

## AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION CONSTRAINTS.

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**Abstract.** Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui i) kesulitan siswa dalam memahami bacaan; ii) kesulitan yang berkenaan dengan macam-macam teks bahasa Inggris. Disain dari penelitian ini menggunakan metode descriptive. Subjek dari penelitian ini ialah 30 siswa dari kelas X ipa 1. Penelitian ini menggunakan 3 tipe teks yaitu narrative teks, descriptive teks, dan recount teks. Data penelitian ini didapatkan dari test dan wawancara. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada enam kesulitan yang di hadapi oleh siswa dalam memahami teks bahasa Inggris. Selanjutnya, narrative teks menjadi teks yang paling sulit menurut siswa. Sesuai dengan hasil penelitian, peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa kemampuan membaca adalah kemampuan yang saling ketergantungan.

**Abstract.**The objectives of this research were to explore i) the students' reading comprehension constraints; ii) the students' difficulties with respect to the types of reading texts. The reserch design was descriptive method. The subjects of this research were 30 students of X science 1. This research used three type of text namely, narrative text, descriptive text, and recount text. The data were collected through reading tests and interview. Theresult showed that there were six problems the students faced in understanding English text. In additional, the narrative texts was regarded as being the most difficult English text type by students.In line with the result, the researcher concludes that reading skill isan interdependence skill.

**Keyword.** Reading Constraints, Reading Comprehension, Narrative Text.

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the most important skills students need to master as it enables them to understand what the text tells about. Students need to have good reading skill for acquiring knowledge and learning new information. Based on the curriculum 2013, the objective of teaching reading for the first grade of SMA students is to enable the students to identify the main idea of whole text, vocabularies, and some information from a reading text.

It is important for the students to comprehend a reading text by having knowledge in general view of the text because it can help them to understand main idea of the text and predict what will be discussed on the text. Grabe (2002:8) defines reading as a complexity to extract, build meaning from a text. In short, reading is generally defined as a process of identifying a written or printed text to understand its meaning. As a matter of fact, students find it hard to comprehend the texts in English. This indicates that students have their constraints in comprehending reading text.

The failure of a reader in understanding reading text might be due to several aspects. According to Rumelhart (1980: 47-48), failures to understand the reading text might be due to three things as follow : i) The readers do not have appropriate schemata. When this happens, the reader will not be able to grasp the concept conveyed by reading text. ii) The readers have appropriate schemata but clue there might not be enough. It also may cause the reader not to

understand the recitations, except when given an additional clue. iii) The readers may be able to find the interpretation of the discourse consistently but they may not find out what is desirable of a writer. In this case the reader will understand the reading text, but the understanding is not the same as what the writer means.

In teaching reading at school, reading takes the position as one of language skills that should be taught. According to the 2013 curriculum, the students should be able to understand the functional and essay texts in descriptive, recount and procedure related to near behavior, especially for the first year students of senior high school. Students' score in reading comprehension that should be reached in the KKM is 70.

Based on the pre-survey, it was found out that several students' score in SMAN 1 Bandar Lampung did not achieve the target. The fact showed that the students could only reach score 55-60. This makes the researcher interested in investigating students constraints in comprehending English texts by the first year students of SMAN 1 Bandar Lampung.

The previous research was conducted by Mauli (2014) entitled An Analysis of Students' Problems in Finding Main Idea of Reading Text at The Second Grade of Mtsn 1 Kotabumi. She found that there are six problems faced by students in finding main idea, that is: 1). there were 19 students who lack of the students interest, 2). there were 25 students who lack of vocabulary knowledge, 3). there were

17 students who had problem in identifying the main idea of the passage with very long sentence, 4). there were 19 students who had poor reading strategy, 5). there were 18 students who had problem in sentence pattern (grammatical confusion), 6). there were 21 students who ignore paragraph components.

Another study was conducted by Zuhra (2014) to find out the most difficult types of reading comprehension questions faced by students in reading tests and why they face these difficulties in the national examination. From the interview, she found that the students had an inadequate knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structure but they lacked knowledge about different types of reading comprehension questions. It can be concluded that there were some factors that caused difficulties for the students in answering these tests. First, the students did not comprehend the questions asked due to their weaknesses in differentiating between the natures of different types of reading comprehension questions. Their difficulties were also influenced by their weaknesses in mastering a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structures. Meanwhile, this research focused on the problems that come from pre-observation that the researcher held in SMAN 1 Bandar Lampung. It is found that the students on SMAN 1 Bandar Lampung did not achieve score of KKM and got difficulties to interpret the meaning of the text. There are two research questions on this research, they are : 1) what are the students' constrain in understanding English text by the first year students of SMAN 1 Bandar Lampung?; 2) What is the type of text

that is regarded as being the most difficult English text types by the first year students of SMAN 1 Bandarlampung ?

