Students' Difficulties in Comprehending English Reading Text at SMPN 2

Bangkinang Kota

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to know students' difficulties in comprehending English reading text at SMPN 2 Bangkinang Kota. The design of this research is quantitative research with the use of descriptive quantitative study which focused on one variable. The population of this research was the eighth grade of SMPN 2 Bangkinang Kota. The total population was 112 students. To select the sample, the researcher uses simple random sampling. There were 28 students as the sample. In collecting data, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the respondents consist of 15 items and used the documentation of the students' final task made by the English teacher. The data was analyzed by using Scale Likert through SPSS.16. The result of data analysis showed the lowest percentage of categories students' difficulties. The research found students' difficulties in comprehending English reading text at SMPN 2 Bangkinang Kota.

Keywords: *Difficulties, Reading text.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a process of getting information from written words. Reading is an active process that requires a great deal of practice and skill. In the reading process, we getting to understand the meaning of the text. in reading activity we obtain important information, that is, visual information consisting of all the written elements in the reading text. activities and reading assignments are very important in the educational world because they will determine a students' quality and success as a learner in his studies. Reading is the act of understanding the author's message ideas through interactions with the written text involving visual information and nonvisual information. Moreillon (2007, p..10). Mention that reading ability plays a central role in teaching and learning success at all education stages. It means that students need to improve their reading skills to understand the teaching and learning

materials. And also, reading as a field of teaching is considered as one important area of teaching. Considering the English language was taught in the school, the teacher has an important role to increase students' reading comprehension. It is useful to enrich students' knowledge.

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from the text. According to Linse (2005), reading is a set of skills that involves making sense and deriving meaning from the printed word. Therefore, reading is a language skill that needs the reader to comprehend a text. In the reading process, the reader brings his ideas and experience to obtain meaning from the printed text. Durkin assumes that comprehension is the peak of the reading skill and base for all reading processes. It is not always as easy as it seems to comprehend reading texts, especially for students.

Reading is one of the skills that should be mastered by the students. It means that if the students cannot master the skills in English as what the curriculum has provided, the learning will not be effective and successful. In the reading learning process, the students must understand the content of the text to get information from it. Reading is a process to transfer the science from book to brain from writer to reader, and this information will not be received by the readers if they did not understand the content of the text. Another problem in reading is lack of vocabularies and have difficulties learning English. From that many problems, they will have an opinion that English learning is difficult in particular the reading skills. The students know from their test results that they always failed in the reading text. This matter will out from the goal of teaching-learning. the solution to this problem is that the teacher should know more about approach, method, and strategy. In this research, the researcher focuses on descriptive text. In the descriptive text, the students should be able to understand a reading comprehension and short essay related to their environment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading is one of the subjects to get information and knowledge about everything readers need from the written text. Reading is very important, and it is one of the four language skills that should be mastered by the student for all levels. According to Nunan (2003) cited in Nurdiana (2017), reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their background knowledge to build meaning. Reading is a complex "cognitive process" of decoding symbols to construct or derive meaning. Reading is a means of language acquisition, communication, and of sharing information and ideas. Besides, as one of the basic communicative skills, reading is assumed as a passive skill because all the work has been done by writers at the time they produce a text, and the reader has only to open their minds and let the meaning come in. On the contrary, that assumption is rejected by the fact that meaning is not lying in the text waiting to be passively extracted, and the reader is actively involved by attempted various efforts and following certain processes to get the meaning out of the text said that Nuttal (1996).

When reading a text, students may encounter many factors that contribute to the cause of student's difficulties in comprehending text. According to Alderson (2000), Some of those factors are language knowledge, learner's background knowledge,

motivation, the lack of reading strategies, and the reading process. (1) Language knowledge, It has always been expected that readers must acquire language knowledge first before they can read in a second and foreign language. (2) Learner's background knowledge, background knowledge is one of the research areas where investigators have attempted to find how what readers know affects what they understand. (3) Motivation, Readers' motivation, and the reason why readers read the text affect their reading achievement. (4) the lack of reading strategies, The lack of reading strategies is another issue that causes difficulty in reading comprehension. If readers have acquired reading skills or strategies, they can process text efficiently. (5) reading process, The process of reading is the interaction between a reader and the text. During the process, many things are happening in the readers' minds when they read. While looking at the print text, readers are decoding it, deciding what it means, how parts relate to each other, or to things they know, predicting what to come next.

3. METHOD

The researcher classified the data into quantitative data. The data collected by using a questionnaire had been analyzed by using a quantitative method. The data are collected through the questionnaire. The total number of items in the questionnaire that can be used in the research were 15 items. The items employed were based on the indicators of the reading problem itself. There are 5 indicators of students' difficulties in reading comprehending. Each indicator

consists of 2-4 questions. The total of questions were 15 items. Based on the questionnaire statement, the researcher analyzed to match each student's difficulties with the student's response.

Survey data were collected from respondents. In this part, the researcher analyzed the data from the result data collection. Then, the researcher classified the data into quantitative data. It also helped the observer to concluded, made some decisions, and answered the problem research.

The score of students' response was calculated with the every single question by using formula as follow :

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \text{ x } 100\%$$

Where:
P: number of percentages
F: frequency
N: number of samples

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher counted item questions to get the total of students' difficulties in this research. It found that students difficulties in language knowledge (3.1%), learner's background knowledge (4.4%), motivation (3.8%), the lack of reading strategies (3.6%), reading process (4.6%). The total of number students' difficulties 547 or 19%. It can be concluded that the highest students' difficulties in reading process 128 or 4.6% and then lowest students' difficulties in language knowledge 88 or 3.1%. However, the recapitulation of the students' results from students' test are stated on table 4.1. below:

Table 4.1.

