

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN READING COMPREHENSION AT SMA NEGERI 4 PEMATANGSIANTAR

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Abstract

There are four English skills that must be mastered by every student, reading is one of the most important skills to learn and master because through reading activities students can absorb the information the author wants to convey through reading texts. Reading is not just the ability to say words or sentences, but must be able to interpret the essence of the text. But in reality, students are less able to process, understand, and absorb information from what they have read. This research used qualitative data. This research was conducted on students of X PMIA 7 Students of SMA Negeri 4 Pematangsiantar in January 2022. The reason the researcher chose this class as the research subject was because they were detected as having difficulty in reading comprehension. The technique of collecting the data were interviews. The result of the research showed that some difficulties that student's faced in reading comprehension were difficult to understand the meaning of word, difficult to understand long sentence, difficult to determining the main idea, difficult to understand the grammar, difficult in inferencing.

Keywords : *Reading Comprehension, Students, Difficulties*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a communication tool used to convey ideas, thoughts, intentions, and goals to other people. Therefore, as a means of communication, language is very influential in human life.

One of the language that has an important role in the world is English because it is universal. Especially in Indonesia, English has an important position as one of the languages that must be mastered, because this language is taught from an early age up to the university level. In English, students must be mastered 4 skills, namely listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

Among the four skills, reading is one of the most important skills to learn, because through reading students can obtain information, add insight, practice thinking and analysis skills and also add vocabulary that is useful for developing their language skills.

According to Grabe and Stoller (2002, p11), reading is a process to get information from a text. This means that is not only the ability to pronounce words or sentences from the text, but must be able to understand what information the author wants to convey through the text.

The real evidendence that student's reading comprehension very low is they have difficulty understanding the essence of reading such as finding the main idea or making concusions about the content of the reading. Such as research that has been carried out at SMA Negeri 4 Pematangsiantar, students said that reading comprehension was difficult,often students who are able to read well are less able to process, understand, and absorb information from what they have read.

Students often have difficulty when asked to answer questions related to the text they have read, one of which is when they are asked to determine the main idea of the text. Therefore, researchers are interested in finding out what difficulties students face when reading comprehension and the factors that cause them.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher used interactive analysis model to analyze the qualitative data. According to Miles and Huberman the interactive analysis data was consisted of three steps, such as: data reducing (used by researchers to select important data that has been collected), data display (used to describe data in the form of a description or narrative), and conclusion drawing/verification (used to verify the conclusion of the research).

The subject is X PMIA 7 students at SMA Negeri 4 Pematangsiantar in Academic Year of 2021/2022.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Factors of Students' Difficulties in Reading Comprehension

1. Difficult to Understand the Meaning of Word

When reading a text, students often do not understand the meaning of the words in the text that make them hard to catch read text content.This can be seen from their inability to answer questions about information from the text. They tend guess the answer.

This finding can be seen in the following data based on the student's observation: *'To find the meaning of a word that is not understood, students often open and close the dictionary or asked the teacher'*.

Other data showed that the student did not understand the word in the text based on the student's interview: *'Kata-katanya terlalu sulit, jadi kurang paham, kadang ya main asal tebak ajalah, yang penting siap'*.

From the two of data above,it can be concluded that difficult to understand the word is one of student's difficulties in reading comprehension.They often openen the dictionary or asked the teacher or friends to look for the meaning of the words that they didn't understand. This also makes them often guess the meaning of the words that are important for them to complete the given task on time.

Understanding the meaning of words from a text is difficult but very important to master. Because if they do not master the meaning of the words, then they will have difficulty understanding the meaning of the contents of the text they read.

2. Difficult to Understand Long Sentence

Difficulty understanding long sentences is where students have many words in a text that students do not understand, this is caused by students' misunderstandings about the structure of a text. Understand what the main idea is presented from the text.

This finding can be seen in the following data based on the student's interview: *'Saya susah kali miss paham kalo misalnya teks yang dibaca panjang, kata-katanya banyak yang saya gak paham, kadang jadi perlu waktu lama untuk bacanya biar paham'*.

