

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents: (1) findings, and (2) discussion.

4.1. Findings

The interview was conducted to find out the EFL Students' difficulties in reading Comprehension. After gaining the data from interview, the data was analyzed by using thematic analysis. The descriptions of the result described as follows:

4.1.1. EFL Students' Reading Comprehension Difficulties

The themes and codes were acquired from the result of interview analysis.

Table 4.1.1: Themes and codes of EFL Students' Reading Comprehension Difficulties

Themes	Codes
1. Lack of Vocabulary	<p>A. Most students often encountered unfamiliar vocabulary, which made it difficult for them to understand the reading.</p> <p>B. Some students too often skipped vocabulary that they did not know the meaning which made them not understand the reading fully and made the students answer the reading question wrong</p>

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2. Low level of grammar mastery
- A. Some students still had difficulty understanding a text that contained pronouns, which caused them to misinterpret their reading and lower their reading scores.
 - B. Some students had difficulty in identifying information from the text because they could not understand the proper arrangement of sentences.
 - C. Some of the students had difficulty with several grammatical items, such as phrasal verbs and suffixes, which made them difficult to decode the reading and they ended up not really understanding the reading.
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3. Unfamiliar with the topic of the text
- A. Most students still had low background knowledge, which made it difficult for them to understand the text that included unfamiliar topics.
 - B. Most students had difficulty understanding readings that
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included several places, especially those that were abroad in a text, which made them not really understand the contents of the text.

C. Some students had difficulty understanding the cultural context in the text that they had never known or heard of, which made it difficult for them to relate to their background knowledge.

4. Unable to use reading strategy for effective reading

A. A few of the students still did not know how to use skimming and scanning strategies.

B. Students still had difficulty in determining the main idea in a reading

C. Students were still confused in making an inference from reading

5. Too long reading text

A. Most of the students still had difficulty when they faced too long reading text.

B. Some of the students often lost concentration because the text they were reading was too long.

The themes and codes collected from the qualitative data as list in table 4.1.1 were described in order to identify the EFL students' difficulties in reading comprehension at MAN 1 Muara Enim. There were some difficulties found in reading comprehension, namely; lack of vocabulary, low level of grammar mastery, unfamiliar with the text, unable to use reading strategy for effective reading, too long reading text. The description were as follows.

4.1.1.1. Lack of Vocabulary

Based on the data that was acquired from the interview, students often found unfamiliar vocabulary in the text that was too difficult to understand, or a level of vocabulary difficulty that went beyond their own abilities, which made it difficult for students to determine the meaning of a sentence in the text. The students with initial KN said "It does sir, especially if the vocabulary difficulty level used in the text is too high for me. It makes me interpret what I read wrongly, and then it makes me not really understand what I'm reading because there's too much vocabulary that I don't understand. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). MIB also added "Yes, that's right. I find it very difficult to understand the reading if I encounter a lot of vocabulary that I don't know. When answering reading questions, especially during exams, I get dizzy because I often misinterpret a sentence in order to comprehend the meaning, and then I still don't have any clue what I was reading.

Then, I simply made an incorrect guess at the answer to the existing question. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

Next, the researcher also found that some students often skipped vocabulary that they did not know the meaning which made them not understand the reading fully and made the students answer the reading question wrong. Just like Initial J said “Sometimes it does, but I just skip the words that I don't know. It's a bit difficult sir, because you can't interpret the text completely if you do not know what all of the words mean, because the meaning doesn't make sense, and it makes my comprehension fail and my reading score low because I find more vocabulary that I don't know and I just skip it”.(personal communication, November 17th, 2021). Moreover, Initial ANA added that “it is sir, because if I don't know the meaning of the vocabulary in a sentence, I like to skip vocabulary that I think is foreign, but sometimes it bothers me too much, because the more vocabulary I skip, the more I don't really understand the meaning of the words in the line. It becomes difficult to understand the reading if I only understand a small portion of the vocabulary, which causes my decoding to be incorrect”. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

