CONSTRAINTS IN COMPREHENDING ENGLISH TEXT FACED BY THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS

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Abstrak.Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui (i) kendala utama dalam memahami membaca teks bahasa inggris siswa tingkat kedua sekolah menengah atas (SMA) dan (ii) mengapa kendala tersebut menjadi kendala utama yang dipilih oleh siswa. Pendekatan penelitan adalah kuantitatif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah 60 siswa tingkat kedua sekolah menengah keatas (SMA). Kuesioner di gunakan sebagai alat pengumpul data. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan *Likert Scale*. Hasil penelitian menunjukan bahwa kendala utama siswa adalah kemampuan untuk menganalisis. Ini dibuktikan dengan hasil kuesioner dengan persentase 67.68% dan didukung oleh wawancarasiswa. Alasan kendala tersebut berhubungan dengan tata bahasa (*grammar*), struktur kata (*structure*) dan makna kata. Ini menyarankan bahwa guru membahas lebih dalam untuk mengajar pemahaman membaca dalam kemampuanan alisis.

Abstract. The objective of this research was to find out (i) the main constraint in comprehending English reading text for the second grade senior high school, and (ii) why that constraint becomes the most encountered by the students. The method of the research was quantitative. The subjects were 60 students of the second grade senior high school. The questionnaire were used as the instrument. The data were calculated by using Likert Scale. The result showed that the students' main constraint was ability to analyze, it was proven by the result of questionnaire in which the percentage was 67.68%, and it confirmed from the students' interview. The reasons of the constraint were related to the grammar, structure, and word meaning. It suggested that the teachers concern to teach reading comprehension focus on the ability to analyze.

Keywords: *reading, reading comprehension, constraints.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the important skills that should be mastered by the students, because the students can develop their English vocabulary in order to enhance their knowledge and learn many things by reading. According to (Anderson et al., 1985) Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts it is a complex skill requiring the coordination of a number interrelated of source on information.

The curriculum supplies the goal which the students are required to comprehend English reading text, and to understand the text to get the information. As Chastain (1976: 309) states, they are not required to understand each individual part of the sentence or paragraph, but they should understand the message the writer is trying to convey. Furthermore, Oberholzer (2005) says that understanding what we are reading is far more important to us than knowing the mechanical skill of reading. Without understanding, reading would serve no purpose. It means that understanding text is the most important aspect in reading. Not only do the students understand the text, but they also need to comprehend the whole text that they read. According to Townsend (2003) Comprehend means the student should fully understand of all the aspect of the text.

There are possibilities that the students may get difficulties in understanding reading English text. For example, sometimes English text difficult to understand for the students because of the text is complicated grammar. Besides, there are some sentences in form complex grammar in the text. In addition, some unfamiliar words are also provided influence for students in getting difficulties to understand a text. If the words which content in the reading text easy or familiar with the students, the students will have more feeling to read and they will easy to understand the text.In reading activities, students are required to interpret the meaning of the text becauserelated to the grammar, structure and word meaning. Comprehension is the centre of understanding. Brown (1994) states that there are two major abilities involve are word meaning and verbal reasoning. Without

words meaning and verbal reasoning, there could be no reading comprehension; without reading comprehension, there would be no reading.

Based on the pre-observation, researcher found out that the majority score of students in SMAN 1 Tegineneng did not achieve the target, the researcher asked the teacher to show the score in second grade students of SMAN 1 Tegineneng. The fact shows that the majority of students can only reach score 55-60, the score that teacher got from reading test. This problem makes the researcher interests in investigating students' constraints in comprehending English texts by the second year student of SMAN 1 Tegineneng

There are several previous studies about students' constraint in comprehending English text. The first previous research by Jaya (2005) found that the lack vocabulary is the factor in influence reading English text. Based on his investigation, he found that the students got difficulties in critical reading, applied comprehensive, inferential comprehension, literal comprehension, grammatical structure, and efficient reading. In addition, a study conducted by Sekarini (2017) the result in this study was the lack of students' interest, lack of vocabulary mastery, lack of background knowledge, finding main idea on transition phase, and identifying main idea become the constrain for students.

In reference to the explanation above, the writer was inspired to make a study about the students' constraints in reading comprehending English text and the reasons why it becomes students' constraints.

METHOD

The method of the research was quantitative. The population of the research was students of the Second grade of SMAN 1 Tegineneng. The sample of the research was 60 students.

