



Challenges in Understanding Descriptive Texts Among Eighth-Grade Students at MTs Swasta Darul Akhiroh, Bonan Dolok

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: 18, Jan 2024

Accepted: 1, Feb 2024

Keywords:

Reading

Comprehension,

Descriptive Texts,

Vocabulary Skills.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the challenges eighth-grade students face in comprehending descriptive English texts at MTs Swasta Darul Akhiroh, Bonan Dolok, during the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. The research specifically examines internal and external factors influencing reading comprehension skills among a sample of 30 students. Employing a qualitative research methodology with a descriptive approach, the study utilizes cluster sampling to select the entire class as the research sample. Data collection instruments include questionnaires to assess the classroom environment and students' attitudes towards reading English texts, alongside tests designed to evaluate students' proficiency in various aspects of reading comprehension such as identifying main ideas, supporting details, vocabulary context, and answering detailed questions. The findings reveal significant difficulties in reading comprehension among the students, attributed to a lack of vocabulary, the length of texts, and a general disinterest in engaging with the reading material actively. Test results indicate particular weaknesses in answering detailed questions, with only 27.7% of students performing satisfactorily in this area. This highlights a critical area for intervention, suggesting a need for targeted strategies to enhance students' reading skills and overall engagement with English texts.

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A. INTRODUCTION

People use language in social interactions to meet various needs and purposes. The information in the society is obtained through communication both written and oral. According to Delahunty and Garvey (2010), communication is the act of one person intending to influence the mind of another, such as introducing an idea, and the other person acknowledging this intention. It means that people such as the use of languages to communicate depend on different needs and activities while communicating with each other.

Communication between individuals, encompassing both verbal exchanges on various topics and the act of writing and reading, is fundamental to human interaction. This process involves distinct roles such as the speaker and listener in oral communication, and the writer and reader in written communication, all of which are essential components of language proficiency. The comprehensive mastery of these language skills is crucial for effective communication, emphasizing the interdependence of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in language maintenance and development (Harmer, 2006).

English, recognized as a global lingua franca, is integral across numerous aspects of daily life and professional fields worldwide. Its universal application is evident in its inclusion as a core subject in educational curricula globally, from elementary levels to higher education. The pedagogy of English language learning is structured around the essential quartet of language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Harmer (2006) categorizes these skills into receptive skills, which involve the assimilation of information through listening and reading, and productive skills, which require active language generation through speaking and writing. Among these, the ability to speak is often highlighted as the most crucial, given its role in immediate and effective interpersonal communication.

Reading plays a critical role in the process of learning a foreign language since it helps students acquire the material more quickly when they understand its main ideas and gradually improves their reading comprehension with repeated practice (Ramadhani & Harputra, 2016). Students' linguistic reservoirs are expanded by text engagement, which has a significant effect on their writing, spelling, and vocabulary. Reading is essentially the act of receiving and interpreting written content. It is a cornerstone of language education because it helps students understand texts and absorb a variety of ideas, information, and knowledge that are relevant to both oral and written expression (Barus & Rasita, 2009). Reading comprehension is made much easier

with a strong vocabulary and a firm grasp of grammatical structures, highlighting the close connection between these language skills and reading ability.

Furthermore, to comprehend a text, it is necessary to extract information using the 5W's and 1H analytical framework to summarise the main ideas. Although reading comprehension is a crucial skill, some students still struggle with it, which makes it difficult for them to interact effectively with and understand literature. Difficulties in reading and language proficiency can hinder students from secondary school to university. Barus & Rasita (2009) suggest a nuanced approach to addressing these issues by improving reading skills and expanding language competency based on the underlying cause of the challenges faced. A customized method like this is necessary to ensure thorough language learning results and successfully overcome barriers in reading foreign languages.

The focus of this research study is on the educational field, specifically the use of language in reading skills. Reading skills are taught from early childhood in formal schools such as kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and university. This highlights the importance of reading skills in mastering a language.