Another data to support the data above based on the teacher interview: *'Vocab saya masih sedikit, kadang teks yang singkat aja susah kita pahami artinya, apalagi teks yang Panjang'*.

If students are given a long text to read, they tend to have difficulty understanding the content of the reading which causes students to be lazy to read and if students are lazy to read and open a dictionary, their vocabulary will also not develop. When learning English, the student waited for instructions from her teacher. When the student was asked to read a textbook, the student just starts reading activities. Several times the student was opened the dictionary, until the reading activity is over.

3. Difficult to Determining the Main Idea

Often students find it difficult to draw conclusions about the author's intentions about the topics in the reading texts they read. This can be seen from their inability to answer questions, such as when asked to determine the main idea of a text. Sometimes they are confused about where the main idea of a text is, therefore they often ask their friends.

This finding can be seen in the following data based on the student's interview: *'Kalau disuruh menentukan ide pokok sama guru, saya suka kebingungan miss. Karna saya gak paham cara menentukannya'*.

Another data to support the data above based on observation: *'Siswa kesulitan menemukan ide pokok sebuah teks pada beberapa paragraf, ketika dia diminta menyebutkan ide pokok paragraf, jawaban siswa masih kurang tepat, dia terlihat ragu dan bingung menjawabnya'*.

The students' lack of understanding in determining main ideas, namely the student cannot distinguish between main ideas and supporting ideas, the student does not know the location of main ideas, and the student does not know how to determine main ideas.

Because the student's understanding that the main idea lies at the beginning of a paragraph, sentence, the way the student determines the main idea is to directly look for the initial sentence of the paragraph without reading and understanding the reading text first even though the main idea.

4. Difficult to Understand the Grammar

Not understanding the language structure of a sentence makes it difficult for students to identify information from a sentence read the text. The difficulty here can be seen from him inability to translate, and to tell text.

This finding can be seen in the following data based on the student's interview :
"Kalo sekedar membaca gampang sih miss, masalahnya seringkali disuruh mengartikan. Padahal susunan kalimat dalam bahasa inggris beda sama susunan kalimat dalam bahasa indonesia, sementara kalo diartikan per-kata, pasti ga nyambung".

The cause of not understanding grammar is a lack of vocabulary. Students can interpret words well if they understand the meaning of each word.

5. Difficult in Inferencing

Difficulty drawing conclusions means difficulty to find conclusions from the text. To draw conclusions, students are expected to be able to understand the content of the text. But in reality students still have difficulties. This is evidenced by his inability to answer when asked to explain conclusion of the text.

Other data that reveal the student have difficulty in making conclusion from the text that was read by the teacher is: *"Jika diminta membuat kesimpulan siswa hanya menyebutkan sedikit dari keseluruhan informasi dari teks tersebut, namun mereka sering membuatnya kedalam bahasa Indonesia, namun jika diminta dalam bahasa Inggris, mereka akan mulai kebingungan".*

Difficulties in making conclusions are caused by students' misunderstandings in understanding the contents of the text due to the lack of vocabulary they have. Students need a long time to interpret the text. Increasing vocabulary is very important because it can make it easier for students to understand the meaning of the text they read.

CONCLUSION

This research is conducted at the X PMIA 7 students at SMA Negeri 4 Pematangsiantar. And based on the explanation in the previous chapters, this researcher finds there are some difficulties that students faced in reading comprehension namely: Difficult to Understand the Meaning of Word, Difficult to Understand Long Sentence, Difficult to Determining the Main Idea, Difficult to Understand the Grammar, Difficult in Inferencing.

To minimize students' difficulties in reading comprehension, students are expected to want to enrich their vocabulary in a way that if they do not understand the meaning of the words from the text they are reading, they must be diligent in finding out through a dictionary and diligently practicing their pronunciation. For teachers, teachers should provide variations of reading to students so that they do not get bored, because if students are interested in reading, students will be more proficient, teachers must also change strategies or teaching method which is more able to attract student's interest in reading

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texts, and if student's reading interest decreases, the teacher should provide motivation in learning English. In addition, to other researchers are expected to be able to dig deeper into student's difficulties in reading comprehension, on how to overcome reading comprehension difficulties, understand texts and how to solve them.

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