

THE STUDY OF DIFFICULTIES FACTORS IN READING COMPREHENSION AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AL HIDAYAH IN MALANG

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Abstract

This study aims to know the factors causing difficulties in reading comprehension and to know what strategies students use to overcome their difficulties. The sample of the study was 20 students of junior high school Al Hidayah Malang. This research design is descriptive qualitative, focusing on difficulties faced and strategies used by grade 9 students in learning to read. There are two instruments in this study, namely questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire consists of 10 questions. The findings reveal that most students have reading difficulties. The finding also demonstrates. The student's reading comprehension difficulty is low motivation, limited background knowledge, and lack of vocabulary. The researcher found several strategies used by students, memorization strategies, learning media strategies, and note-taking strategies. In conclusion, grade 9 students at SMP Al Hidayah Malang have their ways of learning reading comprehension. But most students have the same difficult factors: limited background knowledge, low reading motivation, and lack of vocabulary. Students also have strategies to overcome their difficulties in learning reading comprehension. Namely questioning method, discussion method. The researchers hope that this study's results can help teachers overcome students' difficulties in learning reading factors. The students can also apply various strategies found in this research to help them learn reading skills. The results of this study are also expected to provide additional information for future researchers interested in conducting similar research.

Keywords: Factor, Difficulty, Reading Comprehension,

Introduction

English is an international language used world community as a means of oral and written communication. English is one of the languages used widely in various aspects of human life, which has a vital role in intellectual development, socio-cultural, economic, and education. Government decision stipulates English as a subject at various levels of education very reasonably to prepare the Indonesian generation to compete globally. English education is taught at every level of education in Indonesia. From elementary, middle, and high schools, including English subject as one of the leading programs.

The purpose of learning English is for students to gain knowledge and skills in the language and create a young generation that can compete globally. Meanwhile, learning English at the

SMP/MTs level is targeted so that students can achieve the level of functional literacy, namely communicating orally and in writing to solve everyday problems. By reaching the functional literacy level, students can understand and express information, thoughts, and feelings and develop science, technology and culture (BSNP, 2006, p.277).

According to Sugirin (2013: 9), in the history of learning English, *Reading* is a skill that always occupies a central position. Agree with Sugirin, Nation (2009:8) also states that reading (reading) is a central activity in language activities because it can improve other language skills such as listening and speaking; Writing could provide a valuable opportunity with deliberately focused language learning. Reading in language English is a skill that every student must possess. One activity needs to be developed by students from an early age to prepare students at every level of education.

The understanding occurs when students adapt and integrate various kinds of information from texts and what combine it with what is already known. Students need the ability to read English to get information and understand the intent and content of a text or given reading. Understanding an English text is an activity that requires the ability to understand English vocabulary and understanding of the structure of English sentences.

Reading comprehension is more than just recognizing and understanding words and their meanings. It involves a more complex cognitive process where students can understand the meaning of written language, link it to their prior knowledge, and build a mental representation of the information they have read (Keenan, et al.2017). Sloat (2007) argues that failing to achieve the reading comprehension objectives during the students' primary grades will lead them to need more reading abilities. This includes a need for more vocabulary, difficulties in the academic field, and difficulties in mastering English in general. Therefore, reading comprehension needs to be given more attention, particularly in EFL classes (Robinson et al., 2019)

One of the four skills you acquire when studying English is the ability to read. In addition to the other three skills mentioned above, reading fluency is important. Reading is important to thrive in today's society, as Snow (2013) stated. The ability to read is crucial to one's success in school and life. Reading promotes social growth, as stated by Komiyama (2017). Since reading is beneficial not only in the academic world but also in the social and professional worlds, it follows that people's daily lives and reading activities are intrinsically linked.

The following reading objectives are highlighted by Nurhadi (2006: 14): (1) a complete and accurate grasp of the text's central themes and arguments; (2) the acquisition of new knowledge; (3) the establishment of a clear understanding of the meaning of a word; (4) the satisfaction of a desire to read; (5) familiarity with local or national events; (6) the fulfilment of a desire to immerse oneself in literature; (7) the acquisition of knowledge regarding global or international events; (8) the discovery of a desirable brand item for purchase; (9) the assessment of the integrity of if we read an ad (e.g., for a job opening), we hope to learn more about the position and apply for it. Skilfull reading calls for a unique set of abilities on the part of the reader—intention before engaging with the texts.

According to Kuo (2010), two main issues need to be addressed to help students learn reading comprehension successfully: proper reading strategies to help students improve their understanding of English and appropriate integration system of verbal and graphic information.