The instruments used were questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was to answer the first research questions, and the interview was to answer the second

research questions. The researcher analyzed the questionnaire using quantitative measurement (percentage) and entered the data to quantitative findings. It means that, to analyze the data researcher used Likert Scale.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

After conducting the research, the researcher gathered the result questionnaire as follows:

Table 4.1 TheResult of the Students' Questionnaire

Items Number	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	Percentage (%)	Categories
1	2	2	31	24	1	66.7%	Background Experience
4	3	5	37	15	0	61.3%	
6	16	10	26	5	3	49.7%	
16	6	7	35	10	2	58.3%	
TOTAL						59%	
2	1	2	27	28	2	69.4%	Ability to Analyze
5	2	5	23	30	0	61.3%	
10	0	3	21	30	6	73%	
11	3	9	32	13	3	58.3%	
2	1	2	27	28	2	69.4%	
TOTAL						67.68%	
3	6	7	37	10	0	57%	Thinking Ability
8	2	3	25	27	3	68.6%	
9	2	9	34	13	2	61.3%	
17	4	12	26	18	0	59.3%	
TOTAL						61.55%	
12	3	5	30	18	4	65%	Affection
13	5	9	31	15	0	58.6%	
18	5	12	21	16	6	62%	
19	1	8	29	18	4	65.3%	
TOTAL						62.73%	
7	1	2	27	28	2	63.6%	Reading purpose
14	2	5	23	30	6	63%	
15	0	3	21	30	6	67.3%	
20	3	9	32	13	3	70%	
TOTAL						65.98%	

The table above shows the students' result of the questionnaire from each factor about constraint or difficulty in comprehending English text.

On the factor of "Background Experience", total percentage of all the items was 59%. It can be concluded that some students in second of SMAN 1 Tegineneng were good in background experience, but there were some students who still find this factor become their constraint.Based on the result of"Language Ability", the general percentage of the items was 67.68%, it indicates that the students' language ability was into strong category.

The result of "Thinking Ability", the general percentage of the items was 61.55%. It indicated that factor of thinking ability was strong category, and became their constraint after language ability. After that, the result of "Affection", the general percentage of the items was 62.73%. It indicated that factor affection became their constraint and the category was strong. Then the last, the result of "Reading Purposes", the general percentage of items was 65.98%. It indicated that factor reading purposes became their constraint and the category was strong.

The data from the tables above showed that the second grade of SMAN 1 Tegineneng still found the constraint in comprehending English text. The main constraint that faced by students was language ability, it can be seen that the percentage of the language ability factor is the highest.

The Result of Interview

The interview was conducted to answer the research question in chapter 1 that is "Why does that constraint become the most selected constraint by the students?" It was aimed to find out the students' problem in comprehending English reading text especially in comprehending procedure text. The interview was done outside the classroom to avoid the interference from other students, and the researcher also gave the students English text. Before the interview, researcher asked students to read the text. By using this technique, the researcher could get the data precisely from each of the students about their constraint in comprehending English text.

Regarding from the result of interview, the researcher found some of difficulties faced by the students in comprehending English reading text in some categories of constraints.

First category was *background experience*. This category told about the schemata of the readers, it made a number of the reader not really understand about the text because each of the readers had a different experience and knowledge. Most of the students were not in difficulty in this category. However, a number of students had

difficulty but they could handle it. They still read the text well. They told that they could understand the text by guessing from the title. It was the reason that background experience was not the main constraint of reading activity to the students.

Second category was *ability to analyze*. In this category mostly the students had difficulty in reading. It was because this category related to the grammar, structure and word meaning of the text. All of the students confirmed they had the difficulty, when they read the text because they were not really understand about the grammar and the structure of the text. On the other words, they could understand the text because the text was using complex sentences and using a difficult structure. It also forced them to have a mastery of syntax, which are related with structure. This made the ability to analyze became the main constraint in reading.

Third category was *ability to think***.** Some of the students had a difficulty in this category. It was because this category forced them to think in a logic way based on the text. It requires the readers to be able to engage in various types of reasoning. It makes the students must be able to deal the events and concept. The example of the logic way, when they made summarized the text or made the conclusion of the text. They must be able to make their words make sense with the text. It made them had the difficulty in reading English text.

Fourth category was *affection*. Affectionrelated to the readers feeling, it was about the reader's ability to understand his/her own emotion, such as motivation, attitudes, beliefs and feeling. In fact, however the readers were not like the topic of the text and not really comfortable to the text, but they could guess the main idea of the text. On the other hand, they were still in difficulty because of the language of the text.

Fifth category was *reading purpose*. It was relate to their own intention and their own mind that could be influenced in reading activity. In interview, they told that they were not disturbing about their feeling as far as they could guess the main idea based on the title of the text. On the other word, many of the students agreed that they felt so lazy to read the text which the topic did not make them interest or did not make them enjoy in reading. It was the reason reading purpose to be the second main constraint in reading activity.

