

A STUDY ON THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' READING ABILITY OF SMK NEGERI 3 PEKANBARU

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Abstract: *The aim of this study was to find out the second year students' ability level of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru in reading comprehension. The design of the study is quantitative research paradigm. The population of this research were all the second year students of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru divided into 5 majors ; Hotel Accommodation, Culinary Art, Patisserie, Design Fashion and Beauty Class. The total number of the population were 266 students. In order to choose the sample and try out class, the lottery was taken. Culinary Art 1 was determined as the try out class while Culinary Art 2 as the sample class which both of the classes consist of 34 students. To identify the students' reading ability, the reading test was administered. Before conducting the test, a try out was done in order to determine the reliability and validity of the test. The data were collected by administering a reading test to the students in the form of multiple choice. The result shows that the ability of the second year students in reading comprehension was classified into good level with the mean score of 70.53. There are three of reading components that can be classified into excellent (finding factual information, finding main ideas, and the meaning of vocabularies words). The other components are categorized into good level (finding references, finding inferences, and finding social functions. The other two components can be said as average level (identifying language features and identifying generic structures). The implication of the findings is that the second year students of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru should be well trained in aspects of language features and generic structures.*

Key Words: *Ability, Reading*

PENELITIAN TENTANG KEMAMPUAN MEMBACA SISWA TAHUN KEDUA SMK NEGERI 3 PEKANBARU

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Absrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tingkat kemampuan siswa kelas dua SMKN 3 Pekanbaru dalam kemampuan membaca. Desain penelitian ini adalah penelitian kuantitatif. Populasi penelitian ini adalah semua siswa kelas dua SMKN 3 Pekanbaru yang dibagi menjadi 5 jurusan; Akomodasi Hotel, Tata Boga, Patiseri, Tata Busana dan Kelas Kecantikan. Jumlah total populasi adalah 266 siswa. Untuk memilih sampel dan kelas uji-coba, lotre diambil oleh penulis. Tata Boga 1 dipilih sebagai kelas uji coba sementara Tata Boga 2 sebagai kelas sampel yang kedua kelasnya terdiri dari 34 siswa. Untuk mengidentifikasi kemampuan membaca siswa, tes membaca diberikan. Sebelum melakukan tes, uji coba dilakukan oleh siswa untuk menentukan reliabilitas dan validitas tes. Data dikumpulkan dengan melakukan tes membaca kepada siswa dalam bentuk pilihan ganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan siswa kelas dua dalam kemampuan membaca tergolong baik dengan skor rata-rata 70.53. Terdapat tiga komponen membaca yang dapat digolongkan menjadi sangat baik (mencari informasi faktual, menemukan ide utama, dan makna kata-kata kosa kata), komponen lainnya adalah kategori ke level yang baik (mencari referensi, menemukan kesimpulan, dan menemukan fungsi sosial, dan dua komponen lainnya dapat dikatakan sebagai level rata-rata (mengidentifikasi fitur bahasa dan mengidentifikasi struktur generik). Implikasi dari penelitian ini adalah bahwa siswa tahun kedua SMKN 3 Pekanbaru seharusnya lebih dilatih dalam aspek fitur bahasa dan struktur generik dalam teks.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan, Membaca

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the basic skills in learning English which cannot be separated from other language skills and these skills are writing, speaking and listening. According to Connors (2014), reading is defined as the ability to read and interpret meaning from varied texts. It is an activity that involves thinking process to get the information or idea from the text.

However for foreign language learners reading is not an easy task to do because reading in English is complicated. The learners found that it is hard to get the meaning from the text. The learners, especially ESL and EFL learners, face a variety of difficulties while reading. According to Alsamadani (2008), even though the students have reading difficulties in their mother tongue, the problems get worse when reading is applied as a foreign language, the students might be lagging behind in a number of reading components, including accuracy, comprehension, and speed.

In the educational environment, reading is one of the most common and often compulsory activities that students and academicians need to do most of the time. Unfortunately, Indonesian students' reading achievement is quite low. As cited in Muryani and Iman (2017) Progress in International Reading Literacy Study as known as PIRLS (2011) states that Indonesian students' reading achievement is still low. Reading achievement shows that Indonesian students has average score 428 points with the scale center point of international mean score is 500 points, it means that Indonesian students' reading skill is significantly lower than the center point.

