



AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN READING LONG ENGLISH TEXT

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Article info	ABSTRACT
Corresponding Author: Yohana Triana Ina Weran, yohana.weran@gmail.com Universitas Kapuas, Sintang	Reading comprehension difficulties experienced by students can be attributed to two main factors: internal and external factors. Limited vocabulary knowledge is one of the difficulties students face when reading English texts. Many students have limited English vocabulary, which can make it difficult for them to understand the meaning of the texts they read. This research was conducted using a qualitative method, with a questionnaire as the data collection technique. The questionnaire was distributed to fourth-semester students of the English Education Study Program at the University of Kapuas. Based on the respondents' answers, the findings indicate that the length of the text itself was not necessarily the main difficulty. Instead, students experienced greater difficulties in understanding the content of the text. Therefore, students' difficulties in reading long English texts may be influenced not only by the length of the texts but also by their ability to comprehend the content and maintain their interest and concentration while reading Keywords: <i>Reading comprehension, Reading difficulties, long English texts, Students' interest, Concentration, English education students</i>
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INTRODUCTION

Reading is an important language skill because it allows readers to obtain information, develop knowledge, and understand ideas presented in written texts. Reading, however, is not simply the process of recognizing words. It requires readers to construct meaning, connect information, identify important ideas, and interpret what the writer intends to communicate. When students read without understanding the content, they may not be able to obtain the information or knowledge contained in the text.

Reading comprehension is therefore a complex cognitive activity. According to Digna Arisshio Risma Miranda (2023), reading comprehension includes several aspects, such as the reading process, reading strategies, reading materials, and the use of media. Difficulties may arise when these aspects are not appropriately supported. Students may, for example, have difficulty understanding vocabulary, identifying references, making inferences, locating detailed information, or dealing with unfamiliar English materials. The difficulty can become

more noticeable when students are required to read long English texts. Long texts require students to maintain attention for a longer period and to process information across several paragraphs. Students may understand individual sentences but still experience difficulty connecting ideas and maintaining an overall understanding of the text. In addition, unfamiliar vocabulary may interrupt the reading process and make students lose focus.

Limited vocabulary knowledge is one of the difficulties students may experience when reading English texts. Hikmah Khildainy (2023) explains that students with limited vocabulary may experience difficulty understanding the meaning of what they read. Similar difficulties include understanding word meanings, locating references, making inferences, finding detailed information, becoming familiar with English materials, and dealing with limited vocabulary mastery (Sayekti Dwi Safitri, 2023). Reading difficulty is also influenced by factors beyond vocabulary. Hayati and Puspitaloka (2022) identify internal and external factors that can contribute to students' reading comprehension difficulties. Lack of motivation is one internal factor, while difficulties with English sentences and reading habits may also affect students' performance. In addition, Lendo, Liando, and Olii (2022) suggest that teachers should select texts that are readable, understandable, and appropriate for students' abilities.

Reading strategies may help students manage these difficulties. Par (2020) found a relationship between the use of reading strategies and reading achievement among EFL students. Students who use appropriate strategies may develop better understanding of the texts they read. Strategies such as predicting meaning, using context clues and dictionaries, skimming, and scanning have also been reported as useful in dealing with reading difficulties (Ramadhianti & Somba, 2023). Based on these considerations, this study focuses specifically on fourth-semester students' perceptions of reading long English texts. The study does not assume that text length itself is the only source of difficulty. Instead, it explores what students actually experience when reading long texts and the factors that they perceive as contributing to those difficulties.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore fourth-semester students' perceptions of the difficulties they experience when reading long English texts. A qualitative approach was selected because the purpose of the study was to obtain descriptive information about students' experiences and perceptions rather than to measure the relationship between variables statistically.

The participants were fourth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at the University of Kapuas Sintang. Data was collected using a questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The questionnaire contained three questions corresponding to the research questions: students' problems when reading long texts, possible solutions for improving reading skills, and factors contributing to reading difficulties. Six student responses were obtained. The responses were analyzed descriptively. The researcher reviewed each response, identified recurring ideas, and grouped similar

responses into themes. The themes were then interpreted in relation to the concepts and previous studies discussed in the literature review. Because the study involved six respondents and relied on self-reported questionnaire responses, the findings should be understood as a description of these students' perceptions rather than as a generalization to all English Education students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Finding

The questionnaire was distributed to fourth-semester students through Google Forms. Six responses were obtained. The responses were organized according to the three research questions.