Based on observations at MTs Swasta Darul Akhiroh, it is evident that students' reading comprehension falls below the minimum standard. This is reflected in the number of students who struggle to achieve the minimum mastery level criterion (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal or KKM) for English, which has been set at 75 by the school. This is reflected in the number of students who struggle to achieve the minimum mastery level criterion (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal or KKM) for English, which has been set at 75 by the school. Several students have scored below 75, failing to meet the KKM. This fact has prompted the need for this research study.

Two factors influence students' lack of reading comprehension: internal factors, such as their interest in learning English and motivation to succeed in reading, and external factors, such as teaching media, techniques, methods, learning facilities, school social environments, and the curriculum. This research study focuses on elaborating the difficulties that students face in reading comprehension during the teaching and learning process of English.

English is the first foreign language that must be learned and understood in Indonesia, as almost all science and technology is written in English. English has been chosen as the primary foreign language to be taught in Indonesian schools, from elementary to university level. Even elementary school students are now being taught

English as part of the local curriculum. However, there are many challenges faced by both teachers and students in achieving the curriculum goals, resulting in a lack of progress. It is evident that many high school graduates are unable to communicate effectively in English, both orally and in writing.

B. LITERATUR REVIEW

1. Language Learning

Language learning involves four main areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, recent research suggests that pronunciation and memorization are also fundamental elements (Ketabi & Saeb, 2015). Pronunciation is the physical articulation of words, distinct from the mental process of formulating thoughts into speech that defines speaking. Memorisation is also important for students, who need to learn everything from vocabulary to grammatical structures. This can be challenging, especially when the language being learned is not the student's first or second language.

To overcome these challenges, various learning methods and techniques have been proposed. For example, incorporating reading comprehension games can make reading activities more engaging and enjoyable for students, enhancing their learning experience (Klimova, 2015). Writing, which demands grammatical precision, can be particularly challenging. However, it is recognised that writing proficiency is closely linked to reading. Extensive reading can enrich a student's understanding and ability to produce well-structured texts (Wijaya, 2020). These insights underscore the interconnectedness of language skills and the importance of innovative teaching strategies to support student learning.

2. Reading Comprehension

Understanding reading comprehension, especially in the context of English as a foreign language for Indonesian students, involves navigating challenges that arise from limited exposure or misunderstandings. The structure should have a logical flow of information with causal connections between statements. Patel and Jain (2008) in (Hartanto et al., 2022) define foreign languages as those not typically used in one's immediate environment. Therefore, comprehensive language instruction in schools, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, is crucial. It is important to use clear and concise language, avoiding complex terminology and ornamental language. Technical terms should be explained when first used. The text should be grammatically correct, free from spelling and punctuation errors, and written in a

formal register. The author should avoid biased language and use precise word choice. The text should adhere to style guides, use consistent citation, and follow a consistent footnote style and formatting features. Quotes should be clearly marked and filler words avoided.

Reading is crucial for language acquisition as it helps to expand vocabulary, gain knowledge, and comprehend complex concepts. The process of reading involves not only decoding words but also integrating linguistic knowledge and applying prior experiences to understand the intended message of the text (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011).

Reading comprehension relies on several key components, including decoding, fluency, vocabulary, sentence construction, cohesion, reasoning, background knowledge, and working memory and attention. These skills are essential for understanding text, making inferences, and connecting ideas within and across texts.

Effective reading strategies encompass a range of activities, such as identifying main ideas and key details, and understanding the structure and function of texts. Oakhill et al., (2019) emphasise the complexity of reading comprehension, which involves various cognitive skills and abilities, including the crucial role of inference-making. Similarly, Nurjanah et al., (2022) highlights the significance of reading comprehension in English language learning, requiring students to extract both explicit and implicit information through careful analysis of the text.

a. Level of Reading Comprehension

According to Nurjanah et al., (2022), students' reading comprehension proficiency varies significantly, largely due to differences in their vocabulary range and grammatical understanding. Therefore, educators must use diverse teaching approaches and learning activities to effectively cater to individual student needs.