According to the 2013 Curriculum, and English syllabus for the second year students of vocational high school the students are required to learn three kinds of text such as narrative text, recount text, and descriptive text. In order to understand the reading materials the students are expected to comprehend the texts and understand the indicators of reading, such as finding the main idea, finding factual information, making inferences, identifying reference, finding the meaning of vocabulary, and in addition, finding general structures, finding the language features and finding the social function.

Based on writer's interview with the English teacher in SMKN 3 Pekanbaru, the students of this school faced some problems in reading. She said that students were mostly passive in teaching learning process, especially in comprehending English texts. Then, based on the writer's observation in class while doing practice teaching in SMKN 3 Pekanbaru, most of the students stated English as one of the difficult subjects especially in reading. Most of them confessed that they often found that it is quite hard to complete reading comprehension section in an English proficiency test.

From the explanation above, it is clear that reading is essential to be learned and comprehend by the students. In this case, the writer wants to find out about the real condition of students' ability level in comprehending English texts and also the ability level in comprehending English texts for each component. Based the reasons above the writer interested in conducted a research which is entitled A Study on the Second Year Students' Reading Ability of SMK Negeri 3 Pekanbaru.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive research which has only one variable that describes the reading ability of the second year students of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru. According to Gay (2000), a descriptive research involves collecting the data by answering questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Therefore, the aim of this research is to find out how is the reading ability of the first year students of SMK Negeri 3 Pekanbaru.

In this research, cluster random sampling was used to decide the sample. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) stated that cluster random sampling is the selection of groups, or clusters, of subjects rather than individuals. The writer took two classes, Culinary Art 1 as the try out and Culinary Art 2 as the sample class which both of the classes consisted of 34 students.

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), research instrument is general method used by the researcher for obtaining information in collecting the data. In obtaining the data, the students were given a reading test. The test consisted of 6 texts (2 narrative, 2 descriptive, and 2 recount texts), each text contained of 8 questions. It was constructed in the form of multiple choice with four alternatives answer including 1 correct answer and 3 wrong answers.

After distributing the reading test to the students, the writer analyzed the data in order to know their ability in reading English texts. Furthermore, the level of the student's score in comprehending English texts can be classified into four levels of mastery. The classification can be seen in this following table:

Table 1. The Classification of Students' Scores

No.	Test Score	Classification
1.	80 – 100	Excellent
2.	60 – 79	Good
3.	50 – 59	Average
4.	0 – 49	Poor

(Harris, 1974)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The specific objective of this research is to find out the ability of the first year students of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru in comprehending English texts. The writer classified the questions in some components that help students in comprehending the texts. There are finding the main idea, finding the factual information, meaning of vocabulary words, finding references, finding inferences, finding generic structure, language features and social functions of the texts. The result of the research can be described as follows:

Table 2. Percentage Of The Students' Ability in Reading Comprehension

No	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1	80 – 100	12	35	Excellent	70,53
2	60 – 79	12	35	Good	
3	50 – 59	6	18	Average	
4	0 – 49	4	12	Poor	
Total		34	100		

The result shows that 12 students (35 %) are in excellent level, 12 students (35 %) are in good level, 6 students (18%) are in average level, and 4 students (12 %) are in poor level.

In short, the mean score of the students in comprehending the texts is 70, 53. It can be stated that the ability of the second year students of SMKN 1 Pekanbaru in comprehending English texts is in Good level. It means that most of the students are classified in good level.

Table 3. Students' Scores and Their Level of Ability in Finding Factual Information

No	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean Score
1	80 – 100	21	62	Excellent	75,98
2	60 – 79	4	12	Good	
3	50 – 59	4	12	Average	
4	0 – 49	5	15	Poor	
Total		34	100		

For finding actual information, 21 students (62%) are in excellent level, there are 4 students (12 %) in good level, 4 students (12 %) are in average level, and 5 students (15 %) are in poor level.

The writer finds out that the students' mean score in finding factual information is 75.98. It can be concluded that the ability of the second year students of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru in comprehending the texts, in the term of finding factual information is in good level.

