ANALYZING THE LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING TOWARDS READING COMPREHENSION AMONG THE EIGHT GRADE STUDENTS OF MTsN 3 BANDA ACEH

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Abstract

Reading is a very important skill for students to master in learning English because, through reading students can understand what is conveyed in learning and also to increase students' vocabulary. Based on the independent curriculum at school, grade 2 students at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh have studied two aspects, namely detailed information and vocabulary. This research aimed to analyze the level of understanding towards reading comprehension faced by students in reading comprehension by class VIII students at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh. This research design is a descriptive quantitative research design. The population in this studied was the eighth grade at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh with three classes, with a population of 96 students, so the sample taken in this study was 33 students. The sample was selected using simple random sampling technique. To collect data, research can analyze the data using descriptive statistically that can be calculated by Ms. Excel. In addition, students analyzed difficulties in reading comprehension, including: detailed information and finding the meaning of vocabulary. In conclusion, the students of grade VIII of MTsN 3 Banda Aceh have a good understanding of toward the reading comprehension test in the aspects of detailed information and vocabulary meaning questions. It can be seen from the percentage score of the detailed information and the vocabulary meaning that they got 84% and 93,6% respectively. It is because the grade VIII students of MTsN 3 Banda Aceh have studied various vocabulary in the teaching and learning process of English subject, so they can answer the test question

Keywords: Reading comprehension, reading difficulty, detailed information, vocabulary

1. Introduction

Reading is a very important skill for students to master in learning English because, through reading students can understand what is conveyed in learning and also to increase students' vocabulary, and functions as a window of knowledge for students such as reading books, magazines, newspapers as well. According to Asmawati, (2015) reading is an activity that is done and found in every life. It aims is to obtain information and knowledge from articles, books and magazines. Reading is very important for many students as they get information during learning process. Teaching reading is very necessary aims to student's skills in understanding English texts. Reading is understanding the entire content of what is read. To achieve better results in the learning process, students need to read a lot and understand the content. However, reading comprehension requires a better comprehension approach either by students and teachers.

Based on the research conducted by Nuttal (2000) and (Saraswati el.al, (2021) that students' reading comprehension can show difficulties in five aspects of reading comprehension, namely determining the main idea, identifying references, making conclusions, detailing information, and finding the meaning of vocabulary.

First, according to Longan (2002), understanding paragraphs is very important to find the main idea. These elements can be found at the beginning or end of a sentence, helping students understand the text more easily.

Second, according to Sharpe (2005), when students encounter references, they must understand the antecedent, namely the reference of the pronoun used in the sentence to indicate a person, location, or situation.

Third, it is hoped that students understand the text well so they can draw conclusions from the statements in each paragraph. Readers must practice combining the directions given by the text with what they know before drawing conclusions (Kopitski, 2007). In other words, directions that help students make assumptions that lead them to conclusions.

Fourth, the purpose of the reading test is to evaluate students' ability to understand text. Understanding reading skills is a complex process that involves active reading activities, critical thinking, background knowledge, and the purpose of reading the text.

Fifth, students' background knowledge, especially vocabulary mastery, is very important for text comprehension. This includes the ability to guess or discover the meaning of new words through context tools. Predictions for general students. Context helps students make broader conclusions about meaning (Sharpe, 2005). As a result, students can learn to understand texts more effectively and efficiently. Based on the independent curriculum at school, grade 2 students at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh have studied two aspects, namely detailed information and vocabulary.

There are certain factors which have led researchers to select MTsN 3 Banda Aceh class VIII. Some of the most common problems identified at the outset of the current study were that these students experience considerable difficulties in terms of reading: therefore, they can be considered as an appropriate target group for the study of the potential factors and obstacles which might affect reading comprehension. Moreover, class VIII students are at a significant developmental period in their academic life where effective reading skills are vital for a successful outcome in other classes too. Interventions targeting these skills at this age can have tremendous effects on their learning across their developmental years. Additionally, it must consist of students with different reading skills; thereby, encompassing a wide variety of data and information regarding the diversity of challenges students face. This diversity makes the research both valuable and impactful, since it gives the different factors that influence reading comprehension, not a general one.