Kholiq & Luthfiyati (2018) identified four distinct levels of reading comprehension that educators must understand to tailor their instruction accordingly. The initial stage of comprehension, known as literal comprehension, involves extracting explicit information directly from the text. This serves as the foundation for more advanced comprehension skills. Inferential comprehension requires students to deduce meanings and conclusions that are not explicitly stated in the text, thus engaging with the material at a deeper level.

According to Kholiq & Luthfiyati (2018), critical comprehension involves evaluating the content, structure, and language of a text. This fosters analytical thinking and deeper engagement with the material. Creative comprehension encourages students to respond emotionally and aesthetically to texts, integrating their cognitive understanding with personal insights and reactions. This level of understanding indicates a complete assimilation of cognitive abilities and personal involvement with the text, resulting in a deeper and more comprehensive reading encounter.

b. Factors of Reading Comprehension

Hirsch (2003) emphasises the crucial role of vocabulary in reading comprehension. Understanding the meanings of words significantly enhances comprehension, which is the primary objective of reading. Vocabulary serves as the foundation of communication, enriching all facets of linguistic interaction, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. An extensive vocabulary not only enhances academic performance but also boosts social confidence and competence, highlighting the crucial role of vocabulary in language education. It aids in the development of various language skills, including listening and reading comprehension, speaking, writing, spelling, and pronunciation, making it an indispensable tool for effective English usage.

The acquisition of vocabulary can be intentional, where learners memorise words and their translations directly from lists. Although this method may offer quick results and is often favoured by learners for its straightforwardness, it tends to be superficial. Vocabulary learned in isolation, typically in its infinitive form, may not readily translate into contextual usage, leading to a quicker fade of memory retention. Aitchison in Alizadeh (2016) for a more embedded approach to vocabulary learning. Educators are urged to thoroughly integrate new terms into students' mental lexicons to ensure a deeper and more enduring understanding.

Rahmawati (2012) identifies several challenges in vocabulary learning. These include discrepancies between written and spoken forms in English, the vast number of words learners must acquire, limited word knowledge, and the complexity of understanding beyond mere definitions. Additional hurdles include grammatical misunderstandings and pronunciation errors, which are often due to phonetic dissimilarities between English and the learners' native languages.

These factors highlight the significance of having a thorough understanding of vocabulary in mastering a language. This suggests that effective vocabulary acquisition goes beyond mere memorisation and involves comprehension and application in suitable contexts.

3. Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is designed to convey a vivid portrayal of a specific subject, be it an object, animal, person, or place, enabling readers to visualize the subject in their minds through detailed descriptions. Setiawati (2022) defines descriptive text as a narrative that itemizes the attributes of a subject, distinguishing it from other types of texts by its focus on particular characteristics that make the subject unique.

This type of text serves an informative purpose. It is often used to provide a detailed description of a specific subject rather than general information about a category of subjects, as seen in report texts. The primary aim is to present a particular person, place, or thing in such detail that readers can form a clear mental image (Gerot, 1994). Descriptive writing enhances narrative vividness and plays a crucial role in developing characterisations, establishing a sense of place, and elucidating key themes within a narrative. According to Siahaan & Shinoda (2008), it involves detailing various aspects of the chosen subject, whether it is a living being, an inanimate object, or a location, making it an integral component of storytelling and expository writing.

Descriptive text usually follows a two-part structure: the identification phase introduces the subject of the description, and the description phase elaborates on the subject's features, qualities, and characteristics. Descriptive text is characterised by a focus on specific entities, the use of descriptive and classifying adjectives, and the frequent employment of the simple present tense. Verbs such as 'is' (a form of 'be') and 'has' (a form of 'have') are often used to relate ongoing or habitual states and possessions, bringing the subject to life for the reader.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

The study utilises a qualitative approach, emphasising the descriptive method to intricately detail the observed phenomena and survey methods to compare and understand variations in reading comprehension skills.

