

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN READING COMPREHENSION AT SMPN 05 TANAH PINOH BARAT

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Abstrak

Penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif dilakukan untuk mengetahui kesulitan siswa dalam membaca pemahaman dan faktor-faktor kesulitan siswa di SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat. Subjek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas VII SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat. Putra. Sampel dipilih dengan menggunakan purposive sampling. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kesulitan siswa dalam membaca pemahaman, dan faktor-faktor kesulitan siswa di kelas VII SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat. Peneliti menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif. Subyek penelitian ini adalah siswa SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat. Sampel dipilih dengan menggunakan purposive sampling. Teknik pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan teknik pengukuran dan komunikasi tidak langsung. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah tes membaca dan angket tertutup. Peneliti memberikan tes dengan 20 soal pilihan ganda. Setelah mendapatkan data dari tes membaca, peneliti menganalisis data dengan menghitung nilai siswa pada tes yang telah diberikan pada masing-masing kelas. Kemudian peneliti mengkategorikan nilai siswa pada tes tersebut berdasarkan tingkat kemampuannya. Untuk mengetahui kesulitan siswa, peneliti menghitung persentase kesulitan siswa dalam lima aspek pemahaman membaca. Data dari angket tertutup dianalisis dengan menghitung persentase jawaban dari siswa. Hasil tes menunjukkan bahwa siswa kelas VII SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat mengalami kesulitan dalam lima aspek pemahaman bacaan. Yaitu, ide pokok, detail pendukung, kosakata, inferensi, dan referensi. Aspek yang paling menantang bagi siswa adalah kosakata dengan persentase 58%, dan referensi sebesar 62%. Gagasan pokok dengan persentase kesukaran siswa 38%, rincian pendukung 38%, dan inferensi 42%. Hasil angket menunjukkan bahwa kesulitan siswa dalam membaca pemahaman disebabkan oleh 3 faktor, yaitu: Kurangnya pemahaman materi bacaan, kesulitan dalam menggunakan strategi membaca, dan yang terakhir adalah keterbatasan pengetahuan kosakata. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini adalah siswa gagal memahami kosakata dan membuat kesimpulan. Kedua aspek ini merupakan aspek yang paling sulit bagi siswa.

Kata Kunci: Kesulitan Siswa, Pemahaman Bacaan, Metode Deskriptif Kuantitatif

Abstract

Quantitative descriptive research was conducted to determine the students' difficulties in reading comprehension and the factors of students' difficulties at SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat. The subjects of this study were seventh grade students of SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat. Son. Samples were selected using purposive sampling. The purpose of this study was to determine the difficulties of students in reading comprehension, and the factors of students' difficulties in class VII SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat. Researchers used quantitative descriptive methods. The subjects of this study were students of SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat. Samples were selected using purposive sampling. Data collection techniques in this study using measurement techniques and indirect communication. The instruments used are reading test and closed questionnaire. The researcher gave a test with 20 multiple choice questions. After getting the data from the reading test, the researcher analyzed the data by calculating the students' scores on the tests that had been given to each class. Then the researcher categorizes the students' scores on the test based on their ability level. To find out the students' difficulties, the researcher calculated the percentage of students' difficulties in five aspects of reading comprehension. Data from closed questionnaires were analyzed by

calculating the percentage of answers from students. The test results showed that the seventh-grade students of SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat had difficulties in five aspects of reading comprehension. Namely, the main idea, supporting details, vocabulary, inference, and references. The most challenging aspects for students are vocabulary with a percentage of 58%, and references by 62%. The main idea with the percentage of student difficulty 38%, supporting details 38%, and inference 42%. The results of the questionnaire show that students' difficulty in reading comprehension is caused by 3 factors, namely: Lack of understanding of reading material, difficulty in using reading strategies, and the last is limited vocabulary knowledge. The conclusion of this study is that students fail to understand vocabulary and make conclusions. These two aspects are the most difficult aspects for students.

Keywords: Students Difficulties, Reading Comprehension, Descriptive Quantitative Method

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an action to see and understand a text. It is very true because reading requires the use of vision to understand a few words in a sentence and make them meaningful. Reading may give several benefits for language learners and provide the students a good model for English writing, an opportunity to study vocabulary, grammar, punctuations, and also gives a real illustration of how to construct sentences, paragraphs, or a passage. Alderson in Gebre (2016: 87) states reading plays a very important role in our lives and Mozayan (2012: 2423) states that the more someone reads, the more they pick up items of vocabulary and grammar from text, often without realizing it, and this widening language knowledge seems to increase their overall linguistic confidence.

