



TEACHER'S PROBLEMS IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION: A CASE AT SMPN 7 KOTA BUKITTINGGI

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Abstract

This study aims to identify and analyze problems in teaching reading comprehension at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that teachers possess a general understanding of teaching reading, including the objectives of reading, models of reading, and strategies to enhance comprehension. However, several problems are also identified, such as difficulties in applying suitable strategies, limited use of media, and challenges in accommodating students' diverse levels of comprehension. These problems influence the way teachers implement their understanding in classroom practice. Furthermore, the study shows a close correlation between teachers' understanding and the problems they face, indicating that limited understanding often leads to less effective teaching strategies.

Keywords:

problems in teaching, teaching reading comprehension

A. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is one of the essential skills in learning English, especially for students in junior and senior high school. It is not only about reading the words in a text, but also about understanding the meaning, interpreting the ideas, and connecting the information with one's prior knowledge. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), reading comprehension becomes even more important because it supports the development of other language skills such as writing, speaking, and listening.

However, teaching reading comprehension in the classroom is not without challenges. Teachers may face difficulties related to the curriculum, the students' abilities, the availability of resources, and the choice of strategies. These challenges can affect the effectiveness of the teaching process and the level of student engagement. Therefore, understanding how teachers perceive and approach the teaching of reading comprehension is important in order to improve the quality of English instruction.

This research focuses on exploring problem in teaching reading comprehension. The study was conducted at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi, using interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis to collect data. The results are expected to provide insights into the factors that influence the teaching of reading comprehension and to contribute to the development of more effective teaching strategies in the EFL classroom.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative research design, which aims to find and explore problems in teaching reading comprehension at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth exploration of teacher's experiences, beliefs, and practices, making it suitable for studying how problems show up in teaching process.

To collect the data, the researcher used interview, observation and documentation. Interview was conducted towards an English teacher who was responsible for the teaching reading. Then, her classes were observed for the observation data. Then, the documents included in this research were written materials related to reading instruction to gain insights into curriculum structure, teaching materials, and lesson planning. This method complements interviews and observations

by providing concrete evidence of instructional planning and implementation (Creswell, 2013).

Then, the data were analyzed by implementing three steps of Miles & Huberman including data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Here, the researcher interprets the findings and ensures their credibility through validation techniques. Creswell (2013) emphasizes that drawing conclusions in qualitative research is an ongoing and iterative process, requiring researchers to continuously reflect on the data, compare findings with existing literature, and verify interpretations for accuracy.

C. FINDINGS

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the finding related to the problems in teaching reading comprehension that faced by the english teacher. This research was taking place at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi and focus in identifying various problems that teacher may aquire when teaching. Beside of that, the researcher also wants to gain more information about teacher's understanding in teaching reading comprehension. The data was collected by three main research instrument which are interview, observation and document analysis. Interview was used to gain specific data from the english teacher and gain deeper information about problems in teaching reading comprehension, observation was used to verify the data that researcher aquired from interview and document analysis to help researcher in drawing conclusion and verification of the research.

a. Data reduction

1) Interview

Problems in teaching reading are the challenges or difficulties that English teachers face during the process of teaching reading comprehension in the classroom. These problems can come from various factors such as teaching strategies, students' ability, curriculum demands, time limitation, and lack of teaching resources. In this research, the problems were found at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi. The researcher categorized the problems into five aspects: pedagogical problems, linguistic problems, student related problems, curriculum and time, and material and resources. All of these aspects have already asked to the english teacher and this was the result:

a) Pedagogical problems

Pedagogical problems refer to challenges related to teaching strategies, knowledge of teaching methodology, and clarity of learning objectives. These problems significantly influence how reading comprehension is delivered in the classroom. This section explores the teacher's perspectives and practices concerning these aspects.

b) Linguistic problems

Linguistic problems are difficulties that come from the language aspects of the reading text. These problems can make students confused or unable to understand the text clearly. In this part, the researcher focuses on three main points: vocabulary and grammar difficulties, the use of authentic texts, and student's limited English proficiency. These problems affect how students receive the material and how the teacher prepares the reading lesson.