Discussion

The objective of this research was to find out what the main constraints in comprehending English text. Based on the result of the questionnaire, the researcher found that the students' main constraint was their ability to analyze. The percentage of the ability to analyze was 67.68%. Most of the students thought that this category made them had a big problem in reading activity. This difficulty was due to the lack in uderstanding grammar, structure and word meaning. The students needed to understand the meaning of the word and they also should have good sentence structure comprehension to get the meaning of the text.

The current study is in line with the previous research. The factors that cause of students' difficulties in comprehending the English text were vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and reading interest. (Putri 2003; Atikah 2009; Sasmita 2012). Regarding all the previous researches related to the present research, it could be seen that vocabulary and grammar factor was the factor that affected the students' difficulties in reading activity.

The study also confirms that there are two major abilities involve reading. They are word meaning and verbal reasoning. Without two major abilities, they could be no reading comprehension and without reading comprehension, there would be no reading (Brown, 1994). On the other words, there is no reading process without the ability of the readers to construct the meaning of the words related to the text. The study also supports the statement that reading comprehension is the process of extracting and constructing the meaning through interaction and involvement with written language (Caldwell 2008). As a result, when the students did not

have the ability to analyze the meaning of the word by understanding grammar and vocabulary, exactly they had problem in their reading activity.

In order to answer the second research question related to the reason why ability to analyze was the main constraint of the students' difficulty in reading, the interview was distributed to the students. The result of the interview showed that ability to analyze became the main constraint because some factors. They were unfamiliar vocabularies (vocabulary) and sentence pattern (grammar).

Unfamiliar vocabulary was the first factors. Reading comprehension and vocabulary were closely related. It was because vocabulary referred to the words of the whole text. It forced the reader to master the vocabulary for communicating and getting the message of the text. Vocabulary is another major component of reading ability with which language learners will experience difficulty, but the degree of difficulty will vary with the demands of the text, the prior knowledge of the reader, the degree of automaticity a learner has achieved in general word recognition, any specialist lexical knowledge a students might have, and learner's first language Hedge (2000: 193). Regarding to the statement, it can be seen that vocabulary is one of the important factors in reading and without understanding the meaning of the word; the students will have a problem to get the message of the text.Based on the interview, the researcher found the students' difficult to understand the meaning of vocabulary, the students difficult to get the meaning of the words.

After unfamiliar vocabulary, last factor of the students' constraint in comprehending English text was sentence pattern. Comprehending English text was complex process in reading. It was because the students needed to understand the meaning of the words and they also might have a good ability in comprehending sentence structure. It helped the students to understand the relation between ideas, details, and also each part of the components of sentences in order to have better analysis and ability for understanding of the text. Nuttal (1982) argues that the grammatical forms that beyond the level of students' knowledge can make reading difficult and overall meaning of the text seems to be impossible to receive. It could be happened, if the students had not ability to

comprehend the sentence well and get the meaning of the word clearly. It was because they did not understand the grammatical forms in each of sentence of the text.

Regarding to the students' result interview, it indicated that most of the students had difficulty in sentence pattern (grammar). They found a problem to get the message of the English text, when they did not understand what the meaning of the sentences. In order to achieve a better fit between grammar and reading comprehension, it is not helpful to think of grammar as a discrete set of meaningless, static structures, nor is it helpful to think of grammar solely as a set of prescriptive rules about linguistic forms. Grammatical structures not only have (morph syntactic) forms, but they are also used to express meaning (semantics) in appropriate use contexts (pragmatics).

Briefly, the researcher found that the main constraint in comprehending English text for the second grade of SMAN 1 Tegineneng was the ability to analyze. The reason why the constraint became the most selected by the students, it was because the students did not understand the meaning of the new word (unfamiliar vocabulary) and they did not comprehend the structure of the sentences (sentence pattern or grammar). It could be the reason because the ability to analyze category was related to the grammar, structure and word meaning.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusions

Based on the research at the second grade students of SMA N 1 Tegineneg, the result showed that the constraint was the ability to analyze. The reason why the constraint became the most selected by the students, it was because the students did not understand the meaning of the new word (unfamiliar vocabulary), unfamiliar content of the text which make the students are not interested to read,

and the sentence pattern which was too complicated to be understood by the students. They did not comprehend the structure of the sentences (sentence pattern or grammar). It could be the reason because the ability to analyze category related to the grammar, structure and word meaning.

Suggestions

In reference with the conclusion above, the writer gives some suggestions to the teacher. First, the teacher should teach the students the technique to find the vocabulary meaning by using clues from the text without looking it up on the dictionary. Second, the teacher should tell and teach the students the reading technique that is used while reading. It will make the students reading process effectively and increase their reading ability. Last, the teacher should create and give materials with variant sentence patterns.

For further researcher it is suggested to find other problems that faced by the students that come from the students' ability in different grade. To solve the problem, the further researcher can use other technique which appropriate related to the problem. Then, the researcher can solve the problem that faced by students with some technique.

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