In reading, the students not only read with an aloud voice, but reading is a process of getting meaning from the text through comprehension. By comprehending the text will help the students to develop more complete to get information of what they read and lead them into a deep understanding of the text. The students who understand what they are reading can more easily go beyond the given information on the page.

Reading and comprehension are two things that cannot be separated. Reading means understanding the text and it is the same thing as comprehension. Reading comprehension is not simply reading with a loud voice, but reading comprehension is additionally settled to comprehend the significance of words, sentences, passages, and thoughts. According to Woolley (2011: 15) "reading comprehension that should be mastered by readers to comprehend the text".

Comprehension is an active process, which the reader actively engages in a text to construct meaning. Therefore, reading comprehension is to understand the contents of the reading and all information explicitly and implicitly using knowledge and reasons to understand the ideas of the reading. Comprehension in learning is a level of ability that

expects someone to be able to understand the meaning or concept, situation, and fact low. In this case, do not only memorize verbally, but understand the concept of the problem or fact to be asked, then the operation can distinguish, change, prepare, present, arrange, interpret, explain, demonstrate, give examples, estimate, determine, and make decisions.

Reading comprehension is one of the reading processes in comprehending a text. Patrick (2013: 35) mentioned that characterized that reading comprehension is normal as the performed reading outcome, as is obtaining analytical thinking specifically when higher reading abilities are underlined. Unfortunately, teaching reading comprehension in Indonesian schools has several problems that are caused by many factors and aspects, hard material given, the strategy used by the teacher, and so on, so the teachers must find the solution if the teachers want teaching process will run well.

However, there are still many students who have difficulty understanding reading texts. Reading difficulties is a common problem of students, Hasanah, (2019:4). Likewise, Students in Vocational High School, also have difficulty in reading. They must also master reading skills because they will find a lot of reading material. However, getting something is not easy for students.

In learning to read comprehension, the teacher added that the students of SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat, Melawi Regency, especially grade VII, got a daily test score of 40-70. The importance of reading skills in developing English mastery, so students' difficulties in understanding English reading texts must be identified, and what factors make students difficult in reading comprehension. That way, teachers at schools know the difficulties of students, and can also develop appropriate learning strategies, so that students can improve their understanding of the texts they read.

There are previous studies that have similarities with this study conducted by Estika Satriani (2018). She researched "Reading Comprehension Difficulties Encountered by English Students of Universitas Islam. She found difficulties faced by students, there were several aspects, namely, lack of motivation in reading, lack of skills, and these students did not have background knowledge, so the lessons were not studied well. The other study by Febri Nila Rosaria Hutagalung¹, Dervine Hutagalung², Dinaria Veronika Simanjuntak³, Putri Delima Yanti Tampubolon⁴. The purpose of this study was to analyze the students' ability in understanding the Recount Text. This research used descriptive qualitative method. This research was conducted at SMK Dharma Bakti 1 Medan. The sample of this research was 17 students of class 10 TKJ. This study used a reading test and interview

instruments. The last is Sarwaswati, et al. (2021) conducted a study on students' difficulties in reading comprehension in eighth-grade students at SMP N4 Tegallalang. The result is that students have difficulty in five aspects of reading comprehension.

From the explanation above, this research has similarities with those described above, namely the same in explaining reading difficulties. But students and goals in research are different. Middle school, university, and eighth-grade students may have different difficulties. Therefore, this research should be carried out.

Based on the description above, the researcher conducted a study on the analysis of learning difficulties in English in class VII students. Therefore, it is necessary to do research "AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN READING COMPREHENSION AT SMPN 05 TANAH PINOH BARAT (Descriptive Study on Class VII Students of SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat Melawi regency)"

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this study, the researcher is use descriptive quantitative research. Descriptive research aims to obtain information about the actual or existing phenomena or situations at the time of the research, Sigit Santoso, (2011:59). In descriptive research, the researcher collects, analyzes, and interprets descriptive data to capture certain interesting phenomena. In this case, the phenomenon is students' difficulties in reading comprehension. In a descriptive study, no treatment is necessary. Research only explained the variable and phenomena that occur in the school. The researcher had described the students' difficulties in reading comprehension at the seventh-grade students of SMP N 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat.