c) Student-related problems

Student-related problems are difficulties that come from the students themselves during the reading lesson. In this research, the problems found include low motivation, different reading levels among students, and limited background knowledge. These problems can affect how students understand the reading material and how the teacher delivers the lesson. This part explains how these problems appear in the classroom and how the teacher tries to handle them.

d) Curriculum and time

Curriculum and time problems are challenges that come from the learning system and time for teaching. In this research, the teacher mentioned several issues such as too many materials in the syllabus, not enough time to focus on reading, and students losing motivation because of the current curriculum rules. These problems can reduce the effectiveness of reading lessons. This part explains how these issues appear in the classroom and how they affect the teaching and learning process.

e) Material and resources

Material and resources problems are related to the tools and media used in teaching reading. In this research, the teacher faced several issues such as outdated materials, lack of teaching media, and limited access to technology. These problems can make it harder for the teacher to prepare interesting and effective reading lessons. This part explains how the teacher deals with these limitations during the teaching process.

2) Observation

In this part, the researcher presents the results of classroom observations that were conducted to support the data from the interview. The observations were done during English reading lessons at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi. The purpose was to see directly how the teacher teaches reading in the classroom, and to find out whether the teacher's explanation in the interview matches the real teaching process. The observation also helped the researcher identify the problems faced by the teacher during the lesson.

a) First Observation

The first observation was taken on Wednesday, Mei 28th 2025, from 11.15 to 13.45 WIB in class VII.6 of SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi. Mrs. M as the English teacher taught material about narrative text. The material is focus on reading skills.

The class began with opening section by the teacher. After pre teaching activities, the teacher continues to learning section. Resercher observed the teaching process and fill the checklist in the observation sheet.

Table 4. 1 First Observation

No	Problem sources	Procedure
1	Teacher's Problems in Teaching Reading	1. Teacher uses several strategies in explaining such as story mapping to explain parts of narrative text 2. Teacher explains the goals in the beginning of the study. 3. <u>The teacher passes the grammar explanation section.</u> 4. Teacher is not hesitated in explaining the material. 5. Teacher gives context before explaining the narrative text. 6. The teacher explains the material clearly without rushing. 7. <u>The teacher only uses the textbook.</u> 8. The material is relevant with student's daily experiences.

Based on the result of the first observation, the teacher used several strategies during the reading lesson. One of the strategies that the teacher used was story mapping to explain the parts of narrative text. This strategy helped the teacher to deliver the structure of the text clearly to the students.

b) Second Observation

The Second observation was taken on Wednesday, June 4th 2025, from 11.15 to 13.45 WIB in class VII.6 of SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi. Mrs. M as the english teacher continue taught material about narrative text.

The class began with opening section by the teacher. After pre teaching activities, the teacher continues to learning section. Resercher observed the teaching process and fill the checklist in the observation sheet.

Table 4. 2 Second Observation

No	Problem sources	Procedure
1	Teacher's Problems in Teaching Reading	1. Teacher uses several strategies in explaining such as story mapping to explain parts of narrative text 2. Skimming and scanning method used in this meeting 3. Teacher explains the goals in the beginning of the study. 4. <u>The teacher passes the grammar explanation section which should be introduced before jump into text explanation.</u> 5. <u>Student seems to not understand some passages in the text</u> 6. Teacher is not hesitated in explaining the material. 7. Student who are seems not interested last week start try comprehend the material 8. <u>The teacher just generalized all the students.</u> 9. Teacher gives context before explaining the next material in narrative text. 10. The teacher explains the material clearly without rushing. 11. Teacher starts connect the lesson content with the upcoming test 12. <u>The teacher only uses the textbook as reference.</u> 13. The material is relevant with student's daily experiences. 14. In this second meeting, the teacher uses projector in learning process.

In the second observation, the teacher continued teaching narrative text to the students. The teacher still used story mapping to explain the structure of the text, just like in the first meeting. Besides that, the teacher also used skimming and scanning methods to help students find the main idea and specific information from the text.

