is included in the text. The readers have the chance to select the appropriate words to complete the blanks in the cloze test. In actuality, the readers were already aware of the appropriate terms to use. Because of this, readers were spared from having to consider the text's meaning in a wide sense. Rather, they only complete the blanks without fully comprehending the material.

The writer, who had experience as a teacher at the FKIP Batanghari University English Department's second semester, discovered that the students' comprehension of reading was poor, particularly when it came to multiple choice and cloze assessments. They were still having trouble deciphering and evaluating the material. The majority of kids struggled with reading; they frequently read a page or more but comprehended very little. This study attempted to look into the outcomes of two distinct testing methods used for a certain language competency. It was a multiple-choice and cloze test to assess reading comprehension achievement.

## METHOD

A mixed method design was employed in this study. This was done to compare the students' abilities by assessing the score using statistical formulas, such as mean and standard deviation values, and to explain the students' reading comprehension success to answer two types of exams, namely multiple choice and cloze tests. The population consisted of second semester students from FKIP Batanghari University's English department. Class II A1 was the sample (Creswell, 2008). Purposive sampling was used as the sample selection method. Tests and interviews were the two approaches used in this study. The multiple-choice and cloze test was administered during the first meeting, and it was only given once. An interview was the second one. The purpose of the interview is to find out how students feel about multiple choice test and cloze test and their reading comprehension achievement tested using these two tests. The students took a multiple-choice exam administered by the researcher in order to gather data. The examination included questions concerning the main idea, references, word meanings, and other reading comprehension-related topics.

Conversely, every question on the Cloze Test was drawn directly from the book. The statistical method was applied to the data analysis process. Following the acquisition of the grade II A1 Mean and Standard Deviation values from the multiple choice and cloze tests administered during the second semester of the English department at FKIP Batanghari University. The description of the results from both tests came next. which test had the highest and lowest possible score.

1. The formula of mean as follow:
   $\bar{x} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$
   Where: $\bar{X}$ = mean; $\sum X$ = sum up the score; N = number of sample
2. The formula of Standard deviation (SD) is:
3. $SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{X})^2}{N}}$
   Where: SD = Standard deviation; N = Number of sample; $\sum$ = Added up or sum; $x$ = Score; $\bar{X}$ = Mean

After that, the interview was recorded on audio. The audio file was converted to text. After being translated into English, the transcriptions were examined. It seeks to ascertain how pupils feel about cloze and multiple-choice tests that assess their reading comprehension skills. The purpose of this interview was to find out what the participants thought would be a better exam to gauge the reading comprehension skills of the students. This method was also employed to bolster the students' test results after completing both assessments.

## RESULT

*Analizing the Data of Test*

The reading test that the writer administered included cloze and multiple choice questions in addition to a narrative text. As a result, the participants had to use the text to support their answers. The tests' outcomes are shown in the highest score for cloze test is 90, the average is 40, the lowest score is 0. While the highest score for multiple choice test is 50, the average is 20, the lowest score is 0. This is apparent that the students‘ score in cloze test was almost double than those in multiple choice items.

**Table 1**
**Descriptive Statistics For The Multiple-Choice And Cloze Tests That Students Took**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviaiton |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cloze Test | 22 | 0 | 90 | 55.45 | 10.289 |
| Multiple Choice Test | 22 | 0 | 50 | 29.55 | 7.515 |

source: processed data

The reading comprehension skills of the pupils are displayed in table 2. The cloze test participants' mean score of 55.45 is greater than the multiple choice test subjects' mean score of 29.55. The maximum score on the cloze test is 90, whereas the multiple choice test has a maximum score of 50. Thus, the Cloze Test score is 40 points greater than the Cloze Test score. The same minimum score of 0 applies to both tests. The test analysis allowed the researcher to draw the conclusion that employing a multiple-choice and cloze test yielded different outcomes for students' reading comprehension achievement in the FKIP Unbari.

