

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENT'S DIFFICULTY IN UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH READING ON DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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Abstract

This research was aimed to find out students' difficulties in understanding descriptive texts of the eight grade students at MTS Al-Jihad. This is descriptive qualitative research. The purpose of this research was to discover students' difficulty in understanding reading on descriptive text and causes behind it. The population of this research was the students of the eight grade students of SMP Al-Jihad Pontianak. The sample of this research was 33 students of the eight-grade class A who have been selected. The data were collected by using tests and questionnaires. The test consisted of 40 questions and the questionnaire consisted of 15 questions. The findings of this study based on the percentage of incorrect answers of reading test showed that there are eight components of reading comprehension. Six of them were categorized high level as difficult question aspects for the students. There were difficulties in identifying vocabulary, generic structure, factual information, references, language features, and social function. Two of them were categorized medium level as a not difficult question. There was difficulty in identifying the main idea and inference. Based on the result of the questionnaire, the students felt difficulties in understanding descriptive texts because of internal and external factors. There was limited vocabulary knowledge, weak verbal reasoning, problems with recalling information, difficulty understand the text because of the level of the text, lack of familiarity with the subject matter, lack of fluency in reading, problems with processing information after reading, and inadequate use of reading strategies in the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: *Analysis, Students' Difficulties, Reading, Descriptive Text*

INTRODUCTION

In addition to speaking, listening, and writing, reading is one of the four language skills taught in the English language acquisition process. According to Komiyama (2009) states, Reading gives you access to important information for work and school and helps you acquire general competencies. Reading is the skill in which students will focus at the end of their language studies. The students may learn more about a country and its citizens as a result. Students might gain new knowledge or verify what they already know by reading.

MTS Al-Jihad was chosen was because this phenomenon could occur among the school's students. As a result, the researcher conducted a preliminary investigation to ensure that her study could be carried out at this school. The previous study was done by giving the questionnaire to the students, giving a test about descriptive text, and interviewing an eighth-grade English teacher about his class, particularly when the concentration of the lesson is on reading.

According to Oberholzer (2005), understanding the text occurs in Indonesian students, they get difficulties in understanding the text, especially English reading text. It is because English is not their first language. For instance, students will get difficulties when the teacher asked about some information related to the English reading text which they already read. Some teachers also give the question that the answer is no mentioned in the text but still in the context. It meant that students must comprehend the text fully.

Based on the background above, the researcher is interest in analyzing the student's difficulty in understanding reading on descriptive text. Thus, this research is entitled "An Analysis of Student's Difficulty in Understanding Reading on Descriptive Text at the school MTS Al-Jihad Pontianak." Analyzing students' difficulty in understanding reading on descriptive text is crucial because it is a fundamental skill that impacts academic success, and understanding the specific difficulties that students face can inform targeted instruction and interventions to improve their reading comprehension. Additionally, descriptive text is a common genre in many subject areas, and students who struggle with this type of text may find it challenging to understand complex concepts, follow instructions, and complete assignments effectively.

METHOD

This study used descriptive method. The purpose of this research is to figure out what students have problems understanding English reading content. according to Gonzales (2007), is on current relationship conditions: prevalent practices and held beliefs, as well as ongoing processes: effects that have been left behind, or emergent patterns. The data for this study used questionnaire and reading test. The researcher used a questionnaire to gather information about English reading text comprehension teaching a learning. A questionnaire is a collection of questions used to collect data from respondents. The questionnaire was used to know the reasons for students' difficulty in understanding reading English text. This questionnaire should provide an answer to the second study question, which is about the causes of students' difficulties understanding English reading texts.

The second stage is the test, the test is constructed an objective in the form of multiple choice. The reading test consisted of 40 items multiple choice test on five descriptive texts. Test items have 4 choices and only one correct answer. The sources of the test were adapted from the internet that used school-based curriculum in the same level for the second-year students of Senior High School. In this research, items of the test were about the components of reading comprehension and descriptive text. According to Blerkom (2009) stated "Multiple-choice forms have the advantage of being able to evaluate items quickly and objectively." The procedure of the data instruments was analyzed by following steps:

1. Test

The formula by the teacher in MTS AL-Jihad Pontianak as follows:

$$Score = \frac{\text{Correct Answer}}{\text{Total number of questions}} \times 100$$

After that, the researcher examined the data using the mean score calculation, as shown below:

$$Mean = \frac{\sum s}{n}$$

Notes ;

$\sum s$ = Total score of students' tests

n = Total number of students

As a result, the researcher reached a conclusion and described it effectively and systematically. The result of the interview was obtained from the researcher's analysis of all of the information provided by each student. The researcher identified the mean score of the total score of the students' test from the results of the students' answers, which were calculated one by one.