Prihatini's (2020) survey found that some students struggled with reading comprehension on multiple levels, including literal, inferential, critical, and creative.

Muawanah (2021) also conducted a study showing reading difficulties, such as students' inability to grasp the paragraph's central idea. This is supported by the findings of Tina's (2022) study, which found that reading texts and analyzing the structure of generics were challenging for her participants. Therefore, they needed to include the point of the lesson.

Therefore, the researcher needs help with students understanding reading English Westwood (2001) said learners' concerns were the cause of the problems. Background, teacher skills, and learner environment. On the other hand, the purpose of all reading is the ability to understand the text you read. The meaning is that if the reader understands the reading text, the reading can be successful.

The ability of students' English reading comprehension is very important to develop. By government regulations, junior high schools must be able to understand functional text reading and its types text (text types) in English in the school environment, by Government Regulation Number 68 of 2013 in the Ministry of National Education (2013:63) that must be able to understand the structure of the text and linguistic elements for carry out social functions.

From the discussion above, this present study attempts to explore students difficulties reading comprehension in Junior High School. the study poses the following research questions.

1. What are the factors of the difficulties experienced by students in junior high school?
2. What are the students' strategies to overcome their difficulties in reading comprehension?

The aim of this research is to know the factors of the difficulties experienced by students in junior high school and to know the strategies by students to overcome their difficulties in reading comprehension

Research methods

The research design used in this study is a Method of Qualitative Research. Qualitative research is used to examine the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is the instrument. According to Sugiyono (2018), the qualitative research method is based on philosophy, which is used to research scientific conditions (experiments) where researchers as instruments, data collection techniques and qualitative analysis emphasise meaning.

In this research, the research approaches are used in the research design. Descriptive Design is used to help describe the answer to existing questions such as what, who, when, where, and how It is related to the research problem. The goal of descriptive research is to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. This research is more concerned with what rather than how or why something has happened. This study used questionnaires and interviews with 20 participants and three informants. According to Miles and Huberman, Interactive data analysis involves three steps. Reduction of the data, data presentation, and drawing or reviewing conclusions. In this study, testing the credibility of the data was carried out using a triangulation technique. Triangulation is a data validity checking technique that utilises something other than the data for checking purposes or as a comparison of the data.

Research Finding and Discussion

Based on the data obtained, the results of the research can be described as follows:

Description of Research Data

1. Limited background knowledge

The results of a questionnaire related to grammatical factors show that most students are still groping for the correct language sentence structure. The following are the results of interviews with students considered to represent the general answers to grammar factors. "Because there are various kinds of grammar in texts that are studied in English, I am confused about understanding and interpreting the text."

2. Low reading motivation

The results of a questionnaire related to motivational factors show that most students have low reading interest in language English. The following are the results of questionnaires from students, which are considered to represent general answers from motivational factors. "Yes, because I rarely read, I find it difficult to understand English texts.

3. Lack of vocabulary

Based on the results of the questionnaire related to vocabulary limitations, most of the students were able to understand the content of the text. In general, but problematic to understand the meaning of the word in detail. The following are the questionnaire results with students considered to represent the general answer of the limited vocabulary factor. "I sometimes find it difficult to understand because of my lack of vocabulary, and I can't fully and have different meanings".

Based on the results of the questionnaire related to the new vocabulary factor shows that most students have limitations in words. The following are student questionnaire results, representing general answers to the new vocabulary factors. "Because I am confused by the new English vocabulary, which is long and complicated to understand"

The strategies to overcome the factors of student difficulties

1. Low Reading Motivation

In another finding interview, Kirani said that she found it difficult to read English due to a lack of reading at home. My strategy is to read according to her favorite topic, so she only studied at school. Me honing my reading skills at home to better understand a text. In summary, the message of this result is that students have difficulty in reading comprehension and reading skills, this indicating difficulty understanding words in the text due to a lack of motivation in students and above that, students are able to overcome difficulties by reading favourite topics. This builds a sense of enthusiasm in reading by liking the topic.

2. Lack of Vocabulary

In another findings interview, "Chusnul said "she experienced obstacles when he read with new and long vocabulary. To overcome this problem, the problem I discussed with my friends to find words that were difficult to understand". From these data, learning must have a strategy to understand language elements in the semantic part, and from that, we must know about vocabulary first. In this way, students must improve their new vocabulary knowledge. So that it can help

students understand the text they read. A lack of vocabulary can make students have difficulty understanding the text.