*Analyzing the Data of Interview*

Interviews were one method of gathering data for this study, as was mentioned in the preceding chapter. During the interview, the writer attempted to ascertain the students' opinions regarding the impact of multiple choice and cloze tests on their reading comprehension proficiency. Six students were chosen at random based on their test results and interviewed. As a result, two representatives of the highest, middle, and lowest scorers were among the interviews.

**Table 2**
**Representatives of Interviwee**

| Group | Cloze Test | Multiple Choice Test |
|---|---|---|
| Highest | NN | LDA |
| Middle | HZ | IA |
| Lowest | IR | MA |

source: processed data

Six questions were asked, including how familiar the students were with the tests, which test they preferred, how well they understood the questions on each test, whether they thought the test was a good way to gauge their reading comprehension skills, and what difficulties they

had answering the multiple choice and cloze questions.

*The first question is related to the types of assessment which the students are more familiar with whether multiple choice or cloze tests.*

Four out of the six students who participated in the interview indicated that they were more familiar with cloze tests, while the other two indicated that they were more familiar with multiple choice tests. Pupils who choose multiple-choice or cloze exams gave the same explanations, stating that their teachers often assigned both kinds of assessments as part of their daily exercises. Below is an example of a response from students who selected the cloze test during an interview: *"I choose cloze test because it is frequently given by our teacher",* IR the one who got the lowest score in cloze test. *"Almost every questions that the teacher gave us is in form of cloze test",* said *MA,* the lowest scorer in multiple choice test. His opinion is relevant with his score; 0 in multiple choice and 10 in cloze test.

However, other students who opted for the multiple-choice exam claimed that because the majority of the questions in their textbook were of this format, they were more accustomed to taking multiple-choice exams. As LDA said, *" I choose multiple choice test because in our textbook, there are lot of multiple choice type of test, and mostly in examination we often get multiple choice test than cloze test, and that type also often given by our teacher in our daily exercise".* Her best multiple-choice test score backed up her response. This student's multiple-choice answer was also that of another student, as IA stated, *"Because the questions in textbook, the examination and the exercise are mostly in form of multiple choice test. Eventhough our teacher often give us cloze test too in our daily exercise, but still multiple choice test is more familiar for me".* She performed averagely on the multiple-choice exam. To sum up, four students performed better on the cloze test, and their scores matched their assertions.

*The second question is related to their preference between multiple choice or cloze tests, and their reason for the choice.*

The second question emphasized the students' choice for those tests, whereas the first question concentrated more on how familiar the students were with both of them. Four out of six students indicated that they preferred the cloze exam, and they all gave the same explanation: it was simple to complete. The following interview response could serve as an example of this: IR said, *"I choose cloze test because this test is simple, easy to answer, do not make us headache to find the answers, we just need to put it at the blank space".* While some students claimed that the cloze exam questions were simple, others claimed that they could comprehend the tale better if they understood the meaning of the terms and the contents of the story text. NN the top scorer in cloze test, confirmed that *"I prefer cloze test, because if we know the contents of the story and the meaning of the words, it will be easy to answer".* From NN's response, it was clear that she was familiar with the story, which made it easier for her to respond to questions similar to the cloze exam, which is why she chose to undertake it.

Like NN, IA stated that *"I prefer cloze test, because in cloze test, I get more understanding about the plot of the story. Firstly I can read all of the text, I get more comprehension, then I can answer what the best word to fill in".* With the exception of the technique employed, the perception of IA and NN were nearly identical. Since the multiple choice test was simple, one of the students who preferred it also had the same answer as above. As MA informed, *"I prefer multiple choice test because it is easy to answer".* But in his score in multiple choice test, he got zero. The explanation for the other person's choice of multiple choice exam is distinct. One method to complete the test before the allotted time runs out is by guessing. As LDA stated,*"if we do not know the answer, we can guess, that is why I prefer multiple choice test".* Eventhough she said that she could guess in answering multiple choice test, still her score in multiple choice test was the highest. The answers to this question are as follows: more students preferred to take the cloze test; four people selected the cloze test; however, not every individual who selected their preferred test received a higher score on it. Although MA and LDA, two students, preferred multiple choice tests, they performed better on the cloze test.

