

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' READING DIFFICULTIES IN  
COMPREHENDING NARRATIVE TEXT

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**Abstract**

*The aims of this research are to identify the students' difficulties in comprehending narrative text and to obtain the factors that contributing difficulties in comprehending narrative text of the tenth grade students SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang. The researcher used the descriptive qualitative as the method which is served by narrative style. The subject of this research was 15 students of X Perhotelan 2. To collect the data the researcher used multiple choice test and interview. The researcher used data reducing and data display as the technique of analyzing the data. First, the researcher tested the students with multiple choice test and interviewed the students. Second, the researcher found that there are 8.2% students who have difficulties in determining social function and generic structure, 24.7% students have difficulties in determining main idea, 6.8% students have difficulties in determining synonym, 24.7% students have difficulties in finding implicit information, 9.6% students have difficulties in finding explicit information and 26% students have difficulties in determining moral value. Most of the students have difficulties on determining main idea, finding implicit information and determining moral value. The researcher also discovered several factors contributing students' difficulties in comprehending narrative text. They are lack of vocabulary, text familiarity, the level of difficulty of the text, lack of effective reading strategies and lack in processing information.*

Keywords: Reading Difficulties, Narrative Text.

**I. Introduction**

One of the international languages used in the world is English. Crystal (2003) states that English is spoken in approximately a quarter of the world's population. That's make English is a very common language that be spoken by everyone on Earth. Meanwhile English is considered as a foreign language in Indonesia. Indonesian rarely use English in their daily life. So it means that learning English is very difficult for the learners because they used to use Bahasa Indonesia.

The language skills in English consists of four skills: listening writing, reading and speaking. Spratt, et., al. (2005) states that reading is like listening. Means that it requires responding rather than generating the text. Meanwhile reading comprehension is the way on arranging and extracting meaning by involvement of interaction in written language at same time. Constructing and extracting emphasize both the insufficiency and the importance of the text. (Snow, 2002). According to Akbari (2014) reading comprehension is skill to comprehend and understand the points in a passage and construe it correctly. So reading comprehension is the reader's

understanding about what they read in written form. The reader also have to capable to make conclusion of the passage

Since the researcher had finished the internship or PLP in SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang, researcher found that in reading comprehension practice in the class room, the students still feel difficult to catch the points of the reading text, difficult to understand kind of words, they cannot make the conclusion of the passage, when students read an English text they often bored and they could not comprehend and understand reading text correctly.

Students' difficulties are some circumstances from students that are lack in understanding the learning process in class. Different factors that affect the students' difficulties are the relationship between students and teachers, student's background, the learning environment and the teaching approach (Westwood, 2001)

Klingner, et., al. (2007) stated that there are several factors that affect difficulties in comprehending a text from students' basic skills. They are vocabulary, word reading and knowledge. Students have difficulties in reading words when they cannot comprehend the message of the passage appropriately. If the students read inaccurately and slowly, it means the students have difficulties in their reading skills. Meanwhile Mohammed & Amponsah (2018) stated that the factors affecting students' low reading ability are: students' low motivation, students' poor of phonemic awareness, teachers' low of knowledge on teaching phonemic awareness, students' low confidence and lack of pre-reader book at home and in school.

According to Westwood (2008), there are several problems that affect students' reading comprehension. They are:

- a. Lack of Vocabulary Knowledge
- b. Lack of the text familiarity
- c. The Level of Difficulty of the Text
- d. Lack of Effective Reading Strategies
- e. Lack in processing information

One of the reading text is narrative Text. A narrative text is a text that tells story and has sequence of events written in words. The aim of narrative text is not only providing entertainment but also gives moral values and thrills the readers' emotions (Anderson, 1998). Purba (2018) stated that the generic structures of narrative text consist of: orientation, evaluation, complication and resolution. Based on the curriculum of 2013, the narrative studied in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the tenth grade students in Vocational School.

Based on the researcher's internship in SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang, the researcher found that reading comprehension is rather hard for students to understand. Such as students are still lack of vocabulary, students are still hard to find main ideas in reading a text, students are still hard to find explicit and implicit information in the text, and they have low willingness to read a reading text. From the explanation above, researcher wanted to find out the students' difficulties in comprehending narrative text and factors that affect the students' difficulties in comprehending narrative text at the 10<sup>th</sup> grade of SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang..

## II. Method

The method that researcher used in this research is descriptive qualitative. According to Gay, et., al. (2012) qualitative research seeks to delve deeply into the research settings to gain a deep understandings. Miles & Huberman (1994) defined that qualitative research employs word arranged in an expanded text. So, a qualitative research is an interpretation, analysis and collection to obtain perception into a particular phenomena. So, qualitative research is a method which reveals an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon in non-numerical data and to describe the way things are.