3) Document Analysis

The document was an LKPD made by the English teacher. The following is the data from the LKPD.

Table 4. 3 Document Analysis

Cuplikan dari LKPD	Kode/Indikator Masalah	Interpretasi
Tidak ada tujuan pembelajaran tertulis	Tidak mencantumkan tujuan pembelajaran	Siswa tidak tahu apa kompetensi yang sedang dituju dalam kegiatan reading
Instruksi: "Create a dialogue based on the map." Tidak disebutkan panjang dialog, peran, atau contoh	Petunjuk kurang lengkap	Instruksi terlalu umum, dapat membingungkan siswa
Aktivitas hanya fokus pada tanya jawab arah berdasarkan peta sekolah	Aktivitas rendah tingkat kognitif	Tidak mengembangkan keterampilan berpikir kritis atau kreatif
Tidak disebutkan bagaimana LKPD ini akan dinilai (rubrik penilaian tidak ada)	Tidak ada komponen penilaian	Siswa tidak tahu aspek apa yang akan dievaluasi dalam reading
Tidak ada pencantuman KD atau capaian pembelajaran dari kurikulum	Tidak terhubung dengan kompetensi dasar	LKPD tidak mengaitkan kegiatan dengan standar kurikulum

Based on the document analysis, several problems were found in the LKPD (Lembar Kerja Peserta Didik) used by the English teacher. First, the LKPD did not include any written learning objectives. This caused students to be unaware of the specific competencies they were expected to achieve during the reading activity.

b. Data display

After having data reduction, then the data are being displayed in order to get the gist of the topic.

Table 4. 4 Data Display

Interview	Observation	Document analysis
1. Lack of training for english teacher	1. The teacher passes the grammar explanation section.	1. Students do not know what competence is being targeted in the reading activity
2. Students hard to understand reading materials	2. Student seems not understand some	2. The instructions are

3. Low motivation 4. Mixed reading level becomes annual problems for teacher 5. Student's background knowledge 6. Limited english lesson time caused by curriculum 7. Uncreative teacher in adapt at new curriculum 8. No retention policy makes students lost motivation 9. Teachers are unwilling to make students worksheet (LKPD)	3. The teacher only uses passages in the text the textbook. 4. The teacher just generalized all the students.	too general and may confuse the students 3. The LKPD does not develop critical or creative thinking skills 4. Students do not know which aspects will be assessed in the reading activity 5. The LKPD does not link the activities to the curriculum standards.
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c. Conclusion and Drawing Verification

In this section, the researcher explains the final step in analyzing the data, where the researcher draws conclusions based on the results from the three tools used: interviews, class observations, and document analysis. To make sure the findings are trustworthy, the researcher used triangulation through validation strategies (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2013).

Based on the results from interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, the researcher found that English teachers at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi face several consistent problems when teaching reading. These include limited teaching time, a lack of specific training, low student motivation, differences in student reading levels, and difficulty using varied materials.

D. DISCUSSION

In the part of discussion, the researcher will discuss the findings that researcher had found. Based on the findings from interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, the researcher identified a number of problems faced by the English teacher in teaching reading comprehension at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi. From all of the

problems, three problems became the main challenges that strongly appeared in almost every data source: (1) low student motivation, (2) different levels of reading proficiency among students, and (3) limited time and resources. These three problems are very important because they affect the success of the learning process and the achievement of students' comprehension. In addition to these three main problems, the researcher also found other problems such as pedagogical issues, linguistic difficulties, problems with student worksheets (LKPD), and curriculum-related challenges. The discussion of these problems is explained in detail below.