Based on the explanation above, researchers have carried out initial observations on class VIII students at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh and found that some students often face difficulties in comprehending reading and do not understand what they read. Therefore, researchers must investigate the problems and factors that cause students to face difficulties with reading comprehension. Researchers are interested in researching and analyzing the difficulties students face in understanding English texts because they know that by knowing these difficulties, both teachers and students can improve the way they teach and learn to understand texts better. Initially, the author writer found that several students at the school were not proficient in reading.

2. Literature Review

Reading comprehension is a student's ability to process information from reading texts that can be used in everyday life. Reading comprehension is very important in the academic field and is needed to analyze and explain ideas from reading. Reading comprehension is a meaningful interaction between the reader and the text. In reading comprehension, we also need to know the sub-skills of reading. As stated by Suparman (2012), there are several aspects of reading comprehension skills that readers must master to understand texts in order to obtain written information, including identifying main ideas, making conclusions, looking for references, identifying detailed information, and the meaning of vocabulary in reading. According to Fahriany, (2014) understanding text is the essence of understanding. It is the process of interpreting text using the reader's previous knowledge to construct meaning.

According to Yang, (2016) one of the most important ways to obtain knowledge or information from the surrounding environment is by reading. In addition, Mardianti and Ohoiwutun (2014), stated that teaching reading is very useful, because it helps students improve their ability to understand and interpret the content of English texts. Additionally, reading helps learners expand vocabulary and sentences which improving their listening and speaking skills. In other words, reading can help them develop additional language learning skills.

On the other hand, several others provide studies shows more detailed issues regarding reading comprehension which focus on detailed parts of the text as follows. Furthermore, research conducted by Khairunnisa et al. (2023) shows that students have difficulty finding the meaning of words due to lack of knowledge. They also have difficulty getting basic ideas from texts, and they do not like reading texts in English. They also face difficulties in answering reading practice questions. In addition, Arong et al., (2022) stated in their research that students' difficulties in reading comprehension can occur when they lack English vocabulary, do not know effective techniques for reading texts, and lack facilities for the teaching and learning process.

Other research related to students' difficulties in reading comes from Atikah (2009) who focused on finding out students' difficulties in linguistic problems in reading comprehension and the results of her research showed that students experienced difficulties in vocabulary, grammar and spelling. Difficulties in understanding English reading texts must be recognized and overcome by students or lecturers because understanding reading texts is an important skill and is an indicator of achievement in reading that students must achieve. Based on several previous studies, the main problem of students' difficulties in mastering reading skills is vocabulary.

3. Research Method

In this study, the writer used a descriptive quantitative design to test students' difficulties in reading comprehension. According to Moleong (2013), descriptive research is a research method carried out to describe or explain an object that is currently occurring. According to Creswell (2013), quantitative research is a type of research method that uses numerical data to collect and analyze measurable data. Therefore, descriptive quantitative research method is an approach used to describe the characteristics of a phenomenon or research object that is used statisticsally in analyzing research (sugiyono, 2016). data. In this method, the research aims to collect quantitative data that can be described and explained systematically.

This research was conducted at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh. The research was carried out at this location because the writer had practical teaching experience during a field exexperience program (PPL). It is

located on Jl. Unida Surien Campus, Meuraxa District, Banda Aceh. The research was carried out from April 22-May 22 2014.

Creswell (2012) stated that a population is a group of individuals who have one distinguishing characteristic. The population is also defined as the entire research subject, while the sample is part of the population of people and is internal survey research (Arikunto, 2014). In other words, the population includes all subjects involved in the research. The sample is part of the object you want to research.

