

# An Analysis of Vocational High School Students' Difficulties in Reading Comprehension

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## ABSTRACT

### Keywords:

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The aims of this study was to find out the difficulties of students at SMKN 2 Rangkasbitung in reading comprehension and compared with aspects of decoding and retention difficulties. As well as internal and external factors. This study used descriptive qualitative method. The data that was needed by this study is direct data, namely through questionnaires with students. The results show that, students who have difficulty reading in the aspect of comprehension as big as 22%, decoding difficulties 23%, and retention difficulties 24%. For internal factors as big as 15%, and external factors 16%. Based on the results, it can be conclude that almost of 29 students in (APH 1) class at SMKN 2 Rangkasbitung have difficulty in reading comprehension, decoding, and retention aspect. Dominant difficulty in the aspect of reading comprehension namely, they often misunderstand the meaning of sentences. Next the decoding aspect with the dominant difficulty is, they find it difficult to pronounce words and recognize words out of context. Then the retention aspect with the most dominant difficulty is, they have a hard time connecting what they read with previous knowledge. And internal factors that dominate their reading difficulties is, they feel afraid when reading English texts. And for external factors, they lack reading facilities at school.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The foundation of all language skills is reading comprehension. The end goal of the reading process is for students to be able to manage the relationship between learning activities, learner experiences, and prior knowledge in order to form a text's meaning (Yên & Thảo, 2021). With good reading comprehension skills, will create a feeling of satisfaction and pride because we can understand the reading, so that when we read, it will feel more enjoyable. the same as in the world of work will make us look professional.

The students have already learned and know English since they were in elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school/vocational school (Tambunsaribu et al., 2021). However, there is no denying that students struggle with reading comprehension (Nyoman & Kamayana, 2020). As for the students who have difficulty in reading comprehension. There are three difficulties that students faced, the first is vocabulary (82%). The students' problems in reading text are due to their lack of vocabulary knowledge the unusual words of the text made the students difficult to read and finally, the students' lack of vocabulary is the cause of their reading difficulties. The length of the text is the second difficulty in reading text based on research findings (43%). The length of the text is a problem in reading because it contains many discussions additionally, the length of the text causes students to lose interest and not pay attention to the text. Reading strategy (46%) is the third difficulty in reading comprehension. Reading strategy is a problem for students in reading comprehension. When students don't have a reading strategy, they don't understand what they're reading. The dominant factor in students' difficulty with reading comprehension,

based on the three indicators above, is vocabulary knowledge (Darmasrura et al., 2021). These causes can affect students' difficulties in reading comprehension. Students will be easy in reading comprehension if students have a strong desire and increase vocabulary, so that they can master reading comprehension easily.

Based on the explanation above, the difference between this writer and previous research is that this writer focuses more on analyzing the factors of students' difficulties in reading comprehension. Therefore, the writer is interested and want to investigate both internal and external factors that make students at SMKN 2 Rangkasbitung get difficulties in reading comprehension. The difference also lies in the place, object and method for research.

## 2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative descriptive research method that aims to describe the factors that cause students' difficulties in reading comprehension. According to Olsson (2008) as cited in Bogdan et al that qualitative research is a method of collecting descriptive data from people who are being observed in the form of speech, writing, and behavior. Inductive thinking processes can be used to gain an understanding of reality through this qualitative research.

**Table Specification of Questionnaire**

No	Aspect	Sub aspect	Item
1.	Decoding difficulties	- Trouble sounding out words and recognizing words out of context - Confusing between letter and the sounds they represent - Slow spoken reading speed (reading word for word) - Expressionless reading (monotonous) - Ignoring punctuation while reading.	1-5
2.	Comprehension difficulties	- Misconception about the meaning of sentences - Inability to relate ideas in a passage - Omitting or covering up details - Difficulty distinguishing important information from minor details - Lack of concentration while reading	6-10
3.	Retention difficulties	- Difficulties remembering or summarizing what is read - Connecting what is read to prior knowledge - Applying text content to personal experiences	11-13
4.	Internal factors	- not interested - unmotivated - lazy - afraid	14-17
5.	External factors	- lack of facilities at school - lack of parental control - no motivation from parents	18-20
	Total		20

### Score description :

Strongly Agree = 4

Agree = 3

Disagree = 2

Strongly Disagree = 1

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

No	Question	Total Answer
1.	I find it difficult to pronounce words and recognize words out of context when reading English texts.	96