2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a set of printed or written questions with several options designed for a survey or statistical study. The researcher distributed a questionnaire to students to determine the sources of students' learning challenges in interpreting English material. The researcher concludes the data to answer the research question. In this stage, the researcher gathered all of the data she had questionnaire. The researcher can identify and determine the causes of the student's difficulty in understanding English reading text and the cause of the difficulties using the questionnaire.

These questionnaires have five questions that assess students' difficulties. Subjects were required to evaluate themselves on a five-point scale that included very disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and very agree. Scores were assigned to each issue, with responses indicating predefined "strong" students' problems receiving 5 points and those at the other end of the scale getting 1 point. The students were given a questionnaire to complete during which they have been asked to answer all of the statements and questions. There are two types of questionnaires, according to Suharsimi (2010) states that open questions and close questions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

In this study, three types of data were collected, and the research findings show the results of the study based on those data. The first piece of information obtained from the students' test results relates to their difficulties understanding English while reading descriptive text. The second data obtained from the students' questionnaire responses is the factor causing their difficulties understanding English while reading descriptive text

1. Students' difficulties in understanding English reading descriptive text

The researcher in this study employed a test to determine the students' difficulty to understand English descriptive text There are a total of 40 multiple-choice questions. Identifying the primary idea, a specific name, a word, a specific item, finding a reference, and understanding the text's structure are among the questions.

Table 1. Students' Scores.

NO	STUDENTS	SCORE
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Table 1. Students' Scores.

NO	STUDENTS	SCORE
1.	AS	50
2.	AY	67.5
3.	AFA	60
4.	AN	50
5.	AT	37.5
6.	CTAP	55
7.	DAS	60
8.	FL	62.5
9.	FM	60
10.	FR	50
11.	FA	65
12.	HT	50
13.	MRSA	62.5
14.	MAAL	50
15.	MA	50
16.	MAZ	60
17.	MAS	45
18.	MA	55
19.	MAR	40
20.	MHW	65
21.	MHN	62.7
22.	MIA	55
23.	MPD	50
24.	MZ	67.5
25.	ND	50
26.	SA	60
27.	SMS	45.7
28.	URFAQ	50
29.	ZS	60
30.	ZA	70
31.	PCW	57.5
32.	MF	45
33.	NAS	50

Based on the formula above, the average score is calculated as follow:

$$Mean = \frac{1.818}{33} = 55$$

Notes :
 $\sum s = 1.818$
 $N = 33$

Discussion

According to the results of the researcher's study, the difficulties that students experienced in grasping reading on descriptive texts remained. This is consistent with the findings of the research conducted by Nanda and Azmy (2020), who discovered that vocabulary, motivation, reading approaches, and background knowledge are among the factors that influence students' ability to grasp English reading texts. It is probable that the lack of vocabulary and interest of the students contributed to their inability to comprehend the reading content. This idea is backed by the findings of Ahmadi et al. (2013), who found a favourable correlation between student reading motivation and reading comprehension.

In addition, Morgan and Fuchs (2007) revealed that the relationship between children's reading abilities and their motivation to read is bidirectional. This demonstrates that a student's level of interest in reading can influence their reading abilities, and vice versa. When developing reading programs, teachers should consider not just students' reading abilities, but also their motivation to read the material.

The findings of these earlier studies demonstrate the importance of providing students with a quality reading material that can improve their vocabulary, motivation, and reading skills. Teachers can construct reading exercises to promote active learning and motivate students to improve their reading skills. This can result in greater reading interest and engagement among kids. Providing students with background information and context about the book they are reading can also help them comprehend and enjoy the text's content, hence increasing their motivation to study the assigned subject.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**Conclusion**

Based on the results of the reading test, it can be concluded that the students at the second year of MTS Al-Jihad Pontianak had difficulties in understanding reading on descriptive texts. The purpose of this research was to analyze the students' difficulties in understanding reading on descriptive text faced by the second-year students of MTS Al-Jihad Pontianak.

Suggestion

Based on the test results that most of students have some difficulty identifying the text's main idea, identifying specific words in the text, and many students have problems understanding the text's structure. This is evidenced by the high percentage of people who got every question wrong on the test. Besides, another purpose of this research was to analyze the factors that caused students' difficulties in understanding reading on descriptive text. Based on the result of the questionnaire, according to both internal and external factors, the students found it difficult to understand descriptive texts. There were issues with recalling information, low vocabulary knowledge, and difficulty understanding the text, lack of familiarity with the subject, difficulties processing information after reading, and inappropriate use of reading strategies during the teaching and learning process.

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