*Third, the question focused on the type of the tests' question, which one is easier to understand and answer according their ability in apprehending the story, multiple choice or cloze tes*

Regarding the examinations they preferred to take, this question was related to the one before it. Given that they previously claimed the tests were simple to complete, it stands to reason that their responses to this question are connected. However, the inquiry here focused more on their comprehension of the narrative than on their responses. As the author understood it from the interview. Understanding the story's topic was the most challenging aspect of reading. The scores for this question are 50:50, which indicates that three students choose the multiple-choice test and three others the cloze test. Students' rationale for selecting a multiple-choice exam was that the story had revealed the answer to the question. As they disclosed:

*"in multiple choice test, the answer of the question has already mentioned in the story (MA)".*

*"Type of the questions are different with cloze test (LDA)".*

*"with multiple choice test, it is easy to understand the story (NN)".*

Even though NN did well on the cloze test, she preferred the multiple choice test since it allowed her to learn more about the story. It was possible to analyze their answers and determine that the multiple choice test's question types differed from the cloze test's. The answers to the multiple-choice questions in the test were already addressed in the text. The questions included a wide range of topics related to the novel, including its goal, its characters, word references, and more. These components contributed to the pupils' increased comprehension of the story's storyline and content. They just have to finish the text in the cloze test, and the reason of other 3 students who chose cloze test because it was easy, as mentioned by HZ and IR,*"Cloze test is easy".* They have no other reason for this question. But as they said that cloze test is easy, it means they got more apprehending about the story while doing cloze test.

While IA mentioned that, *"In cloze test, I read the text first, then I can get more comprehension of the story because I know the plot of the story, after that I can put the right answer which I feel it is correct to put there ".* IA used her own method or approach to comprehend the question she was asked to answer after reading it and first following the story's plot. According to her statement, even though she had an average score on the multiple choice test, she increased her score by 10 points on the cloze test. Her impression was confirmed by the score. Finally, the two points received by three students who choose the multiple-choice test validated their claim. The three students who choose the cloze exam also received a score of 2, which confirmed their perception. Unlike IR, he claimed he choose the cloze test because it was simple, yet despite having a zero, he received the highest mark in the multiple-choice exam. The results of this question were as follows: three students selected the multiple choice test, and the remaining three selected the cloze test.

*Fourth question, was related to the appropriateness of the tests to measure students' reading comprehension ability*

The students were required to provide their personal opinions of the assessments that best assess their comprehension skills in reading. Their viewpoint, score, and comprehension of the narrative were taken into account during the study. Many students came to the conclusion that multiple choice tests are a better option for reading assessments because, as previously mentioned:

*"I think multiple choice test is more appropriate to measure our ability, because this test is often given in examination and daily exercise. So we has already trained for this test".* Answered NN, the top scorer for both tests.

Compared to HZ, who received an average score on the Cloze test, the rationale was different. He selected a multiple-choice exam because he explained that when the allotted time for answering the questions was almost up, the only thing they could do was speculate. As he mentioned,*"I choose multiple choice test, because I can guess".*

While the last 3 students have the same answer with HZ perception. As IR said, *"in multiple choice test, if the time for answer it is over, we can guess it".* IRis the lowest scorer in cloze test but the top scorer in multiple test. His perception as the line with the score. However, a different student (MA) asserted that since he could follow the questions and the storyline, the cloze exam is a better way to gauge a student's reading comprehension skills. According to his results, he received 10 points for the cloze test and 0 for the multiple items. In summary, a majority of students said that a multiple-choice exam was a better way to gauge their reading comprehension skills than a cloze exam. Despite

the fact that four students stated they selected the multiple-choice exam because they could guess.