In this research, identifying the population was a critical initial step before selecting a sample. According to Ary et al., (2009), a population encompasses all members within a well-defined category, whether they are people, events, or objects, relevant to the

study's focus. Similarly, Suharsimi (2006) clarifies that the population includes all subjects pertinent to the research inquiry. For the purposes of this study, the population is defined as the 30 tenth-grade students majoring in administration at MTs Swasta Darul Akhirah Bonan Dolok.

To select a representative sample from this population, a subset must be chosen that accurately reflects the characteristics of the broader group. According to Ary et al., (2009), a sample is a smaller observed segment of the population. For this particular study, cluster sampling was deemed the most appropriate method due to the substantial size of the population and its organization into distinct groups or classes. This approach allows for the selection of entire clusters, in this case, a class, to represent the population. Consequently, the sample for this research consisted of the entire class of 30 tenth-grade administration students, ensuring an accurate representation of the broader population under study.

In this research, data collection tools are crucial for gathering information relevant to the study's hypotheses. The instruments employed include A questionnaire was used to gain insights into the classroom environment and the teaching-learning process, specifically regarding students' reading skills. A set of ten questions was designed to observe and record specific aspects of the classroom setting and instructional dynamics. Additionally, a reading comprehension test consisting of twenty multiple-choice questions was administered to assess students' abilities in identifying main ideas, supporting details, understanding vocabulary in context, and discerning specific information within English texts. The test results were analyzed to identify patterns of comprehension proficiency and specific areas of difficulty among the students.

During the data analysis process, the researcher evaluated student performance using predefined criteria to distinguish between success and failure. This was achieved through two primary analytical approaches: descriptive and inferential analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to elucidate variable characteristics through statistical measures such as mean, median, mode, and the construction of histograms, among others. Conversely, inferential analysis is used to examine hypotheses and draw conclusions beyond the immediate data set (Sullivan-Bolyai & Bova, 2014).

The data analysis methodology was divided into several stages. The first stage, data reduction, involved filtering and condensing raw data to retain only relevant information for the research objectives. This required discarding extraneous elements to maintain focus on the study's core aims. The next stage, data display, involved organizing the

filtered data into coherent structures such as matrices, graphs, and charts. This made the information easily interpretable and actionable. This phase was crucial for visualizing the data in a way that facilitated immediate comprehension and analysis. The final stage involved verification and conclusion, where the researcher thoroughly evaluated the data, seeking patterns and regularities. The research findings were summarised by making informed conclusions after critically comparing observed patterns with the initial hypotheses (Creswell, 2020).

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The Result of Research

After completing the data collection for this research, the researcher embarked on a detailed analysis to gain insights into the challenges faced by students in understanding English texts at MTs Swasta Darul Akhiroh Bonan Dolok. Using a qualitative methodology as outlined by Miles and Huberman, the analysis unfolded in three key stages: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions from the data collected primarily through student questionnaires. The questionnaire component of the study consisted of 10 carefully crafted, closed-ended questions. The observational data are presented in the following table:

Table 1

The Distribution of Frequency and Percentage of Students' Reading Comprehension of Descriptive Text by Questionnaires

No	Questionnaire Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage
1	When I don't know the meaning of a word in a passage, I open a dictionary or ask the teacher what the word means	4	20	66,6 %
		3	10	33,3%
		2	-	0%
		1	-	0%
2	Lack of vocabulary knowledge makes it difficult for me to interpret word by word or sentence by sentence in a text", so it is difficult for me to find the main idea in the reading text	4	18	60%
		3	10	33,3%
		2	2	6,6%
		1	-	0%
3	I have difficulty in understanding a text, when I do not understand the meaning of words or sentences	4	15	50%
		3	10	33,3%
		2	5	16,6%