Subject of Research

The subject of this research is the students of SMP N 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat. The researcher used purposive sampling to select the sample. Purposive sampling is the selection of samples based on certain criteria. Sugiyono, (2013:85) states that purposive sampling is a sampling technique with certain considerations and criteria. In this case, the sample selection based on the criteria needed is seventh-grade students.

Techniques and Tools of Data Collection

In this research, the researcher was used measurement and indirect communication as the technique of collecting data. The measurement technique is a technique that is carried out by identifying how the data was collected. This study used a reading test as an instrument to collect the data on students' difficulties in reading comprehension.

a. Test

To do research, a researcher has several techniques of data collection. According to Sudijono (2011: 67), the test is a method that can be used or a procedure that needs to be taken in the context of measurement and assessment in the field of education, in the form of giving assignments or a series of tasks in the form of questions which must be answered, or orders which must be done by the test so that based on the data obtained from the measurement results a value can be obtained that symbolizes the behavior or achievement of the testee; which values can be compared with values achieved by other testees or compared to certain standard values. In this research, the researcher used measurement techniques and indirect correspondence techniques in collecting data. The instrument in gathering information, the researcher gave a test as a structure filling test using multiple-choice the test consisted of 20 questions.

b. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions to gather information from respondents. Sugiyono, (2013:142) states that a questionnaire is a data collection technique that is done by giving a set of written questions to respondents to answer. Questionnaires are used to determine the factors of students' difficulties in reading comprehension. In this study, the researcher chose a closed-ended questionnaire, the answer is chosen by the respondent himself. The researcher adopted a questionnaire from Yolanda Melandita, (2019:63). The questionnaire has been validated by the researcher.

Technique of Data Analysis

1. Analysis of the Test

The result of the data obtained from the test is used to find out what difficulties are faced by students in learning reading comprehension. Students correct and incorrect answers were used as an indicator of difficulty.

First, the researcher scores the results of the test using the formula below:

$$= \frac{\text{The number of right answer}}{\text{The number of question}} \times 100$$

After getting the results of students' scores, the researcher calculated the students' average scores. Then the researcher categorizes student scores based on the ability level according to Arikunto, (2006:245) as quoted in Wahyu Tanoto, (2016:39).

Table 1
The Classification of Students' Reading Ability Levels

Value	Grade	Level of Achievement
85-100	A	Excellent
70-84	B	Good
55-69	C	Average
40-54	D	Poor
< 39	E	Very Poor

To find out what difficulties are experienced, the researcher had calculated the percent error of the five aspects of reading comprehension using the Arikunto, (2008:172) formula:

$$S:\frac{R}{N} \times 100\%$$

S: Incorrect Percentage

R: Incorrect answers

N: Total Sample

2. Analysis of the Questionnaire

This study used a closed-ended questionnaire, where the answers are chosen by the respondents themselves. The questionnaire consists of 15 statements. To analyze research data, the researcher used the formula of Sudjono, (2001:43).

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

Were,

P: Percentage

F: Frequency

N: The total number of the respondents

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Result of the Test

The results of the first test score with the main score of 44,4. The ability of students on the first test is sufficient, then the mean score of students on the second test is 32,4 which is classified as poor. The last test experienced a significant decrease, with the main score of 29,68 categorized as poor. Based on students' abilities, this show that students have difficulty in answering questions from reading comprehension. The following is an explanation of the results of the five aspects of reading comprehension.

1. Students Answering Main Idea

In this aspect, there are 4 questions on the first test in class VII-A. As a result, as many as 14 students answered incorrectly on this aspect of the question, and 6 students answered correctly. This means that out of 20 students, 6 students did not experience difficulties only in answering this question. The second test is given to class VII B students, this aspect also contains 4 questions to see if students in that class difficulty have answering questions or are still having difficulty determining the main idea. As a result, 15 students answered correctly on this aspect of the question and another 5 students answered incorrectly on the second test. The last test was given to class VII C to see students' understanding of the aspects of the main idea that were answered correctly on the given test. The results of the third test, from 20 students of class VII C, 16 students answered the test questions correctly, and 4 students answered incorrectly.