1.Problems in Teaching Reading Comprehension

Based on interview, observation and document analysis, english teacher in SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi faced several problems when teaching reading comprehension. The problems came from various sources. The researcher categorized the sources of problems into several key areas: (1) low student motivation, (2) different levels of reading proficiency among students, and (3) limited time and resources. These three problems are very important because they affect the success of the learning process and the achievement of students' comprehension. In addition to these three main problems, the researcher also found other problems such as pedagogical issues, linguistic difficulties, problems with student worksheets (LKPD), and curriculum-related challenges. The discussion of these problems is explained in detail below.

a. Low Student Motivation

Low student motivation appeared as one of the strongest problems in teaching reading comprehension. From the interview, the teacher stated that many students considered English only as a compulsory subject, not as a skill that they need to master. Because of this, they often came to class without interest, and sometimes they just followed the lesson without paying serious attention. The teacher admitted that motivation is a serious matter, and she tried to encourage students by using games, asking questions about their background knowledge, and giving group activities.

The observation also showed evidence of low motivation. In the first observation, several students seemed bored and did not focus on the text given by the teacher. Some of them talked to their friends instead of reading. However, during the second observation, when the teacher used skimming and scanning strategy with the help of a projector, a number of students who were previously passive began to show more

participation. This indicates that using different strategies and media can improve motivation.

b. Different Levels of Reading Proficiency

The second major problem is that students in one class have very different reading proficiency levels. This problem was mentioned clearly by the teacher in the interview. She explained that every year, this problem always appears, especially for new teachers who are not used to teaching mixed-ability classrooms. Some students can understand the text quickly, while others need more explanation and still struggle with basic vocabulary and grammar.

This was also observed during classroom activities. The teacher gave the same explanation and activity to all students, without making differences based on their ability. As a result, the stronger students did not get enough challenge, while the weaker students were left behind. This problem makes it difficult for the teacher to manage the class effectively because students' needs are not the same.

Document analysis also supported this problem. The LKPD used in class only gave general tasks with low difficulty. They did not provide different levels of exercises or scaffolding to support weaker students. Because of this, the worksheets did not really help all students equally.

c. Limited Time and Resources

The third problem that strongly appeared is the limited time and resources for teaching reading. The teacher explained that under the new curriculum, English lesson hours were reduced from 2×2 hours per week to only 1×3 hours per week. This reduction made it very difficult to cover all the materials and to give enough practice for students. The problem becomes worse when the English class is canceled because of public holidays or other school activities, because then the teacher has to combine two weeks of material into one meeting. This causes the students to receive the material too quickly and without enough practice.

From the observation, it was clear that the teacher depended a lot on the textbook. In the first meeting, no other media was used. Only in the second meeting did the teacher use a projector, but still the main source was the textbook. Although the textbook contained texts related to students' daily life, it was not enough to keep students engaged. Without more variety in materials, students easily lose interest.

The document analysis also showed that the worksheets (LKPD) were not well prepared. They did not include clear learning objectives, they were not connected to curriculum standards, and the instructions were too general. The worksheets also did not provide assessment criteria, so students did not know how their work would be evaluated. Because of this, the LKPD could not fully support the improvement of students' reading comprehension. With limited teaching time and weak supporting materials, the teacher had fewer opportunities to give practice, feedback, and assessment. This limited the effectiveness of the reading lesson.

D. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research is to find the problems that teachers faced in teaching reading comprehension at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi. After several step in conducting this research, the researcher concludes several conclusions.

Based on the findings and discussion, the researcher concludes that teaching reading comprehension at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi still faces many problems. The data that were collected from interview, observation, and document analysis show that the teacher met several challenges in carrying out reading lessons. From all of the problems, three main problems appeared strongly, namely low student motivation, different levels of reading proficiency, and limited time and resources. These three problems became the dominant issues that influenced both the teacher's way of teaching and the students' way of learning.

In conclusion, the problems in teaching reading comprehension at SMPN 7 Kota Bukittinggi are varied and closely connected. The three main problems are low motivation, proficiency differences, and limited time and resources. These central problems are related to other supporting problems such as lack of training, poor worksheets, and varied background knowledge. All of these problems influence each other and make the process of teaching reading comprehension less effective. Therefore, solving these problems requires not only the teacher's effort to apply better strategies in the classroom but also broader support from the school and education system in the form of training, better resources, and curriculum guidance. Only with combined efforts can the problems be reduced and the goal of teaching reading comprehension be reached more successfully.

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