The population for this research was class VIII students at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh. MTsN 3 Banda Aceh has 11 classes with a total of 321 students. Class VII has 117 students, class VIII has 96 students, and class IX has 108 students. The writer chose class VIII, which consisted of 96 students, so the sample taken was only 33 people. They were selected by using simple random sampling technique with the lottery method. According to Nuardi (2013), simple random sampling is the process of selecting samples from a population that is determined to have the same chance of being selected as a sample.

The instrument used to collect data from samples is a test. The test was a written test or reading test. The writer used a test that has four texts directly from the grade eight MTs student text book (Practice Your English Competence published by Erlangga). The test contained 10 questions, with 5 questions of detailed information and 5 of questions about the meaning of vocabulary. Based on the Kurikulum Merdeka (Freedom Curriculum) at school, class 2 students at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh have studied two aspects, namely detailed information and vocabulary.

Data was collected through tests and then analyzed statistically to provide a detailed picture of the facts studied. The test was in form of English reading test that was given to students of MTsN 3 Banda Aceh as a way the writer collected the research data. The type of test carried out is a multiple-choice test consisting of ten questions. There are four choices for each question, namely A, B, C, or D. The writer gives ten points for questions answered correctly and zero points for questions answered incorrectly.

To analyze quantitative data, the writer analyzes student's scores based on the result of the test. The reading test consists of 10 questions (5 questions of detailed information and 5 questions of guessing the meaning of vocabulary). The score for each correct answer is 10 and 0 for the wrong answer. Therefore, the highest score is 100 (10 x 10 = 100).

4. Results and Discussion

The number of grade VIII students of MTsN 3 Banda Aceh who took the test were 33 students. The test given was about reading comprehension consisted of 10 questions: 5 detailed information questions and 5 vocabulary meaning questions.

4.1 The Analysis Result of Reading Comprehension test

Tabel 1. Reading Comprehension Scores

No	Scores	Frequency
1	100	17
2	90	7
3	80	5
4	70	3
5	50	1

Based on the table above, there are 33 students of grade VIII who were being the sample of the study. It can be seen that the scores that the students obtained based on the tests regarding detailed information

and vocabulary questions are various, ranging from 50, 70, 80, 90, and 100. It can be concluded that the highest score that the students get is 100 and the lowest score is 50. Specifically, there are 17 students who got score of 100, 7 students got score of 90, 5 students got score of 80, 3 students got score of 70, and 1 student got score of 50.

The following table will show detailed of the students' answers according to two types of reading questions; details information and vocabulary.

Table 2. Student Answers to Types of Reading Questions

No	Types of Reading Comprehension Questions	Questions	Sample	Total Score of True Answers	Mean Score
1.	Detailed Questions	10	33	143	4.3
2.	Meaning of Vocabulary	10		157	4.75
Total				300	9

Based on the table above, the mean score ($\overline{\times}$) of the detailed information comprehension test is 4.3. Meanwhile, the mean score ($\overline{\times}$) for the vocabulary meaning question is 4.75. It other words, the question that gives the highest score to students are the questions related to the meaning of vocabulary with the mean score ($\overline{\times}$) of 4.75. Furthermore, the questions which the students cannot answer well are the questions about the detailed information that can be proven by its mean score ($\overline{\times}$) 4.3. It meant that the students perform better in answering the questions related to vocabulary meaning.

4.2. The Result of the Students Answers in Understanding Reading Questions

The percentage of reading comprehension test on the aspects of detailed information and vocabulary meaning questions is calculated by the author using the formula as stated in the Chapter III. This study calculates the average percentage of each indicator with the following information:

Tabel 3. Percentage of Students Reading Comprehension

No	Score/Range	Ability Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	80-100	Very good	29	88%
2	70-79	Good	3	9%
3	60-69	Enough	-	-
4	50-59	Bad	1	3%
5	0-49	Very Bad	-	-
			33	100%

Based on the data above, it can be seen that the overall percentage is 100%. The data showed that there are 29 students in the very good category (88%), 3 students who were in good category (9%) and 1 student was in the bad category (3%).