## **METHODS**

This research was designed based on the problems identified and arranged to adjust the main purpose of the research, so that the researcher used a discourse analysis research that employed descriptive method. Surakhmad (1994:139) believes that a descriptive method is a kind of research method employing technique of searching, collecting, classifying, analyzing the data, interpreting them and finally describing the conclusion. The research used two instruments for collecting the data namely, reading test and interview.

The participants of the research was the first-year students of SMAN 1 Bandar Lampung of 2016/2017 school year. The sample of this research was one class that is, X science 1 which consist of 30 students. It was chosen by pre-observation of students' score in English subject.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

To find out the result of reading comprehension students, the researcher distributed 50 items of reading comprehension test consisted of identifying the main idea, vocabulary, specific information, inference and reference. The result of reading comprehension showed that there were 6 students (20%) who got score 11-20, then in three score intervals; 21-30, 31-40, and 41-50 there were 5 students (16.7%) in every interval. There were also 4 students (13.3%) who got score 51-

60. Moreover, score interval 61-70 have 3 students (10%) inside and in score interval 71-80 and 91-100 there is 1 students (3.3%) for each interval. Since the minimum score of English subject (KKM) is 70 so, there were only 5 students (16.7%) who achieved the KKM and there were 25 students who got score under 70.

In this process, the researcher interviewed 30 students who had the low score and the high score in reading test. In reading test, if the students got the low score it meant that the students had trouble in reading test but it does not mean that students who had high score does not have problem in reading test. The result

showed that there are six students' problems in understanding reading text, they were : lack of students' interest, lack of vocabulary mastery, lack of background knowledge, on transition phase, identifying main idea, and lack of motivation.

The failure to read seems to correlate with accumulation of handicaps such as poor vision, poor hearing, and left handedness. These factors, of course, outside the teacher's control. What the teacher can control is the pace and method of instruction to suit the learners he has to teach (Dakin, 1973). It should be taken into account that each learner is unique in terms of individuality.

To find out types of English text regarded as being the most difficult English texts by the first year students of SMAN 1 Bandar Lampung. Here is the comparison as follow :

**Table 1. Specification Students' perception in types of texts**

No.	Types of Texts	Perception	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Narrative	Easy	4	13.3%
		Difficult	26	86.7%
2.	Descriptive	Easy	23	76.7%
		Difficult	7	23.3%
3.	Recount	Easy	13	43.3%
		Difficult	17	56.7%

Table 1 shows specification of students' perception in types of texts to find out the most difficult English text they face. We can see that there are 26 students (86.7%) said that narrative text is difficult, 7 students (23.3%) said that descriptive text is difficult. In addition, there are 17 students (56.7%) said that recount text is difficult. According to the Table 1, we can see that narrative is regarded as being the most difficult English text by having 86.7% students' difficulty perception. The problem of identifying the most difficult English text is there are some students who do not know

about the type of texts, so they only understand the task without knowing what kind of text that they read.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

### Conclusions

Based on the research at the first grade of SMAN 1 Bandar Lampung and analyzing the data, the researcher would like to give the conclusion that reading is an interdependence skill where the students need to master the factors that support the reading skill. The factors are connected one and another so that,

they are inseparable. The problems that students faced prove that understanding reading text is not as simple as many people mostly thought. If students don't master one of the factors they always have a missing piece of understanding reading text. As students of a foreign language, mastering vocabulary is the most important piece that needs to be mastered first.

### **Suggestions**

Based on the discussion and conclusion previously presented, the researcher would like to give some suggestion as follows:

The first is for the teacher, identifying students' weakness is good to improve

reading skill, but the teacher should give the students motivation and lead the students to think about the topic that will be discussed in the learning process using some new words. So, the students have schemata related to the topic.

Second suggestion is for the further researcher. It is better if the researcher uses another instrument to collect the data such as observation sheet. So that, the researcher can find more data to make sure that students really faced the problems in English learning process. The researcher hopes that this study will give the contribution to English learning process especially in understanding English texts.

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