The researcher started this research on July 2020, at the 10th grade of SMK N 2 Tanjungpinang. It is located in Jl. Pramuka No.1 Tanjung Ayun Sakti, Bukti Bestari, Tanjungpinang. The researcher took purposive sampling to choose the sample. Purposive sampling

took the subject intentionally to understand or learn the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). The sample of this research is X Perhotelan 2, consists of 34 students. Unfortunately only 15 students who answered the test, so researcher only took 15 students as the research sample. The researcher took two techniques to collect data in this research, they are:

a. Test

The researcher used multiple choice test as technique of collecting data to obtain the students' difficulties in understanding narrative text. According to Brownsn (2003) multiple choice test is well known as the popular technique to testing reading ability, because it can be scored quickly and easier to administer. The indicator of the questions were based on the syllabus of SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang. The indicator of each item consisted:

1. Identifying the social function and generic structure
2. Identifying the main idea
3. Identifying the synonym word in narrative text
4. Identifying implicit information
5. Identifying explicit information
6. Identifying moral value

b. Interview

To analyze the factors contributing students' difficulties in reading narrative text the researcher used interview. The researcher did the interview to the students to get information about the factors contributing the difficulties faced by students in comprehending narrative text. Due to the spreading of the Covid-19, researcher did the interview via Whatsapp voice note.

The techniques of analyzing the data in this research is from Miles & Huberman (1994). They are:

a. Data Reducing

The process of simplifying, focusing, picking, converting and summarizing the data is called data reducing. The purpose of data reducing is to eliminate, sort, sharpen, and direct the data.

b. Data Displayed

After that step. Then the data is displayed in written word. The result of the research can be shown in data display. In conveying the data, the researcher described it in the style of written word. The researcher classified the students' difficulties in comprehending narrative text with getting percentage from the students' worksheet. Bellow is the formula that researcher used.

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

(Sudijono as cited in Larasati, 2019)

Where:

P = Percentages

F = Frequency of difficulties

N = Total of the Difficulties

### III. Results and Discussion

#### A. Data Reducing

The researcher arranged the students' result in answering the multiple choice into table and converted it to percentages. The data were taken from 15 students from X Perhotelan 2. Below is the table of the type of difficulties, frequency and percentage in comprehending narrative text at the 10<sup>th</sup> grade of SMK N 2 Tanjungpinang.

Table 1. Types of Difficulties, Frequency and Percentages

No	Types of Difficulties	Frequency	Percentages
1.	Social Function and Generic Structure	6	8.2%
2.	Main Idea	18	24.7%
3.	Syonym	5	6.8%
4.	Implicit Information	18	24.7%
5.	Explicit Information	7	9.6%
6.	Moral Value	19	26%
	Total		100%

## B. Data Display

In the data display, the researcher displayed the data by discussing and interpreting the data as clear as possible. This data display discusses about the difficulties in comprehending the narrative text and factors that affecting students' difficulties in comprehending and understanding narrative text.

### 1. The Students' Difficulties in Comprehending Narrative Text.

#### a. Social Function and Generic Structure

There are 6 incorrect answers of determining social function and generic structure made by the students from 73 incorrect answers, therefore frequency is 8.2%. Based on the percentage, only a few of students have difficulties in determining social function and generic structure.

#### b. Main Idea

There are 18 incorrect answers of determining main idea made by students from 73 incorrect answers, therefore the frequency is 24.7%. Based on the percentage, most students have difficulties in determining the main idea.

#### c. Synonym

There are 5 incorrect answers of determining synonym made by students from 73 incorrect answer, therefore the frequency is 6.8%. Based on the percentage, only a few students have difficulties in determining synonym.

#### d. Implicit Information

There are 18 incorrect answers of finding implicit information made by students from 73 incorrect answers, therefore the frequency is 24.7%. Based on the percentage, most students have difficulties in finding implicit information.

#### e. Explicit Information

There are 7 incorrect answers of finding explicit information made by students from 73 incorrect answers, therefore the frequency is 9.6%. Based on the percentage, only a few students have difficulties in finding explicit information.

#### f. Moral Value

There are 19 incorrect answers of determining moral value made by students from 73 incorrect answers, therefore the frequency is 26%. Based on the percentage, most of students have difficulties in determining moral value.

## 2. Factors Contributing Students' Difficulties in Comprehending Narrative Text.

### a. Lack of Vocabulary

The first problem is lack of vocabulary knowledge. Based on the interview, the student has low vocabulary knowledge. The students feel hard understand the meaning of words in narrative text. The student's understanding in vocabulary knowledge is low.