4.1.1.2. Low level of grammar mastery

Based on the interview, it was found that students have difficulty understanding sentences in a text that contains pronouns. Where it makes it difficult for students to interpret a sentence, it makes their reading comprehension inaccurate and lowers their reading scores. The students with initial K also said that “*Sometimes I am really confused, especially when I meet pronoun in a text. Because*

of that, I am often confused which object does the pronoun refer to. For example, there are: they, their, those. It makes me misinterpret a sentence, then it makes me not really understand what I read and ends up making me choose the wrong answer when answering reading questions. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). The student with Initial J added that, *“Yes, there are. For example, the use of pronouns. Usually, there are questions asked about what “it” refers to? or “they” or something like that, because there are many pronouns that are still difficult for me to understand. It is very difficult to answer those kinds of questions because there can be more than one object in one sentence”.* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

The researcher also found that one of the students explained that he often had difficulty understanding the text because he did not know how to arrange words in English correctly because it was different from the arrangement of words in Indonesian. Initial RH said, *“It's still not enough, because when I translate English text into Indonesian by translating it word by word, sometimes the translation doesn't make sense. When I attempt to understand the meaning of the reading, I don't understand anything at all from it”.* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). Initial J also added that *“I still don't understand the arrangement of words in English, which makes me not really understand what I read”.* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

Furthermore, the researcher also found that one of the students still had difficulty understanding the text when they encountered grammatical items such as phrasal verbs and suffixes because they were too unfamiliar with them. The students

with initial VZ stated that *“Yes, it does. I'm still confused when I want to understand my reading when I encounter a verb that has more than one word, for example, "look" means to see while there are some words that have a combination of words like look for, look up, look after and I'm still confused about the meaning of the word and usually I misinterpret the phrase by translating it one by one which makes the meaning of the words wrong”*. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). Initial MK explained that *“Honestly, I still have difficulty understanding the text. For example, when I encounter basic vocabulary, but behind it, there is a little addition. For example, "excite" means "seru" right sir? But if you add some letters until it becomes excitement, the meaning changes. This often happens when I'm on a reading exam, and it makes it difficult for me to translate the meaning. So that's one of my difficulties in understanding my reading”*. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

4.1.1.3. Unfamiliar with the topic of the text

Based on the data obtained from the interview, the researcher found one of the difficulties some students had in understanding their reading was that students were unfamiliar with the text that they read. This happened because they had never read a similar text before or did not have sufficient background knowledge to understand the content of what they had read, which means they had no preparation at all in order to understand their reading and it made it difficult for them to grasp all the meanings of the text they wanted to read. The student with Initial AZC said *“Yes, I do, because if you are not familiar with the topic being read, you will definitely find many unfamiliar vocabularies later. Furthermore,*

when reading a text with an unfamiliar topic, I do not have the basic knowledge of the text required in order to understand the reading. It becomes very difficult to understand the contents of the text if you really do not know anything about the topic and have never read a reading text with a similar topic before". (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). Then, initial VZ added that *"Sometimes it happens, I forget the details and I don't remember what the topic was, but the cultural content that was included in the reading was challenging for me. Maybe because I didn't know much about it, it probably made it hard for me to comprehend".* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

Next, the researcher also found that students struggle when they want to understand readings that contain a place that includes places outside their knowledge, for example places that are abroad. Initial C said *"Yes, I have experienced it sir. It's difficult to comprehend places abroad, sir. If I've heard of the place before, maybe I can understand it, but sometimes the place being discussed is not well known to us. So, it's difficult to imagine the situation in that place. Therefore, it is difficult to understand the contents of the reading".* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). Initial ANA also added *"Topics about places in other countries besides Indonesia, Sir. For example, when I read a descriptive text about Paris, there was a lot of foreign vocabulary that I didn't understand. So, it's a bit difficult to understand the text and to find answers in the text".* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

Next, the student claimed that they had difficulty in comprehending the text when they found the cultural context in their reading. The students with Initial

stated that AZC *“Sometimes it happens, maybe a topic that contains western culture. The topic is too difficult for me because, it is too unfamiliar to understand”*. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). ANA also said that *“I think because the text discusses a habit and daily life of other people's cultures which are very different from my own sir. Because I have never done or have never known the culture in the text, I can't relate and imagine what the text is talking about”*. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

