


INVESTIGATING THE STUDENTS' READING DIFFICULTIES IN UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH TEXT

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received: August 2, 2022 Revised: August 12, 2022 Accepted: September 22, 2022 Published: April 15, 2023</p> <p>Keywords: Cooperative Integrated Reading and Compositon (CIRC) Learning Model Reading Comprehension</p>	<p>The purpose of this study is to identify the difficulties faced by the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 3 CAMBA, as well as the factors causing the students' problems understanding English reading text. This study is qualitative. The eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 3 CAMBA were the research subjects. The data collection methods are interviews and tests. The researcher presents the data from the difficulties in understanding English reading text. The result of the research shows that there are 26.31% students who have difficulties in understanding to look for the main idea of the text. Then, there are 12.86% of students have difficulties understanding the vocabulary of the text. Then, there are 8.77% of students have difficulties in understanding and making inferences from the text. Next, there are 52.04% of Students struggle to understand where in the text to go for the specific information. The students' inability to comprehend the meaning of words in English reading text has been identified as the main contributing factor. Also difficulties in understanding a long sentence in the text, difficulty in understanding vocabulary, house environment, and school environment.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.</i></p> 
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INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of four language skills taught in the process of learning English, along with listening, speaking, and writing. However, every reading talent is regarded as the most significant. Snow (2013), Reading is vital for social and educational success in modern society. Furthermore, according to Komiyama (2013), reading promotes general skill development and gives access to essential knowledge at work and school. It is legitimate to claim that people's

everyday lives and reading activities are intertwined, because reading is advantageous not only in education, but also in social and professional situations.

After completing their language lessons, the students will excel in reading. It can help students better understand a nation and its citizens. It may be utilized to gain access to the current and former civilizations of the country. Reading is the skill that will last with them the longest and be the easiest to use. As a result, beginning in junior high school and continuing through university, kids should be taught to read. Furthermore, Shihab (2011) defines reading as a process of actively thinking in order to unlock or comprehend a notion presented by an author. It consists of connecting an author's thought to what one already knows and organizing all of the ideas for use. The reader must be able to interpret, connect, and organize both the author's and the reader's thoughts. Reading is thus a receptive skill involving the ability to decipher or grasp written messages. Readers do not need to understand every detail of each word or paragraph, but they must understand the message the author is intending to convey.

Because English is a foreign language in Indonesia, Inaccurate word identification and recognition, a lack of particular comprehension skills, or poor oral reading skills can all make it difficult for English language learners to comprehend literature. According to Nuttal (1983), there are five major problems that students encounter when reading in a language that is not their native tongue, especially when attempting to grasp the material. These are the issues: the alphabet or code sign, vocabulary, sentence structure, coherence devices, discourse markers, impediments that defy logic, and thoughts. The fact that Indonesian students' native tongue differs from English in terms of form, sound, vocabulary, and structure is most likely the root cause of all of these difficulties.

Furthermore, the title of this study was chosen by the researcher because the researcher believes it is critical to conduct research on this topic because each student would have unique difficulty digesting the reading content. Given how important it is for students to understand text in order to improve their reading skills, these difficulties in understanding reading text should be identified and resolved by both students and teachers, as they will have a negative impact on the students' ability and motivation to meet the reading goal. According to Oberholzer (2005), reading difficulties can have an increasingly negative impact on children's

schooling and university education as reading requirements get larger and more comprehensive.

As a result, the researcher selects SMP Negeri 3 Camba since the problem may influence the students at the school. The researcher completed preliminary research to ensure that the study could be done at this institution. An eighth-grade English teacher was interviewed about her class as part of the exploratory investigation. The researcher noticed that many 8th grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Camba fail to understand reading literature, particularly descriptive writing, based on pre-observation data. According to the English teacher, a number of students continue to make mistakes when working on reading questions, resulting in low reading performance. These inaccuracies were most likely caused by a misunderstanding of the content of the text.

McGrath (1995). describes reading as the active cognitive activity of taking in ideas from an author, connecting those ideas to what you already know, and arranging all of the information so they can be remembered and utilized. According to Kennedy (1981), reading is a mental process in which the reader becomes aware of a concept, understands it in light of their prior experiential knowledge, and interprets it in light of their own aspirations and goals.

According to Ariyanto (2011), The only method for people to acquire the speed and ability they will require for practical purposes once they leave school is through reading. It is impossible to think of any professional position in our educated culture that does not demand the ability to read.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed descriptive qualitative research. To characterize the students' reading challenges in understanding English text, the researcher used a descriptive method. In this case, the goal of descriptive research is to collect and organize basic data in a descriptive fashion, or to provide a description of the students' difficulty reading English text.

The subject of this research was 8th grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Camba, because the researcher saw that they had difficulty understanding the reading text during Internship 1. In eighth grade, there are four classes: 8A, 8B, 8C, and 8D. The researcher selects class 8B,

which comprises of 30 students, because they have been identified as having difficulty understanding English reading content.