No	Questionnaire Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage
		1	-	0%
4	length of the text makes it difficult for me to find the main idea in the reading	4	15	50%
		3	10	33,3%
		2	5	16,6%
		1	-	-
5	The length of the text makes me not interested in reading	4	10	33,3%
		3	16	53,3%
		2	4	14,6%
		1	-	0%
6	Length texts make it difficult for me to retell the contents of what I read	4	3	10%
		3	16	53,3%
		2	10	33,3%
		1	2	6,6%
7	When I read the text I underline or help important information in the text for me to remember the information	4	5	16,6%
		3	5	16,6%
		2	18	60%
		1	2	6,6%
8	take notes while reading to help me understand what I read	4	-	0%
		3	-	0%
		2	26	86,6%
		1	4	13,3%
9	I looked through the entire text to see what the text was about before reading it	4	10	33,3%
		3	2	6,6%
		2	18	60%
		1	-	-
10	When I read an English text, I understand the main idea and supporting idea at once.	4	-	0%
		3	-	0%
		2	12	40%
		1	18	60%

Source: Data Processing 2023

Analysis of the responses in Table 1 above reveals several significant barriers to student understanding. For example, a remarkable 66.6% of students admitted to

consulting a dictionary or asking the teacher for help when encountering unfamiliar words, indicating a significant reliance on external resources for vocabulary clarification. In addition, 60% of the participants identified a lack of vocabulary as a major obstacle to their ability to analyze and understand texts at a granular level, which in turn hinders their ability to grasp the main ideas within the texts.

Text length also emerged as a critical challenge, with 50% of students admitting that lengthy texts hinder their comprehension and diminish their interest in reading. This issue affects not only their comprehension, but also their ability to summarize the texts, suggesting that text length has a direct impact on their engagement and comprehension levels.

Interestingly, the data revealed a reluctance among students to engage in active reading strategies such as annotating or note-taking, with a significant majority not using these techniques to aid their comprehension. This lack of engagement with active reading strategies further exacerbates their comprehension challenges.

From the analysis, it is clear that students' primary reading comprehension barriers include limited vocabulary, the daunting nature of long texts, and a lack of engagement with effective reading strategies. These findings underscore the complex interplay between vocabulary knowledge, text length, and reading strategies in influencing reading comprehension. Addressing these challenges through targeted instructional interventions could significantly improve students' reading comprehension and overall academic performance in English.

The results of the students' performance on a reading comprehension test were systematically presented in a table at the end of the data collection. This table showed the distribution of incorrect answers across different sections of the test, which included ten questions covering various aspects such as main idea, supporting ideas, antonyms, words in context, and answering detailed questions.

Table 2

Section with the number of wrong-answers

No	Section					Score
	Finding Main Idea (1 & 7)	supporting Ideas (2 & 10)	antonyms words (5 & 8)	words in Context (3,4 & 9)	Answering Detail Questions (6 , 11 & 12)	
std.1	20	10	10	10	20	70
std.2	20	0	10	10	0	40

No	Section					Score
	Finding Main Idea (1 & 7)	supporting Ideas (2 & 10)	antonyms words (5 & 8)	words in Context (3,4 & 9)	Answering Detail Questions (6 , 11 & 12)	
std.3	10	10	0	0	10	30
std.4	20	10	20	10	10	70
std.5	20	10	20	20	10	80
std.6	10	0	10	20	0	40
std.7	10	0	10	10	10	40
std.8	20	10	20	20	10	80
std.9	20	0	10	10	10	50
std.10	20	10	10	20	20	80
std.11	10	10	10	20	0	50
std.12	20	10	10	30	10	80
std.13	20	10	20	10	0	50
std.14	10	0	10	10	0	30
std.15	10	10	10	10	0	40
std.16	10	10	20	10	10	60
std.17	20	10	20	20	0	70
std.18	20	20	10	20	10	80
std.19	10	0	10	0	10	30
std.20	10	10	10	10	10	40
std.21	10	0	20	30	10	70
std.22	10	10	10	20	0	50
std.23	10	10	10	20	10	60
std.24	20	10	10	20	20	80
std.25	10	20	10	10	10	60
std.26	10	10	20	10	20	70
std.27	20	20	10	20	10	80
std.28	20	10	20	20	10	80
std.29	20	10	10	10	10	60
std.30	10	20	20	10	20	80