2. Students Answering Supporting Detail

There are 4 questions in each test students' understanding of detailed information. The results on the first test for class VII A students showed 11 students who answered detailed questions, but some students answered correctly. The researcher gave a second test to class VII B, and the results were 13 students who answered the questions correctly. And as many as 7 students had difficulty answering the questions. Of the 20 samples, only 13 students answered correctly. Finally, in class VII C 15 students answered correctly on the last test questions. And there are only 5 students who have difficulty. Get the key from the entire sample, 60 seventh grade students still do not understand the detailed information aspect. On average, students still have

difficulty in answering detailed information questions. Below is a table of student difficulties on the three tests.

3. Students Answering Vocabulary

Just like the previous aspect, this aspect has 4 questions about the test to be given to 20 samples. The first test was in class VII A, 18 students answered prayers. However, some students answered all correctly on this question, namely 2 respondents. The test results for class VII B students, there were only 7 students who answered the test questions correctly and 13 other students answered the test questions with wrong prayers. The researcher gave a final test to class VII C students, to see students' vocabulary. The result is an increase from the two classes listed above, namely students who answered the test questions correctly as many as 16 students and only 4 who had difficulty working on the questions. From the explanation above, it can be said that there are students of class VII C from class VII A and VII B because from each class that is given a test only in class VII C only 4 students have difficulty vocabulary.

4. Students Answering Inference

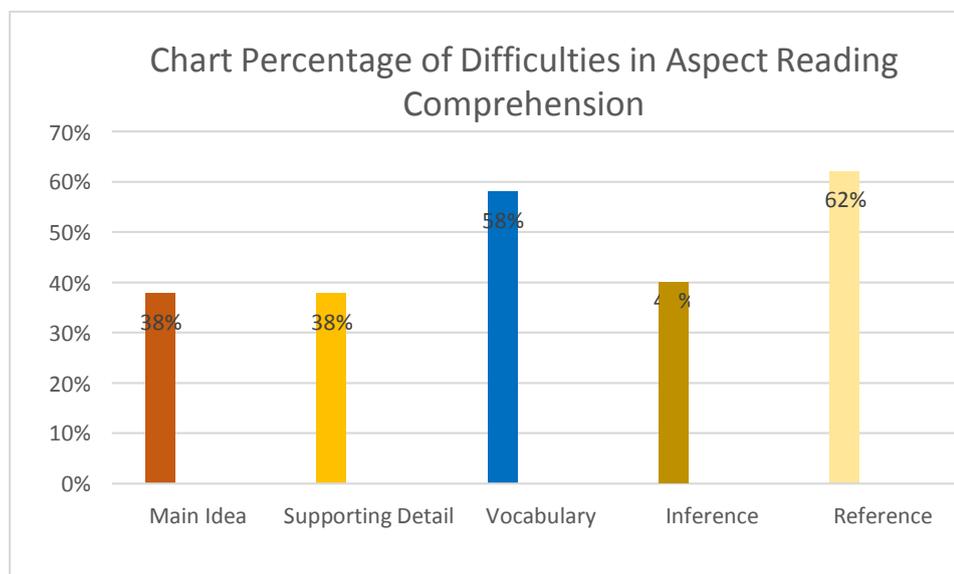
To test students' understanding of inference conclusions, give 4 questions about this aspect in each test. The results of the first test in class VII A with the number of respondents 20 people. The result is that 5 respondents from the class answered the test questions correctly, and 15 other students answered the test questions incorrectly. The second test was given by class VII B. Of 20 respondents, 13 students answered the questions correctly, and 7 students answered incorrectly. The third test was given to class VII C students, the results showed 17 students who could answer the questions correctly. And 3 students had difficulty with this aspect, but not with other students. The conclusion from the explanation above is that there is an increase in students' understanding of this aspect in class VII C compared to class VII A and VII B. The following is the percentage of students' difficulties in inference aspects.