Table 4. Students' Scores and Their Level of Ability in Finding Main Ideas

NO	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean Score
1	80 -100	25	74	Excellent	84,31
2	60 – 79	9	26	Good	
3	50 – 59	0	0	Average	
4	0 – 49	0	0	Poor	
TOTAL		34	100		

Table 3 shows the students' ability in finding main ideas, 25 students (74%) are in excellent level, and there are 9 students (26 %) in good level. There were none of the student is in average and poor level.

It also shows that the students' mean score in finding main ideas is 84, 31. It means that the ability of the second year students' of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru in comprehending the texts in terms of finding main ideas is in excellent level.

Table 5. Students' Score and Their Level of Ability in Finding Meaning of Vocabulary Word

No	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean Score
1	80 – 100	23	68	Excellent	82, 35
2	60 – 79	8	24	Good	
3	50 – 59	2	6	Average	
4	0 – 49	1	3	Poor	
TOTAL		34	100		

For finding meaning of vocabulary words, 23 students (68%) is in excellent level, there are 8 students (24%) in good level, 2 students (6%) are in average level, and 1 students (3%) are in poor level.

It is found out that the students' mean score in finding meaning of vocabulary words is 82, 35. It can be concluded that the students' ability in finding meaning of vocabulary words is in excellent level.

Table 6. Students' Score and Their Level of Ability in Finding References

No	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean Score
1	80 – 100	19	56	Excellent	74,02
2	60 – 79	8	24	Good	
3	50 – 59	1	3	Average	
4	0 – 49	6	18	Poor	
TOTAL		34	100		

Table 5 shows the students ability in finding references, 19 students (56%) is in excellent level, there are 8 students (24%) in good level, 1 student (3%) are in average level, and 6 students (18%) are in poor level.

It is also shows that the students' mean scores in finding references is 74, 02. It can be concluded that the students' ability in finding references is in good level.

Table 7. Students' Scores and Their Level of Ability in Finding Inferences

No	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean Score
1	80 – 100	15	44	Excellent	68,14
2	60 – 79	7	21	Good	
3	50 – 59	8	24	Average	
4	0 – 49	4	12	Poor	
Total		34	100		

For finding inferences, 15 students (44 %) are in excellent level, there are 7 students (21%) in good level. 8 students (24%) are in average level, and 4 students (12%) are in poor level.

It can be concluded that the students' mean score in finding inferences is 68, 14. It can be concluded that the students' ability in finding inferences is in good level.

Table 8. Students' Scores Classification in Finding Social Function

No	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean Score
1	80 - 100	19	56	Excellent	68,14
2	60 – 79	6	18	Good	
3	50 – 59	3	9	Average	
4	0 – 49	6	18	Poor	
TOTAL		34	100		

Table 8 shows the students ability in finding references, 19 students (56%) is in excellent level, there are 6 students (18%) in good level, 3 student (9%) are in average level, and 6 students (18%) are in poor level.

It can be drawn a conclusion that the students' mean score in finding social functions is 68, 14. It means that the students' ability in finding social function is good.

Table 9. The Students' Scores Classification in Identifying Language Feature

No	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean Score
1	80 100	8	24	Excellent	56,37
2	60 – 79	8	24	Good	
3	50 – 59	11	32	Average	
4	0 – 49	7	21	Poor	
Total		34	100		

Table 9 shows the students ability in finding references, 8 students (24%) is in excellent level, there are 8 students (24%) in good level, 11 student (32%) are in average level, and 7 students (21 %) are in poor level.

The students' mean score in finding social functions is 56, 37. It means that the students' ability in finding social function is in average level.

Table 10. The Students' Scores Classification in Identifying Generic Structure

No	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean Score
1	80 -100	6	18	Excellent	54,90
2	60 – 79	11	32	Good	
3	50 – 59	6	18	Average	
4	0 – 49	11	32	Poor	
Total		34	100		

Table 10 shows the students ability in identifying generic structure, 6 students (18%) is in excellent level, there are 11 students (32%) in good level, 6 student (32%) are in average level, and 11 students (32%) are in poor level.

It can be concluded that the students' mean score in identifying generic structure is 54, 90. It means that the students' ability in identifying generic structure is in average level.