The Total in Students' Difficulties in Comprehending English Reading Text

No	Indicators	Total	Percentage
1	Language knowledge	88	3.1%
2	Learner's background knowledge	123	4.4%
3	Motivation	106	3.8%
4	The lack of reading strategies	102	3.6%
5	Reading process	128	4.6%
	Total	547	19.5%

Based on the table 4.2., it showed the statement about student response in questionnaire, and also showed students' response difficulties in comprehending English reading text, students response about dont know generic structure on descriptive text answered neutral (46.4%), statement about I had a hard time matering grammar in text balanced between agree, neutral and disagree (28.6%), statement about sometimes I know some of the words relating in text and have trouble because of my limited background knowledge students answered agree (42.9%), statement about I had difficult understanding the meaning of English vocabulary students answered agree (39.3%), statement about had difficulty memorizing students answered agree and neutral (35.7%), statement about I didn't really understand the types of text I was reading students answered neutral (42.9%), statement about I don't like read books students answered disagree (67.9%), statement about I'm lazy to read when text difficult and uninteresting students answered neutral (42.6%), statement about I'm find a lot of trouble when I'm not interested in the topic discussed students answered agree and disagree (28.0%), statement about I read out loud of help me remember well students answered strongly agree and agree (25.0%), statement about I was always looking for the meaning of a vocabulary students answered (39.3%), statement about I read syllable on the text to understand the content of the text students answered strongly agree (35.7%), statement about when I read, I can't predict the next sentence students answered neutral (57.1%), statement about I had hard time concerting on reading a text students answered disagree (39.3%), statement about I don't understand the in information of every part students answered neutral (50.0%). Based on the data below, the study found out that the different percentage among the indicators.

Table 4.2.
Statement of The Questionnaire

No	Indicators	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I don't know generic structure on descriptive text, so I can't figure out I'm reading	2 respondents (7.1%)	6 respondents (21.4%)	13 respondents (46.4%)	5 respondents (17.9%)	2 respondents (7.1%)
2	I had a hard time mastering grammar in a text that was learned	2 respondents (7.1%)	8 respondents (28.6%)	8 respondents (28.6%)	8 respondents (28.6%)	2 respondents (7.1%)
3	Sometimes I know some of the words relating to culture in text, I still have trouble understanding some of them and understanding the main idea because of my limited knowledge background	4 respondents (14.3%)	12 respondents (42.9%)	8 respondents 28.6%)	4 respondents (14.3%)	-
4	I had difficulty understanding the meaning of the English vocabulary that I was learning, so I did not understand what I was reading	2 respondents (7.1%)	11 respondents (39.3%)	8 respondents (28.6%)	6 respondents (21.4%)	1 respondent (3.6%)
5	Had difficulty memorizing a long, complex new English vocabulary	5 respondents (17.9%)	10 respondents (35.7%)	10 respondents (35.7%)	1 respondent (3.6%)	2 respondents (7.1%)
6	I didn't understand the types of text I was reading, because of my limited knowledge	2 respondents (7.1%)	9 respondents (32.1%)	12 respondents (42.9%)	4 respondents (14.3%)	1 respondent (3.6%)
7	I don't like to read books	1 respondent (3.6%)	-	5 respondents 17.9%)	19 respondents (67.9%)	3 respondents (10.7%)

8	I'm lazy to read when the text is too difficult, boring, and uninteresting	1 respondent (3.6%)	1 respondent (3.6%)	12 respondents (42.6%)	9 respondents (32.1%)	5 respondents (17.9%)
9	I find a lot of trouble when I'm not interested in the topic discussed	4 respondents (14.3%)	8 respondents (28.6%)	7 respondents (25.0%)	8 respondents (28.6%)	1 respondents (3.6)
10	I read out loud to help me remember well	7 respondents (25.0%)	7 respondents (25.0%)	6 respondents (21.4%)	5 respondents (17.9%)	3 respondents (10.7%)
11	I was always looking for the meaning of a vocabulary that was unfamiliar with and difficult in the dictionary	10 respondents (35.7%)	11 respondents (39.3%)	5 respondents (17.9%)	1 respondent (3.6%)	1 respondent (3.6%)
12	I read syllable on the text to understand the content of the text	10 respondents (35.7%)	13 respondents (46.4%)	4 respondents (14.3%)	1 respondent (3.6%)	-
13	When I read, I can't predict the next sentence	2 respondents (7.1%)	3 respondents (10.7%)	16 respondents (57.1%)	5 respondents (17.9%)	2 respondents (7.1%)
14	I had a hard time concentrating on reading a text the end that was long and tedious to	1 respondent (3.6%)	4 respondents (14.3%)	10 respondents (35.7%)	11 respondents (39.3%)	2 respondents (7.1%)
15	I don't understand the information of every part, So I don't understand the message the writer conveys	1 respondent (3.6%)	1 respondent (3.6%)	14 respondents (50.0%)	9 respondents (32.1%)	3 respondents (10.7%)

5. CONCLUSION

The students' difficulties with reading comprehension include: the first was difficulty in Language knowledge, the second was Learner's background knowledge, the third was Motivation, the fourth was The lack of reading strategies, and the last Reading process.

Meanwhile, the suggestion addressed to the teachers, the school and the future researchers, and those who are interested in researching students' difficulties in comprehending English reading text to follow up the research of the study.

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