3. Limited Background Knowledge

In other interview findings based on the answers of students named Reza (pseudonym): all right sir, I sometimes have difficulty distinguishing the types of the text, so I have to ask my teacher or friends to recognise the text.” From the results of the data above, we can see that the student has difficulty recognising the type of text because he has a bad background. So he asks his friend when he needs help understanding the type of text.

DISCUSSION

1. Students’ Factors of Difficulties in Reading Comprehension

Curriculum 2013 (K-13) at Al - Hidayah Malang's junior high school emphasised the importance of students learning English, mainly through reading, and used some resources to facilitate this goal. The majority of the students had difficulty understanding English, particularly reading.

Based on data from interviews and observations, students needed help understanding and analysing common messages structure and linguistic features of reading comprehension texts resulting from poor background knowledge, reading motivation, and poor vocabulary.

1. Limited Background Knowledge

Unfortunately, most of the 9th-grade. Al Hidayah Junior High School, Malang, found obstacles in learning to read. Learning to read English is a lesson included in the 2013 curriculum (K-13) used in the school.

One of the difficulties of students is that they need help understanding the content of the text; they feel difficulty understanding the content of the text because they cannot read pictures of the text they read. Also, if the student has initial or prior knowledge, they can get an overview of the text they read.

Schallert’s theory (2002) states that background knowledge is an important component of learning because it can help create an idea and experience. Initial knowledge includes all experiences of information or ideas, perceptions and concepts, and stored images then used in learning activities.

Background knowledge is defined by Janet (2003) as the ability to recognise and deal with the specific concepts, situations, and problems associated with the words encountered in the text. Readers can construct meaning and add to their existing knowledge with this background information. Reading can be challenging for many students because they lack background knowledge, as was also found by Maulidya (2021).

Sumarto's (2019) findings also confirm that background knowledge is very important in learning English because it helps students understand and develop further understanding to learn effectively.

Based on questionnaires and interviews, English teachers and students said that reading and understanding texts became a problem for students learning to read because of their lack of background knowledge. So some students needed help understanding the contents of the text.

2. Reading Low Motivation

Observations showed that most students were less active in learning, and some seemed bored and lazy when learning to read. Many students pay less attention when learning, but they still obey the teacher when students are told to read, implying that they have low motivation.

According to Winkle's theory (2003), learning motivation encompasses all individual efforts that initiate learning activities, sustain them, and guide learning activities toward their intended outcomes.

Based on the results of Rohmat (2017), learning motivation greatly influences student achievement because many students have difficulty reading due to a lack of motivation.

Uum's (2019) research significantly influences learning motivation, mastery of vocabulary, and understanding of reading English Vocational High School in Tangerang City.

I found that students needed help understanding reading because they tended to be less motivated to learn, so their interest in reading could have been more. Students did not want to learn independently.

3. Lack of Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary is an important factor in information learning textual content because textual content consists of several words. Vocabulary mastery can help students express their thoughts and translate textual content if the lack of vocabulary mastery makes students confused about the

information about the content of the text being studied. As a result, students must be motivated to complete the vocabulary to recognise the contents of the text being studied easily.

In addition, the difficulty of understanding students in reading the text is due to a need for more vocabulary. And mostly students who do not carry a dictionary in their teaching and learning process. As a result, students need help translating words into a sentence. Additionally, dictionaries were crucial for students because they assisted them in finding information while learning English.

This is supported by Nuttal's (1982) theory that students should expand the vocabulary of reading to help students predict general predictions about meaning in reading.

According to Bimas's (2019) research, students who were proficient in vocabulary were better able to understand the text, which helped them to overcome their comprehension difficulties. Similar findings are found in Lastry (2022), who finds a link between students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension because language acquisition significantly affects reading comprehension.

Based on Putri's (2018) findings that as many as 62.41% of students' English reading comprehension is influenced by vocabulary mastery in class X Vocational high school 2 Depok.

Based on jumatriadi's (2019) findings, student mastery of vocabulary contributed to students' understanding of English reading comprehension by 48.4%; thus, the study's results concluded that there was a significant relationship significant vocabulary mastery with reading comprehension in English.

This means that the higher the vocabulary mastery, the higher the students' understanding of reading English texts. On the other hand, the lower the mastery of vocabulary, the lower the student's understanding of English reading.