5. Students Answering Reference

The last aspect is looking for references. This aspect also has 4 items in each test to see students' understanding of this aspect. The first test in class VII A with a sample of 20 students showed that as many as 3 respondents

answered correctly on this aspect of the test question. And 17 Students have difficulty in answering this last aspect, but not with other students. The second test was given by class VII B students, and the results showed an increase in that 11 students answered questions correctly in this aspect. And there are only 9 students who have difficulty in answering test questions with this aspect. The last test was given to class VII C students and the result was 9 students answered correctly on this aspect. Meanwhile, there were 11 students having difficulty in finding references. It can be said that only grade VII B students experienced an increase in their reading comprehension. Here is the proportion of student difficulties.

To simplify the percentage result for each difficulty item described above, the researcher displays the percentage result in the chart below.



Picture 4.1 Chart percentage of students in 5 aspects of reading comprehension

Based on the chart above, students have difficulty in 5 aspects of reading comprehension. The most difficult aspects for students are Vocabulary and References, the highest percentage of students' difficulties is in these two aspects. Determining the main idea with the proportion of students having difficulty 38%, supporting detail with the proportion of 38%. Vocabulary 58% of students is difficult, inferences 42% of students who have difficulty and the last is students who are difficult in the aspect of references by 62%.

Result of Questionnaire

A. Students' Difficulties in Reading Comprehension on Internal Factors

Five internal factors caused students' difficulty in reading comprehension, namely:

1. Factor Lack of Familiarity with Reading Material

On the factor of lack of familiarity with reading material, there are 2 statements in the questionnaire, namely numbered 2 and 11. 12 students in class VII mostly chose to strongly agree with a percentage of 20% with a questionnaire statement number 2, and the most chosen option at number 11 was strongly agree (35%). It can be concluded that the students have difficulty with factor The Lack of Familiarity with the Reading Material, students do not study reading comprehension material at home first, only learn in class and rely on teacher instructions, and also do not understand the type of text because the reading background is still limited.

2. Factor Difficulty in Using Reading Strategies

This factor had 2 questionnaire statements, namely numbers 1 and 3. From the results of this factor questionnaire statement, it can be concluded that in number 1 student more choose the strongly agree option with the number of students answering as many as 6 respondents (20%). Number 3 is positive statement, the most chosen were disagree 12 students (20%). This means that students have difficulty with reading comprehension due to the difficulty factor in using reading strategies. students do not understand how to use reading strategies, such as skimming and scanning.

3. Factor in Problem in Recalling after Reading

Like the previous statement, there are 2 statements to see whether students have difficulty with this factor or not. More students choose Neutral with a total of 18 respondents (30%) in questionnaire number 7. And at number 13 students also choose Neutral with a total of 6 students (6%), students are more impartial to the choice to agree or not with this statement.

The conclusion is the problem in recalling after reading factor is not a factor causing students' difficulties in reading comprehension. This means that when students' read, they do not forget the most important things in the text, and students do not read the text aloud to remember the detailed information.

4. Factor Limited Vocabulary Knowledge

To see if the students had difficulties due to this factor, the researcher gave 2 statements in numbers 8 and 10 is a positive statement. More students chose Strongly Agree with a total of 24 respondents (40%), which means they strongly agree with number 8. At number 10, the most chosen by students is the Disagree option with a total of 6 students (6%). This means that students strongly disagree with this questionnaire. The conclusion is students find it difficult to understand the meaning of words contained in the text because their vocabulary is limited. They have difficulty in reading comprehension caused by the limited vocabulary knowledge factor.

5. Factor Lack of Fluency

From the result of questionnaire, the option most chosen by students in numbers 9 and 14 (positive statement) is Neutral, with a percentage of number 9 25% totaling 15 respondents, and 24 respondents (40%) answering number 13. It can be concluded that the lack of fluency factor is not a factor in their difficulty in reading comprehension.

B. Students Difficulties in Reading Comprehension on External Factors

In external factors, two factors caused reading comprehension difficulties, namely house, and school environment.

1. Factor House Environment

This factor also has 2 statements, namely in numbers 5 and 12. The result show that, the option most chosen by students in the positive statement number 5 is Agree with a total of 12 respondents (20%) and disagree as many as 12 students (20%) at number 12. It can be concluded that the house environment is not a factor in students' difficulties in reading comprehension, because they agree that the family provides motivational support when reading English texts at home.

2. Factor School Environment

This factor has 2 questionnaire statements, which are contained in numbers 4 and 6. at number 4 students chose the disagree option more with a percentage of 6%, and at number 6 students answered more strongly agree 6 respondents (6%). The conclusion is the school environment is not a factor in students' difficulties in reading comprehension.