*Fifth, challenges the students faced in answering multiple choice test.*

According to three students—LDA, HZ, and IR—there were no difficulties answering multiple-choice problems. Their opinions mattered in relation to the score. While 3 others answered that they encountered some challenges including lack of vocabulary, do not understand the questions. MA said, *"I do not know the meaning".* He was still lacking in vocabulary, therefore he was unable to understand the questions or the story. And his score backed up what he said. Among the multiple-choice items, he received the lowest score.

Another case to student was as stated by NN, *"I do not know the meaning and I get different understanding about the question and my own view".* Because she did not know the the questions in multiple choice test, sometimes she misunderstood the questions. Another reason could be seen from the lowest scorer IA, *"I get many challenges when I take multiple choice, such as the different type of questions from number 1 until 10, it is difficult to find the answer because of still lack of vocabulary".*

Analyzing their response above, it is possible to conclude that LDA and IR, who scored the highest on the multiple-choice exam, had no difficulties, as evidenced by their score. HZ, who received the average score, expressed himself in the same manner as LDA and IR.The remaining IA and MA score, pertinent to their opinions. As a result, three students reported having "no" issues and three reported having "challenges" during the multiple-choice exam.

*Last question, challenges the students faced when they do cloze test*

When two students took the cloze test, they discovered that there were no difficulties with this question. It was IR and HZ. While IR's score did not increase, HZ's score on the cloze test did, by ten points. In the cloze test, he scored zero. While four students found challenges when they did cloze test as what mentioned by some students who has been interviewed. As quoted from MA,*"I am afraid that the answers are exchanged, because I do not know the meaning".*

During the cloze test, pupils may encounter perplexing answer choices if they are unfamiliar with a word. They can merely arrange it at random. Due to a language deficit, this could be a major test issue. Understanding the meaning of every word in the language is crucial to learning a language other than our mother tongue. like the work we undertake when learning English as a second language. The shortest way is by mastered each vocabulary of English. And this started to become a common issue for students. It can be difficult for them to generate the right meaning for a phrase when they do not know the meaning of an English term.

Students also encountered another issue when taking the cloze test. Particularly for narrative-style cloze tests, such as the one they previously completed that was administered by the author. The story was too long, and in addition to the vocabulary being inadequate, there were too many options for the cloze test. As mentioned by NN, *"I do not know the meaning of the questions and the story, afraid of exchanged the answer because the choices are many".* Eventhough she said so, her score proved the contrary. Still she got the highest score for this test. LDA confirmed, *"The story is too long, do not know the meaning, capsized when aswering, because still poor in vocabulary".*

Words in English do not have only one meaning, a word could has many senses within it. Just like IA perception,*"I'm still poor in vocabulary so it is hard. Because there are many new words in the text that I do not know. And the meaning of an English word not only one, so I was confused which one is the right answer to put in".* Although, IA has difficulty in answering cloze test, her score in cloze test lead 10 point than the other one. Their problem are various for this last question.

According to the research's findings, students' perceptions of both the multiple choice and cloze tests, as well as their scores, can be used to draw some conclusions. For example, students' cloze test scores are higher than their multiple choice test scores when it comes to assessment types and their preference between the two tests; most students are more familiar with cloze test items than multiple choice ones; an equal number of students thought both tests' questions and texts were easy to understand; and nearly all students thought that multiple choice tests were a better way to measure students' reading comprehension because they could guess the answers; A greater number of pupils

encountered challenges during the cloze test because to their limited vocabulary, which hinders their comprehension.

## CONCLUSION

According to the research's findings, students' perceptions of both the multiple choice and cloze tests, as well as their scores, can be used to draw some conclusions. For example, students' cloze test scores are higher than their multiple choice test scores when it comes to assessment types and their preference between the two tests; most students are more familiar with cloze test items than multiple choice ones; an equal number of students thought both tests' questions and texts were easy to understand; and nearly all students thought that multiple choice tests were a better way to measure students' reading comprehension because they could guess the answers; A greater number of pupils encountered challenges during the cloze test because to their limited vocabulary, which hinders their comprehension the story's content or plot; also, the students' impressions of the two test outcomes differed.

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