4.1.1.4. Unable to use reading strategy for effective reading

The researcher also found that students were still unable to use or understand the skimming and scanning strategy in reading comprehension properly. Initial K stated that *“Sometimes it doesn't. When I use a scanning or skimming strategy, I get confused and even lose understanding of what I have read because I have not fully mastered the reading strategy”*. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). Students sometimes had difficulty using reading strategies such as scanning and skimming because the information they were looking for was stated implicitly, just like the student with Initial VZ said that *“No sir, sometimes it does not really work. Although I read the text with that strategy twice or more. Maybe because my mastery on those strategy is still lacking and sometimes, the answer is just never in the text somehow, maybe the answer is not stated directly and I just don't get it”*. (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

The next data obtained from interview result showed that students still had difficulty in determining the main idea in their reading. Initial J stated that *“Yes, I have sir. Because in order to determine the main idea itself. I have to be careful in*

reading a paragraph in order to be able to distinguish the main sentence and the supporting sentence. However, I still often encounter some sentences that I can't understand which will make it difficult for me to distinguish which is the main idea or which is not". (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). The student with Initial VZ added *"Determine the main idea in one paragraph sir. Because I am often confused when asked to find the main idea. Because there are main ideas that appear at the beginning of the paragraph and it can also appear in the middle or end of the paragraph".* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

Based on the data of interview, the researcher also found that the students were still confused in making an inference from the reading. As initial J said *"That's even more difficult, sir, because if I want to make an inference, I have to comprehend the entire text while I still don't understand the arrangement of words in English, which makes me not really understand what I read. This factor makes me inaccurate in making inferences from a text".* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). DWH also added that *"Yes, I have sir, because I don't know how to make an inference from what I've read. Comprehending the text is already difficult after all. I think making inferences from it is far far more difficult".* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

4.1.1.5. Too long reading text

Based on the interview data, students frequently struggled to understand the content of the reading, which they perceived to be overly long. Student with initial ANA said *"Yes, that is one of the difficulties I face when reading. Maybe it's because the longer texts are sometimes too boring and there are too many words*

that are difficult to understand, so I struggle when I want to read a text. In the end, I don't really comprehend the text because there are a lot of things that I skip because the text is hard to interpret and too boring". (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). Otherwise, VZ said that *"I think it does. Because if it's too long, I easily forget the previous paragraph, when trying to understand the next paragraph. It really annoys me so much when that happens, because I need to repeat it all over again. It really affects my understanding of the reading".* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

Next, the students stated that they often lost concentration because the text was too long. The student with initial MK stated that *"Often, sir, because if the text is long, it is likely that there will be a lot of vocabulary that I don't know, so I have to find out what the unknown words mean first. After I know it, I have to read them again. If there are other words that I don't know once more, I have to look for its meaning again. And after that I should read it again. It goes on and on again repeatedly. It becomes a bit less effective at reading it and I often forget the previous information that has been read, not to mention that I have to think about the very limited time given. These are the things that often make me lose my concentration".* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021). Then, initial K added *"Yes, it often happens. I give up first when I see a lot of writing, especially if the writing is very close to each other and also long. It would break my concentration when I am reading the text. Therefore, my efforts to understand the contents of the text are hampered because it is difficult to concentrate".* (personal communication, November 17th, 2021).

4.2. Discussions

After analyzing the result of the research by using thematic analysis, the researcher found that there were some EFL students' difficulties in Reading Comprehension. Those are (1) lack of vocabulary, (2) low level of grammar mastery, (3) unfamiliar with the topic of the text, (4) unable to use reading strategy for effective reading, (5) too long reading text.

The first was a lack of vocabulary. All of the students argued that one of their difficulties in understanding reading was when they found unfamiliar vocabulary or vocabulary that was too difficult for them to understand in a text they read. It makes students have to skip a lot of vocabulary in the text they read. In the end, it affects the results of their understanding or misinterpretation of the reading. Zuhra (2015) stated that students' difficulties in comprehending reading, one of which is their weakness in mastering vocabulary. This finding was in line with Aziz (2019) students often found foreign vocabulary that they did not recognize in the text which made them very confused in understanding the contents of the text they read, it was due to the lack of mastery of the vocabulary they had. Similarly, Qurniawan (2020) found that most of the students faced difficulties in reading comprehension due to their lack of vocabulary mastery, which made them unable to comprehend their reading properly.