This questionnaire concludes that 3 factors cause students' difficulties in reading comprehension, namely internal factors. The first is Lack of familiarity with Reading material, the second is difficulty in using reading strategies, and the last is Limited vocabulary knowledge. External factors are not a factor causing students difficulties in reading comprehension.

DISCUSSION

The results of the seventh-grade students' reading comprehension test at SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat Melawi Regency showed that students had difficulty in 5 aspects of reading comprehension. This is in line with the research conducted by Saraswati, et al. (2021:40). They researched to find students' difficulties in reading comprehension. As a result, students have difficulty in 5 aspects of reading comprehension. This aspect is very important in learning reading comprehension, to facilitate students in the process of reading and answering questions.

In this study, the seventh-grade junior high school students experienced the most difficulties in drawing conclusions and understanding vocabulary. This is related to the theory explained by the researcher in chapter 2. Joseph, (2001:72) states that students have difficulty understanding the text because they do not know the meaning of words and do not capture the information in the reading text. As a result, they have difficulty understanding the meaning of words and cannot infer the information in the texts they read. Vocabulary is very important in learning English, especially reading comprehension. Students must have a broad vocabulary to facilitate learning and be able to understand how to make text conclusions. Difficulties faced by students include language problems, such as the theory in chapter two. According to Harmer, (1991) quoted in Adriyani, (2020:18) students are limited in foreign languages or English. This makes it difficult for students to understand the vocabulary of the text they read, especially when they encounter unfamiliar words.

Based on the explanation of the findings of the questionnaire, students have difficulty in reading comprehension caused by 3 internal factors, namely lack of familiarity with reading material, difficulty in using reading strategies, and limited vocabulary knowledge. This is not in line with Westwood's theory, (2008:34) in chapter 2. He said that students' difficulties were caused by 5 factors, namely difficulty in using reading strategies, limited vocabulary knowledge, lack of fluency, lack of familiarity with the reading material, and the last problem in recalling after reading. On the external factor school and

house environment theory from Peter, (2001) is not a factor causing class VII students to find it difficult to understand the reading.

Previous research that describes reading difficulties has been carried out by several researchers. Some of these researchers are Estika Satriani, (2018), who researched the difficulties of students in reading comprehension material for English students at the Islamic University of Riau. The next researcher from Wahyu Tanoto, (2016), examined the difficulties of students in reading comprehension at the 6th-semester students of Muhammadiyah Purworejo University. Other researchers who have similarities are Saraswaiti, Dambayana, Pratiwi, (2020). They researched students' difficulties in reading comprehension of eighth-grade students in SMP N 4 Tegallalang.

The researcher concluded that this study and previous studies are similarly focused on difficulty in reading comprehension. The difference with this study is in the sample and research objectives.

The results of this research, class VII students have difficulties in determining the main idea, with a percentage of 38%, supporting detail with a percentage of 38%, vocabulary 58%, inference 42%, and reference 62%. The previous study above did not examine the factors of difficulty faced by students, while this study explained the factors causing it.

The explanation above can be concluded that the results of the test have answered research question number 1, namely what the difficulties of class VII students in reading comprehension are, and the results of the questionnaire explain research question number 2 that students' difficulties are caused by the factors described above.

CONCLUSION

The difficulty of students in reading comprehension obtained from the test results data is that students have difficulty in 5 aspects of reading comprehension. Namely, main idea with the percentage 38% students have difficulty, supporting detail with the percentage 38% of students who have difficulty in this aspect, vocabulary with a high percentage of 58% students, that is almost all students of class VII have difficulty in understanding vocabulary. Reference 62%, this aspect had the highest percentage of difficult students, which means that almost 60 students of class VII have difficulty in making the inference. The last aspect is inference with the percentage 42%, only one percent difference with detailed information.

The most difficult aspect experienced by the tenth graders of SMPN 05 Tanah Pinoh Barat Melawi Regency was vocabulary and reference. This can be seen from the very high percentage of students who are difficult in both aspects.

This study also found factors that caused them to experience difficulties. The result of the questionnaire students had difficulty caused by three internal factors, namely: Lack of familiarity with reading material, difficulty in using reading strategies, and limited vocabulary knowledge.

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