According to Nosin (2021), from his findings that as much as 62.41% of students reading comprehension of English texts is influenced by vocabulary mastery. So vocabulary mastery significantly affects students' reading comprehension of English texts, especially at MAN 3 Bekasi. The results of noredyo's 2019 research show that students who get high vocabulary test scores are proven to get high English reading comprehension scores. On the other hand, students who get low vocabulary test scores also get low English reading comprehension scores. This proves that vocabulary mastery affects improving students' English reading comprehension.

Questioning

Based on the results of interviews with several students to overcome learning difficulties, one used questioning.

Zimmerman stated (2003) that a strategy that allows the reader to ask questions is to ask. This task was completed before, during and after the reading. Then they read a lot during the reading process because they are curious about the text and want to learn more. In addition, asking is a strategy that motivates students because when they do, they begin to elaborate on their understanding and give deeper meaning to their knowledge.

Subekti (2017) The study results show that using a questioning strategy can improve the learning process and intensive reading skills in class v to elementary school.

Arsyad (2022) finding shows that the questioning strategy can improve reading comprehension skills. This is based on an increase in reading comprehension tests, as evidenced by the average score of students after the action cycle 1 of 72 with an achievement of 50% KKM and post-action cycle two increased by 82 with an achievement of 82%.

The research found that students use a reading strategy by asking their friends and the teacher when they don't understand what they are reading.

Discussion method

The discussion is a way of mastery of the subject matter through exchanging opinions between participants educated according to knowledge and experience based on a democratic atmosphere and humanist in solving a problem under the teacher's guidance to obtain joint decisions according to the learning indicators has been established.

The action cycle I students' classical completeness was 60% (12 students who completed learning outcomes), but this had not yet reached the expected completeness criteria, namely completing classically if it reached $\geq 75\%$ or obtained a score ≥ 65 . In the cycle II action, a classical completeness of 100% was obtained with the acquisition of scores for all students (20 students) having achieved a score of ≥ 65 . These results indicate that learning reading comprehension skills using the discussion method can increase the interest of class V students at SDN Subang.

Motivated and enthusiastic about participating in the learning process by using the discussion method because it creates interactive relationships between teachers and students Adawiyah (2018) found that using the discussion method could be 1) class IV SDN students Inti Tomoli. Teachers are increasingly adaptable to the environment, and the way students learn, and students also feel comfortable and helped by the presence of teachers in providing subject matter,

In conclusion, students have reading problems due to poor background knowledge, motivation, and lack of vocabulary mastery, and the students use the strategies is questioning and discussion method.

Conclusion

This research aimed to understand better the challenges 9th graders at SMP Al Hidayah Malang faced regarding reading comprehension. Qualitative descriptive research was used for this study. Twenty students participated as respondents in this study. Questionnaires and in-person interviews are the main research tools.

The researchers identified three factors that contribute to students' struggles with comprehension of English-language reading texts from the results of the questionnaire and interview data analysis. Namely poor background knowledge, reading motivation, and lack of vocabulary mastery.

Learners' cultural context is one source of the difficulty. Because they cannot read the broad characterisation of the text, students need help making sense of what they read.

The second factor that students find reading difficult is motivation in reading. Students need more motivation to learn to read because reading is boring.

The last factor in reading difficulties is vocabulary mastery in reading English texts. Students find it difficult to read because they need more vocabulary, have too many meanings in one word, and rarely open a dictionary Students find it difficult to read because they need more vocabulary, have too many meanings in one word, and rarely open a dictionary.

to overcome the problems of these problem factors, students use asking strategies such as asking friends and teachers to obtain information so that students are trained to find problems and answer these problems, then, the discussion method in this case, students carry out discussions together to solve problems and answer questions.

Suggestion

According to the results of this study, the proposed suggestion our to:

For Researchers future researchers are hopeful that they will be able to put the strategy or methods for overcoming students' reading comprehension challenges to use and provide further details for future researchers considering conducting a study on a related subject. The researcher was also

aware of the limitations of this study. The research's limit is that the first is connected to the study's subject. Time constraints and inadequate learning environments prevent the researcher from making the best observations. Therefore, the researcher has high hopes for future researchers who will be able to delve deeper into this subject.

For the teacher additionally, the researcher hopes that the findings of this study can assist teachers in overcoming students' reading difficulties. In particular, English teachers at SMP Al Hidayah Malang must work harder and be able to provide more explanations so that students know and can understand the text well for grade IX students.

For Students the researcher hopes that students can use the findings of this study to help them improve their reading comprehension. Similarly, the study's findings can be used by students to apply various methods for improving their comprehension of written English.

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