No	Section					Score
	Finding Main Idea (1 & 7)	supporting Ideas (2 & 10)	antonyms words (5 & 8)	words in Context (3,4 & 9)	Answering Detail Questions (6 , 11 & 12)	
Total	450	260	390	430	250	1730
Average	75 %	43 %	65 %	47,7%	27,7%	57,6%

Source: Data Processing 2023

The investigation of students' reading comprehension difficulties with English texts was enriched by interviews aimed at elucidating their experiences and challenges. This qualitative inquiry, based on the methodological framework proposed by Miles and Huberman, involved a meticulous process of data reduction, display, and inference. The researcher selectively curated data relevant to the research question and presented it in a structured format to facilitate analysis.

The findings, derived from a comprehensive examination of students' responses in five key areas, revealed a nuanced portrait of their comprehension struggles. The most pronounced difficulty was observed in students' ability to answer detailed questions, with only 27.7% of responses being correct. This was indicative of a broader challenge in grasping finer textual details, highlighting a potential gap in their analytical reading skills.

Following this, the ability to identify supporting ideas emerged as the next significant hurdle, with a success rate of 43%. This suggests that students may be struggling to distinguish between primary and secondary information within texts, which is crucial for a nuanced understanding of any reading material. Understanding words in context and identifying antonyms were relatively better but still challenging, with success rates of 47% and 65% respectively. These areas indicate potential weaknesses in vocabulary and contextual understanding, which are essential components of reading proficiency.

The highest level of proficiency was observed in identifying main ideas in texts, where students achieved a 75% success rate. While this indicates a basic level of comprehension, the disparity between this and other areas suggests the need for a more holistic development of reading skills.

These findings point to a multifaceted set of challenges that students face in reading comprehension, with particular difficulty engaging with texts at a detailed and nuanced level. To address these challenges, there is a clear need for targeted

instructional interventions aimed at improving students' mastery of sentence structure, vocabulary expansion, and overall analytical reading strategies. By focusing on these areas, educators can better equip students with the skills necessary to not only grasp the main ideas, but also to understand and interpret the finer details and complexities of English texts.

Table 3

The Percentage of Students' s Score in Reading Comprehension Test

No	Reading Comprehension Criterias	Score	Percentage
1	Finding main ideas	450	75%
2	Finding Supporting Ideas	260	43%
3	Antonym in words	390	65%
4	Words in context	430	47,7%
5	Answering detail question	250	27,7%

Source: Data Processing 2023

The level of difficulties in every criteria was different based on the test in reading text then answer the 12 questions in written form relate to the English text. The writer found that the students' difficulties most occurred in answering detail questions with the total score 250 or 27,7 %, it means the students face difficulties in anwering deatil question in the test by uisng descriptive text.

2. The Discussion

The primary objective of this research was to examine the challenges faced by students in understanding English texts at MTs Swasta Darul Akhirroh Bonan Dolok, with a particular focus on identifying the nature and extent of these difficulties. To this end, the researcher designed and administered a set of 10 closed-ended questionnaires, complemented by a series of 12 tests, to a cohort of 30 students within a single class. These questionnaires were carefully designed to include multiple choice questions to ensure a structured and consistent response format.

The data collection process was carried out methodically, with the questionnaires distributed in written form. An additional challenge identified was the students' struggle to effectively manage their study schedules, often mixing study time with leisure activities, which affected their academic engagement and focus.