The researcher employed tests and interviews to acquire data for this study. The reading descriptive text test is used to assess students' ability to read English text. The researcher administered a test that included 15 multiple-choice questions from four descriptive texts. Each text has three to four questions. Also The researcher conducted an interview with the students in order to obtain more solid data about the students' factors affecting their reading ability. The interview format concludes with the alternate answer picked by the students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of data findings after collected the data, it was shown that students had 171 difficulties in understanding descriptive text. The 171 difficulties were divided into the following categories:

- a. Determaining Main Idea: 45
- b. Understanding Vocabulary: 22
- c. Making Inferene: 15
- d. Detail Information: 89

1. The Students Difficulties in understanding English Text

After analyzing the data, the researcher presented the investigation's findings. The participants are eighth-grade students from SMP Negeri 3 Camba. The researcher gathered thirty items of data. A multiple-choice test with four options was presented to the students: a, b, c, and d. The researcher classified each incorrect response based on reading difficulty levels created by students. The researcher calculated the frequency of difficulty using Sudijono's formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

P = Percentage

F = Frequency of difficulties

N = Number of cases (total frequent)

a. Determining Main Idea

The students made 45 mistakes in determining the main idea out of 171 difficulties.

The frequency of problems identifying the main idea as a result is:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{45}{171} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 26,31$$

b. Understanding Vocabulary

The students made 22 mistakes in determining the main idea out of 171 difficulties.

The frequency of problems identifying the main idea as a result is:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{22}{171} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 12,86$$

c. Making Inference

The students made 15 mistakes in determining the main idea out of 171 difficulties.

The frequency of problems identifying the main idea as a result is:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{15}{171} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 8,77$$

d. Detail Information

The students made 89 mistakes in determining the main idea out of 171 difficulties. The frequency of problems identifying the main idea as a result is:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{89}{171} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 52,04\%$$

No	Types of Difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
1	Determining Main Idea	45	26,31%
2	Understanding Vocabulary	22	12,86%
3	Making Inference	15	8,77%
4	Detail Information	89	52,04%
Total		171	100%

2. The Factors of Causing the Students Difficulties

This research discovered five findings after analyzing data about students' reading difficulties in understanding English text: difficulties understanding the meaning of words, difficulties understanding long sentences in the text, difficult to determine main idea, house environment, school environment.

a. Difficulties Understanding the Meaning of Words

Difficult to grasp terms indicate that the student had difficulty determining the meaning of the word in the text. As a result, the student has a difficult time grasping the substance of the reading material. This can be regarded as the learner identifying difficulties when reading the text. Her inability to answer the question concerning the facts from the text demonstrates her issues right now. When a student does not grasp a word in the text, they tend to guess the solution.

b. The Difficulties to Understand Long Sentence.

The difficulty in understanding long sentence indicates that the student struggled to understand the long sentence due to the difficult structure and the large number of words in the text that the student could not understand. As a result of this problem, the student is unable to comprehend long sentences and fails to grasp the primary point of the text.

c. Difficult to Determine Main Idea

Because the student did not understand the fundamental idea, it was difficult for him to find a sentence that communicates the author's point regarding the topic. This could be seen as the learner struggling to understand the primary point of the text while reading it. The difficulty here may be visible in her inability to respond to the question, particularly if the content is lengthy. As a result, locating the key idea may be more challenging.

d. House Environment

According to the interview, the research discovered that the variables causing students' difficulties were related to their home environment. It was due to the fact that the majority of the students were uninterested in reading English books. They were both lethargic and afraid to read English material because they lacked ambition.

e. School Environment

According to the interview, the last element impacting the students' difficulties understanding English reading text is their school environment. They are unable to learn to read successfully since their school did not provide them with sufficient reading material. They claimed that reading was tedious. The majority of students at SMP Negeri 3 Camba lacked prior knowledge of reading English text.

Discussion

After classifying the students' scores, the researcher came to the conclusion that SMP Negeri 3 Camba students had difficulty understanding the reading material in English. The researcher in this study made an effort to ascertain the difficulties that students faced in properly learning English by examining the errors that they had made on their test. By carefully examining the results of their interviews, the researcher also made an effort to identify the problems that students encountered when understanding English.

According to the study, 26.31 % of students have trouble identifying the main idea of the test items. Students have trouble responding to questions about vocabulary understanding by 12.86 %, students have difficulties responding to questions about making inferences by 8.77 %, and students have difficulty responding to questions about looking for specific information by 52.04 %.

The researcher used Rahim's (2006) theory to figure out what was causing the students' problems understanding English reading text. According to Rahim, reading difficulties are

caused by a variety of factors, including: Difficulties understanding the meaning of words, Difficulties understanding long sentences in the book, Difficulties determining primary theme, House environment, and School environment.

CONCLUSIONS

This study's data was collected and evaluated to answer research questions. The purpose of this research is to examine the students' reading difficulties in understanding English text at SMP Negeri 3 Camba. According to the studied data, students have difficulties in determining the main idea, understanding vocabulary, making inferences, and obtaining detail information. They are limited in their vocabulary. The material is incomprehensible to the students. They do not understand when they come across a lengthy paragraph. Students have difficulty understanding the text or subject. The researcher discovered five causes influencing the student's difficulties understanding English reading text based on data analysis of the interview.

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