DISCUSSION

Referring to the result findings, the research question has been answered related to the students' ability in reading comprehension of the second year students of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru. It can be seen that the ability of the second year students in reading comprehension of narrative, descriptive and recount texts is classified into good level.

Based on the result of this research, the students' ability from each reading components can be described as follows: there are two components are in excellent level, three components are in good level, two components are in average level, and none component is in poor level. The most difficult components of the reading texts is identifying generic structures and its score is 54.90. Meanwhile, the easiest aspects of reading comprehension is finding main ideas with the mean score 84.31

The data shows that the lowest aspect in reading comprehension is in identifying generic structures of the texts with the mean score is 54.90. It shows that there are six students are in excellent level, eleven students are in good level, six students are in average level and 11 students are in poor level. It can be concluded that some of the students still faced the difficulty in understanding and confused to differentiate the generic structures of each text.

Considering the problems, the students who achieved lowest score in identifying generic structure because their lack of knowledge about the structure of the texts, they read literally without bringing in prior knowledge. Their limitation of genre knowledge makes them cannot recognize the kind of genre and the students still difficult to distinguish the generic structure of the texts. According to Grabe (2009), the following is the importance of knowing genre. By identifying the genre, the students can interpret the abstract patterns of generic structure because it makes the texts are logic and coherent. The students can also recognize the text structure of text and also will be able

to comprehend better because they get more information from text. This will help the students in constructing the meaning of texts because every paragraph in a text has a relationship with other paragraphs. If the readers know the relationship between the paragraphs to others and it will help them to comprehend the texts. Moreover, McKee (2003) states by knowing about the genre and how it works, the readers will have a sense of reasonable interpretations to make of element of the text. For this reason, the students will have a sense of reasonable interpretation toward the characteristics of text because they know how the genre works so they know how to understand the characteristic of texts.

Reading ability is acquired through practice, not only through educational settings or teaching methods. If the teacher uses good methods in teaching reading to the students, but if the students never practice, it means nothing. Students will have good ability in reading if they practice as often as possible.

In addition Nuttal (1982) also stated that someone who has skill in reading will find it easy to get information directly and quickly. Otherwise, learners whom lack knowledge of reading will face difficulties in understanding the reading. That is why the students' prior knowledge is essential in comprehending a reading text. It will help the students to identify the structure of each text correctly and able to locate the information they need for successful comprehension. Therefore, the students' needs to concentrate and pay more attention in reading activities in order to get a better understanding.

According to the explanation above, the writer concluded that the reading ability of the second year students of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru is classified into good level.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

After conducting research entitled *A Study on the Second Year Student's Reading Ability of SMKN 3 Pekanbaru*. The objective of this study is to find out the second year students' ability in reading comprehension of English texts (narrative, descriptive and recount texts) at SMKN 3 Pekanbaru.

Based on the result of the data analysis for students' scores, it is obtained that the students' ability in reading comprehension of English texts is categorized into good level. The most difficult components of the reading texts is identifying generic structures and its score is 54.90. Meanwhile, the easiest aspects of reading comprehension is finding main ideas with the mean score 84.31. Then, the other aspect such as finding factual information 76, finding the meaning of vocabulary 82, finding references 72, finding inferences 68, finding social functions 68, and identifying the language features of the text is 56.

Recommendation

It is sincere that there is still a lot of weakness in this research. However, from these research findings, the writer would like to propose some recommendations, first, even though the students' reading ability is already in good level, but some students still get low score in term of identifying the generic structure of the texts. So,

without neglecting other components English teachers are expected to focus on the component that students still find difficulties which is identifying generic structure of the texts. The teacher needs to give the clear explanation about the generic structure of genre, giving the example of analyzing of every text is also important to improve students' mastery in reading text. It also important to develop students' motivation and encourage them to practice in reading comprehension.

Second, it is important for the students to know the components of reading that will help them in comprehending the texts. The students should study more about the genre of the texts to help them distinguish the generic structure of the reading texts. They also need to read more and find another resources and do not only rely on the teachers' explanation in to order to improve their ability in comprehending English texts.

Last, for next researcher it is suggested to the next research to conduct research in different design such as action research, experimental research, and etc.

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