The second, low level of grammar mastery made students difficult to comprehend their reading. The findings revealed that most students still struggled with grammatical items when attempting to comprehend the reading because they often made a misinterpretation of what they were reading if they did not use the grammar properly. Elwér (2014) argued that students' low grammar mastery is the

difficulty that most affects students' reading comprehension. This finding was in line with Iwan (2016), students who had low level of grammar mastery had difficulty identifying information in the text they read because they did not understand sentence structure and tended to interpret English word by word, which caused misinterpretation of a sentence. Therefore, students' grammar knowledge affected their reading comprehension. Furthermore, Hidayati (2018), the students who have low knowledge of grammar have difficulty solving types of questions in reading, such as referencing. Based on the data obtained, 71% of the students who were researched by him still had difficulty in locating references or words that pronouns refer to in a text that made them wrong in answering reading questions.

The third was unfamiliar with the topic of the text. Most of the students argued that it was difficult to understand the content of the text, which contained information about a foreign culture or about something they had never known or done before. This happened because they did not have enough background knowledge to help them digest the meaning of what they had read. O'Reilly, T. (2019) stated that the lack of background knowledge about the topic makes it difficult for students to understand the reading and makes them misinterpret the reading that is being read. This result was in line with the previous research by Satriani (2018), one of the difficulties students had in understanding reading was that they did not have sufficient background knowledge to understand the text. It could be that the lesson has not been studied yet, or the student has never read a similar text before. Students who have read the same text as the text they want to read will more easily understand the contents of the text because they already have

sufficient background knowledge. On the other hand, Melandita (2019), stated that students had difficulty when they read texts that had complex sentences because they did not have enough background knowledge and cultural knowledge to understand the text. In other words, the material being read was too unfamiliar for them.

The fourth, unable to use reading strategy for effective reading. The result of the data indicated students still had difficulty in using strategies effectively where it made it difficult for them to find specific information, determine the main idea, and make inferences from a text. Westwood (2012) argued that the inadequate use of effective reading strategies makes reading more difficult to understand and takes much longer time. This result was in line with the previous research by Aziz (2019), the data revealed that students were still unable to understand the reading strategy in reading comprehension, which made it difficult for them to understand the reading. Students will have low grades in reading lessons if they do not have good reading strategies. Because those who did not understand the use of correct reading strategies tended to spend a lot of time getting the right answers when the exam took place, which was usually only given a limited time. On the other hand, Al-Jarrah (2018), the students claimed their teacher did not explain strategies to get answers from reading, which caused them to not understand how to use good reading strategies. This made it difficult for students to analyze the text to find main ideas, supporting ideas, or draw conclusions from a text.

The fifth, too long reading text. Based on the results of the research, students often struggled when faced with texts that were too long, because they thought if

the text was long, it would be more difficult to comprehend and there would be a lot of difficult vocabulary in it, which could lower their motivation for reading. Therefore, students will lose concentration in understanding the contents of reading texts that are boring or too long. According to Snow (1999), understanding a longer text is very difficult because they have to construct meaning, which is usually complex, and they have difficulty recognizing the vocabulary they face in reading a text. This finding was in line with Putri (2020), from her interview data, it showed that students had more difficulty when reading longer texts because there were a lot of difficult vocabularies and tended to have a lot of phrases where students could not interpret the sentences word by word. All of that could cause students to panic and feel bored when reading because they must open the dictionary often but they only had limited time, on the other word, they were too lazy to read longer texts. Furthermore, Yusuf & Fauzan (2016), students needed more time when trying to identify long-text information, and this contrasted with the time that was given for them to answer all questions. That condition made students lose concentration, and they were forced to read in a hurry to answer all questions without understanding the contents of the text carefully.