Analysis of the survey responses highlighted several critical areas of difficulty for students. Foremost among these was a pronounced lack of vocabulary, which significantly hampered their ability to grasp both the main and supporting ideas

within texts, indicating a direct correlation between vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension. In addition, the length of the English texts was identified as a significant barrier, exacerbating the students' comprehension problems, which in turn were attributed to limited vocabulary knowledge. This suggests a cyclical problem in which vocabulary limitations not only affect comprehension of text details, but also reduce overall engagement with longer texts. A study by AlShumaimeri (2006) examines the impact of vocabulary knowledge on the reading comprehension of university students. Al-Shumaimeri's research highlights how a limited vocabulary can significantly hinder students' ability to comprehend English texts, corroborating the findings of the current study at MT's Swasta Darul Akhiroh Bonan Dolok. Al-Shumaimeri emphasizes the critical role of vocabulary acquisition in improving reading comprehension skills (AlShumaimeri, 2006).

Another significant finding was the apparent reluctance of students to actively engage with the text by taking notes or highlighting unfamiliar words, indicating a lack of intrinsic motivation to engage with the reading material. This lack of engagement is detrimental to their comprehension skills, as active reading strategies are critical to improving comprehension and retention.

The written test results corroborated the questionnaire results, particularly highlighting the students' difficulty in answering detailed questions, which scored the lowest at 27.7%. This difficulty in answering detailed questions underscores a broader issue of inadequate vocabulary and reading skills, as detailed comprehension requires a thorough understanding of the text, which depends on a robust vocabulary and the ability to contextualize words and phrases.

In addition, the work of Grabe and Stoller (2013) in their book "Teaching and Researching: Reading" provides a comprehensive overview of the strategies that can be used to improve the reading skills of second language learners. They argue that beyond vocabulary, factors such as text length, students' engagement with the text, and their ability to use effective reading strategies significantly affect comprehension outcomes.

The findings from this investigation of reading comprehension challenges in MTs Swasta Darul Akhiroh Bonan Dolok have significant implications for educational strategies and future scholarly inquiry. The central role of vocabulary in text comprehension underscores the need for educators to weave systematic vocabulary instruction into their instructional frameworks. This could include direct word

instruction, contextual analysis, and strategies for inferring word meanings, such as morphemic analysis. In addition, the apparent reluctance of students to engage in active reading strategies, such as note-taking and highlighting, points to an urgent need for educators to teach effective reading techniques that encourage more interactive and thoughtful engagement with texts.

The diversity of students' comprehension challenges calls for a tailored approach to instruction, in which instruction is adapted to meet students' different needs, addressing specific weaknesses while reinforcing strengths. In addition, the difficulty posed by text length suggests that incorporating a wide range of reading materials that gradually increase in complexity could be beneficial in building students' reading stamina and skills. Looking ahead, future research could take a longitudinal lens to observe the development of students' reading comprehension.

E. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research, based on the previous findings, summarizes the challenges students face in reading comprehension of descriptive English texts. The study set out to dissect these difficulties and, through the responses to the questionnaire, found that a significant barrier is the students' limited vocabulary, which hinders their ability to grasp the main and supporting ideas within the texts. In addition, the length of the texts further complicates comprehension, suggesting that students struggle with sustained engagement and comprehension of longer passages. A notable observation is the students' lack of initiative in using strategies such as note-taking and highlighting unknown words, indicating a possible lack of active reading habits or motivation. Detailed examination of students' performance on five criteria in reading tests confirmed these findings. While students were relatively proficient in identifying main ideas, their ability to understand words in context, to decipher antonyms, and especially to answer detailed questions was significantly lower, the latter being the most challenging with a success rate of only 27.7%. This points to a crucial area for educational intervention, underscoring the need for focused efforts to expand students' vocabularies, improve their engagement with texts, and equip them with the necessary strategies to navigate and comprehend English texts more effectively.

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