### b. Lack of Text Familiarity

The second problem is lack of the text familiarity. Based on the interview, the student said that she often sees a narrative text, but rarely to read it. This problem occurs because she don't understand the context of the text and causing the unfamiliarity with the narrative text.

### c. The Level of Difficulty of the Text.

The third problem is the level of difficulty of the text. Based on the interview, the student answered about the difficulty level of narrative text. She said that narrative text is a bit difficult for her since she lacks in understanding English.

### d. Lack of Effective Reading Strategies.

Based on the interview about effective reading strategies, the student's strategy is by noticing the title of the passage and translate the meaning of the passage. But the problem is she only mentioned by noticing at title of the passage and translating the meaning of the passage. This implies that she doesn't know more about effective reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, summarizing, etc.

### e. Lack in processing information.

The last problem is lack in processing information. Based on the interview about lack processing information, the student said that she has difficulties in processing information due to the words that she thinks rarely to be used in the text, such as exhausted. This means that the student has difficulties with processing information of the text because she doesn't know what the word means.

## C. Discussion

In this discussion, researcher discusses about the difficulties in understanding and comprehending narrative text and factors contributing difficulties in comprehending narrative text at the 10th grade of SMK N 2 Tanjungpinang. In this research, researcher found that there are 8.2% students have difficulties in determining social function and generic structure, there are 24.7% students who have difficulties in determining main idea, there are 6.8% students who have difficulties in determining synonym, there are 24.7% students who have difficulties in finding implicit information, there are 9.6% students who have difficulties in finding explicit information and there are 26% students who have difficulties in determining moral value..

The researcher concludes that the students of SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang are still lack in comprehending narrative text. The researcher attempted to find out the troubles in comprehending narrative text from their incorrect answers in their test. Most of the students have difficulties on determining main idea, finding implicit information and determining moral value in narrative text. Researcher also tried to obtain the factors contributing students' difficulties in comprehending narrative text. To identify those factors, researcher used Westwood's theory (Westwood, 2008).

The first problem is students have difficulty in their vocabulary knowledge. The students felt that they are lack of vocabulary knowledge because they don't understand some words in

English. The students said that they have difficulties in translating and understanding some words from English to Indonesian. Furthermore the students sometime faced unfamiliar words in the narrative text.

The second problem is the lack of the text familiarity. The tenth grade students in SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang were lack of the subject matter, the narrative text. It can be explained as the students rarely read narrative texts. It can be happened because the students don't understand about the text, the students have low motivations to read the narrative text because they still cannot comprehend the text very well.

The third problem is the level of difficulty of the text. The students defined that the narrative text is rather a difficult text. The researcher found that the narrative text is rather a difficult text for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade of SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang. They think the narrative text is rather hard to understand text because they cannot understand English very well. It makes them hard to understand and comprehend the narrative text.

The fourth problem is lack of effective reading strategies. The researcher defined that the tenth grade students of SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang have less effective reading strategies to comprehend and understand the narrative text. This happened because the students still don't have proper reading strategies in understanding the narrative text. Their strategies to comprehend narrative text is studying, understanding the words etc., students only read the text and find some words that they still don't understand. The students still don't know some of the strategies to comprehend English reading text, such as: summarizing, drawing conclusions, skimming, scanning etc.

The last problem is lack in processing information. The researcher found that the tenth grade students of SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang still have difficulty on processing information in a narrative text. This happened because the students still lack in vocabulary mastery as if the students find a difficult or an unfamiliar word, they may not understand the whole sentence very well and causing the problem with processing information in narrative text.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Based on analyzed the data, the researcher found several difficulties faced by the 10<sup>th</sup> grade of SMK Negeri 2 Tanjungpinang in comprehending narrative text. Those are: determining social function and generic structure, determining main idea, determining synonym, finding implicit information, finding explicit information and determining moral value. Most of the students have difficulties on determining main idea, finding implicit information and determining moral value in narrative text.

Based on the interview to the students, researcher discovered several factors contributing difficulties faced by the students in comprehending narrative text. They are: lack of vocabulary, lack of text familiarity, the level of difficulty of the text, lack of effective reading strategies and lack in processing information.

In the first problem, the students felt that they have limited vocabulary because they don't understand some words in English and difficult to translate it. Then the students are still lack of the subject matter, because the students rarely read narrative text. The students also think that the narrative text is a rather difficult.

The researcher also found that the students have less effective reading strategies to comprehend and understand the narrative text. The last problem is lack in processing information due to students' lack of vocabulary, especially for unfamiliar words

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