4.3. Percentage of questions

Detailed information questions (question number 1,2,3,4 and 7) from the data table can be calculated using the following formula: $S = R / N \times 100$.

Where: S = correct percentage, R = correct answer, N = number of students.

Question Number 1: $S = R / N \times 100 = 32 / 33 \times 100 = 96\%$

Question Number 2: $S = R / N \times 100 = 32 / 33 \times 100 = 96\%$

Question Number 3: S = $R / N \times 100$ = 17 / 33 × 100 = 51%

Question Number 4: S = $R / N \times 100$ = 29 / 33 × 100 = 87%

Question Number 7: S = $R / N \times 100$ = 30 / 33 × 100 = 90%

Tabel 4. Questions about detailed information

Question Number	Formulation	Percentage
1	32÷33×100	96%
2	32÷33×100	96%
3	17÷33×100	51%
4	29÷33×100	87%
7	30÷33×100	90%
	96+96+51+87+90÷5	84%

Based on the results of the students' tests on questions 1 to 5, the level of students' proficiency in finding answers is classified as very good. Because students can understand the information in detail which is the main content according to the title, students can answer questions in the form of test. Vocabulary questions (question number 5,6,8,9,10) From the data table can be calculated using the formula:

S = $R / N \times 100$

Where: S = correct percentage, R = correct answer, N = number of students

Question Number 5: S = $R/ N \times 100$ = 32 / 33 × 100 = 96%

Question Number 6: S = $R / N \times 100$ = 32 / 33 × 100 = 96%

Question Number 8: S = $R / N \times 100$ = 28 / 33 × 100 = 84%

Question Number 9: S = $R / N \times 100$ = 32 / 33 × 100 = 96%

Question Number 10: S = $R / N \times 100$ = 32 / 33 × 100 = 96%

Tabel 5. Questions about vocabulary questions

Question Number	Formulation	Percentage
1	32÷33×100	96%
2	32÷33×100	96%
3	28÷33×100	28%
4	32÷33×100	96%
7	32÷33×100	96%
	96+96+84+96+96÷5	93.6%

In conclusion, the students of grade VIII of MTsN 3 Banda Aceh have a good understanding of the reading comprehension test in the aspects of detailed information and vocabulary meaning questions. It can be seen from the percentage score of the detailed information and the vocabulary meaning that they got 84% and 93,6% respectively. It is because the grade VIII students of MTsN 3 Banda Aceh have studied various vocabulary in the teaching and learning process of English subject, so they can answer the test question.

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that understanding the material and the meaning of words is very important in the reading process. If students can understand the material in the text, then they will be able to answer questions related to detailed information. Then, if students have and understand a lot of vocabulary, so they will be able to answer questions about the meaning of words or vocabulary meaning. As previously explained, reading comprehension often depends on students' ability to recognize and convey the important meaning of the text.

In addition, appropriate use of language is also recognized as an important factor in accurate viewing and understanding. Students also need to have knowledge of reading skills, especially in the context of

English language learning. They must be able to understand the material they are facing. This can pose challenges in terms of reading comprehension and skills, as well as in understanding parts of the text that are arranged sequentially (Reflinda, 2022). Complete knowledge, including the facts that appear in students' answers, is closely related to the choices made.

According to Balota et al., (2021), recognizing the right words, as well as understanding the meaning of the various references contained in the text, is very important. This aspect is important in the academic world because it is often needed when students are asked to recall certain knowledge during an evaluation. To properly handle detailed information, students need to implement active reading strategies. There are three approaches that have been shown to be effective in helping students understand texts: identifying and underlining key points, taking notes, and asking questions about those points (Quinonez-Beltran et al., 2023). For example, when reading a historical text, readers may highlight dates, figures, or events by underlining them. This is an effective method to ensure that students can actively understand, remember, and discuss the material. Satriani (2018) also adds that summarizing parts of a text can help strengthen understanding of complex details because students must read and then rewrite the information they find.