2.	While reading English texts I feel confused between the letters and the sounds I represent.	<b>94</b>
3.	When reading English text orally I read slowly (reading word for word).	<b>86</b>
4.	When Reading English text I read without expression (monotone).	<b>76</b>
5.	When reading English text I ignore punctuation.	<b>69</b>
6.	When reading English texts I often misunderstand the meaning of sentences.	<b>99</b>
7.	While reading the English text I am unable to connect the ideas in a passage.	<b>91</b>
8.	When reading English text I omit or cover up details.	<b>66</b>
9.	When reading English texts I have a hard time distinguishing important information from small details.	<b>82</b>
10.	When reading English texts I lack concentration.	<b>78</b>
11.	When reading English texts I have trouble remembering or summarizing what I read.	<b>87</b>
12.	When reading English texts I have a hard time connecting what I read with previous knowledge.	<b>89</b>
13.	While reading English texts I have a hard time applying the content of the text to personal experiences.	<b>85</b>
14.	I am not interested in learning to read English texts.	<b>47</b>
15.	I am not motivated to learn to read English texts.	<b>49</b>
16.	I feel lazy while reading English text.	<b>58</b>
17.	I feel scared when i read English text.	<b>64</b>
18.	When I was at school I lacked reading facilities.	<b>71</b>
19.	When I was at home I was not controlled by my parents while studying.	<b>61</b>
20.	When I was at home I didn't get any motivation from my parents.	<b>50</b>

From the results of the questionnaire in the diagram above, it shows that all students as many 29 in class XII (APH 1) have difficulty in reading comprehension. In line with the statement (Thanthirige et al 2016) students have reading difficulties in decoding, comprehension and retention aspects. However after being compared with the three aspects, the retention aspect became the highest difficulty for them because they have difficulty on all questions on this aspect. This aspect is most difficult aspect with a total score of this aspect 24%. Based on the results, most of them found it very difficult on the question number twelve, namely they have difficulty connecting what they read with previous knowledge. Then the second difficulty in the retention aspect is number eleven, they have trouble remembering or summarizing what they read. And the third difficulty is number thirteen, while reading English texts they have a hard time applying the content of the text to personal experiences.

Next for the second aspect of difficulty, namely decoding difficulty with a total score of this aspect 23%. Based on the results, most of them found it very difficult on the question number one that is, when reading the English text they had difficulty pronouncing words and recognizing words out of context. then for the second difficulty is at number two, while reading English texts they feel confused between the letters and the sounds they represent. For the third difficulty is at number three, when reading English text orally they read slowly (reading word for word). And for numbers four and five on this aspect of decoding, they have no difficulty to read expressively and they don't ignore punctuation.

Then for the third difficulty, which is on the aspect of comprehension with a total score of this aspect 22%. Most of them have difficulty in question number six that they often misunderstand the meaning of the sentence. Then for the second difficulty is at number six, when reading English texts they often misunderstand the meaning of sentences. Next for the second difficulty is at number seven, while reading the English text they unable to connect the ideas in a passage. But for number eight, they had no difficult to read in detail. Last for numbers nine and ten, they had difficulty distinguishing important information from small details and lacked concentration while reading.

For the total score of internal factors it is 15%. Based on the results of the questionnaire, most of them chose question number seventeen to make the internal factor of difficulty in reading. That is, they feel afraid when reading English texts. Even though they have difficulties, they are still interested and motivated to learn to read English texts. They also do not feel lazy when faced with reading English text activities. And for the total score of external factors is 16%. Based on the result, almost all of them chose question number

eighteen as an external factor of difficulty in reading. That is, they lack reading facilities at school. And they did not agree to question number nineteen and twenty because of their difficulty factor was not less controlled by their parents while studying. And not because they don't get motivation from their parents.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that almost of 29 students in (APH 1) class at SMKN 2 Rangkasbitung have difficulty in reading comprehension, decoding, and retention aspect. Reading comprehension became the third difficulty with the most dominant difficulty is, they often misunderstand the meaning of sentences. Next the decoding aspect becomes the second difficulty, with the dominant difficulty in this aspect is, they find it difficult to pronounce words and recognize words out of context. Then the retention aspect becomes the first difficulty with the most dominant difficulty is, they have a hard time connecting what they read with previous knowledge. The last for internal factors that dominate their reading difficulties is, they feel afraid when reading English texts, and for external factors, they lack reading facilities at school.

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