The second is categorized as vocabulary knowledge. Vocabulary becomes a crucial component in reading, because words are the basis of all texts that contain ideas (Abdulsahib et al., 2022; Wen & Naim, 2023). Good vocabulary mastery increases the efficiency of students' understanding of textbooks. Fahrian, (2014) adds that students need to have a deep understanding of the substance of the text in order to find the meaning of words in context. Therefore, vocabulary teaching should be part of the teaching strategy applied during reading sessions.

The use of context clues is an effective strategy for improving comprehension of word meanings. Context clues are clues provided in the text that help readers understand the meaning of new phrases (Tannenbaum et al., 2006). By focusing on words, phrases, and sentences in their immediate context, it often becomes easier to guess the meaning of new terms. Additionally, this method helps students learn new vocabulary while reducing the impact of unfamiliar words on their overall comprehension. In terms of comprehension, this is in line with Gilakjani and Sabouri's (2016) finding that the most important aspect of word knowledge is understanding its meaning when it appears in the text.

Students' knowledge of vocabulary and details can be improved through pre- reading activities. Teachers can provide prior knowledge and important terms to help students understand the material that will be discussed in the text (Cruther, 2013). This step improves students' ability to understand the text because they can connect new knowledge with what they already know. For example, before reading a scientific paper, students can benefit from recognizing important terminology and concepts, which can increase their chances of understanding the detailed information provided. According to Hidayati (2018), pre-reading discussions can involve prior knowledge and provide a better basis for understanding.

Another approach to expanding language knowledge is to keep a language diary (Sari & Suryaman, 2021). In this assignment, students record new terms they learn, complete with definitions and examples of their use in sentences. This kind of practice increases students' chances of using new phrases, and repetition helps the terms stick in their memory. According to Khalifa and Shabdin (2016), vocabulary diaries can serve as a personal dictionary for students, allowing them to review their words chronologically. This action can help students enrich their language reserves over time. Games and flashcards are effective in teaching vocabulary because they facilitate students' learning in a fun way. These activities not only make learning more interesting and engaging for children, but also reinforce new concepts learned in class (Aini, 2022). For example, games such as word bingo, crossing the ocean,

and the use of flashcards make vocabulary practice more fun. Anderson (2003) finds that interactive learning can increase students' motivation and memory for new vocabulary, making the words learned easier to understand. Interactive activities, such as games and flashcards, can make vocabulary learning more engaging and effective. They offer a fun and interactive way for students to practice and reinforce new vocabulary. For example, vocabulary bingo games, crossword puzzles, and the use of flashcards can turn vocabulary practice into a stimulating and enjoyable activity. Anderson's (2003) research showed that interactive learning methods can increase students' motivation and retention of new words, making vocabulary acquisition more effective.

5. Conclusions

These findings may be even more significant for eighth-grade pupils because reading requires comprehension, which is dependent on more complex information and vocabulary knowledge. Students who did good at identifying and recalling actual aspects in the passage demonstrated much greater levels of comprehension. One of the necessary abilities for academic achievement is the capacity to focus on a single detail at a time and thoroughly absorb it.

Furthermore, having a suitable vocabulary can help you interpret texts and fully comprehend what is being said. Learning new terms will not only make it easier to decode individual words, but it will also help you grasp what you're reading. Students that excelled at inferring meaning and reading through texts for greater detail in this study had a large vocabulary. Furthermore, reading tactics such as underlining, annotating, and summarizing are shown to be useful in helping pupils absorb and recall specific material. Students who used these approaches were more inclined to work closely with a text, which encouraged them to comprehend and retain more.

Similarly, applying context cues and pre-reading knowledge were critical for understanding and developing vocabulary, and thus improved comprehension of reading content. Moreover, vocabulary logs, games, and flashcards were also applied to enhance vocabulary acquisition. Such activities help the students to see the new words multiple times and make the learning process more entertaining. Therefore, the statistics also support the fact that effective and can make reading practice much more efficient in terms of vocabulary retention and comprehension.

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