Table 1. Students' Problems When Reading Long English Texts

Respondent	Response
Respondent 1	Reading long texts makes it difficult to focus and easy to get bored.
Respondent 2	It is difficult to maintain attention and concentration for a long period.
Respondent 3	The student has difficulty reading long texts and loses focus when bored.
Respondent 4	The eyes quickly become tired and sleepy when reading long texts.
Respondent 5	Reading many long texts can quickly become boring, especially when the content does not match the reader's interests.
Respondent 6	The student has difficulty understanding the content.

The responses show three recurring problems. First, several students reported difficulty maintaining focus and concentration while reading for a long period. Second, boredom and sleepiness were mentioned as reactions to long reading activities. Third, one respondent explicitly identified difficulty understanding the content. These responses indicate that students' perceptions of difficulty are not limited to the physical length of the text but also involve attention, interest, and comprehension.

Table 2. Students' Suggested Strategies for Improving Reading Skills

Respondent	Suggested Strategy
Respondent 1	Summarize what has been read.
Respondent 2	Use active reading, build vocabulary, learn new words, and practice reading every day.
Respondent 3	Develop a habit of reading articles or other materials that are interesting.
Respondent 4	Choose a theme or topic to read.
Respondent 5	Read a lot.
Respondent 6	Read many books.

The strategies suggested by the respondents can be grouped into four areas: regular reading practice, vocabulary development, active comprehension, and selection of interesting reading materials. Summarizing supports students in identifying and retaining important information. Vocabulary development can reduce the number of unfamiliar words that interrupt comprehension. Regular reading practice can help students develop greater

familiarity and stamina, while choosing topics that match their interests may help sustain attention.

Table 3 Factors Contributing to Students' Reading Difficulties

Respondent	Reported Factor
Respondent 1	Lack of vocabulary.
Respondent 2	Lack of interest in the content.
Respondent 3	Unfamiliar words and unfamiliar language.
Respondent 4	Noise.
Respondent 5	Difficulty understanding the content.
Respondent 6	Difficulty remembering information.

Discussion

The findings indicate that students' difficulties in reading long English texts are multidimensional. Although the study was initially concerned with long texts, the respondents did not consistently identify text length as the direct source of difficulty. Instead, their responses emphasized difficulty maintaining concentration, boredom, sleepiness, unfamiliar vocabulary, difficulty understanding content, environmental distraction, and difficulty remembering information. This finding is important because it suggests that a long text may become difficult when it increases the amount of attention, linguistic processing, and information management required from the reader.

The first prominent issue is concentration. Respondents 1, 2, and 3 described difficulties focusing or maintaining attention during long reading activities, while Respondent 4 mentioned tiredness and sleepiness. These responses suggest that sustained attention is an important part of the students' reading experience. When attention declines, students may miss information, lose connections between ideas, and find it increasingly difficult to construct a coherent understanding of the text. This is consistent with Ratnasari, Umamah, and Elfianto (2023), who identified difficulty in concentration as one of the factors associated with students' reading difficulties.

The second issue is students' interest in reading material. Respondent 5 stated that long texts become boring especially when the content does not match the reader's interest, while Respondent 2 identified lack of interest in the content as a contributing factor. These responses indicate that the perceived difficulty of a text can be influenced by affective engagement. A text that is linguistically manageable may still feel difficult if students have little interest in the topic. Conversely, an interesting topic may encourage students to continue reading despite encountering unfamiliar vocabulary or complex sentences.

This finding can be connected to the literature on motivation and reading. Hayati and Puspitaloka (2022) identify motivation as an internal factor related to reading comprehension difficulties. The present findings provide a similar indication from the students' own perceptions: when interest is low, students may become bored, lose focus, or stop engaging actively with the text. Therefore, teachers may need to consider not only the linguistic level of a text but also its relevance and appeal to students.

The third issue is vocabulary. Respondent 1 identified lack of vocabulary, while Respondent 3 reported unfamiliar words and language. This supports the findings discussed by Hikmah Khildainy (2023), which indicate that limited vocabulary can make it difficult for students to understand English texts. Vocabulary limitations may be even more noticeable in long texts because students encounter a larger amount of language. If too many words are unfamiliar, students may repeatedly stop reading to translate or search for meanings, interrupting the flow of comprehension.

Vocabulary difficulties are also closely related to comprehension at the sentence and paragraph levels. Understanding individual words does not automatically guarantee understanding the whole text. Students also need to identify relationships among ideas, distinguish important information from supporting details, and make inferences. The literature reviewed in this study identifies difficulties in finding main ideas, locating details, making inferences, and connecting topics with background knowledge (Ramadhianti & Somba, 2023). Therefore, vocabulary development should be combined with comprehension strategies rather than treated as the only solution.

The fourth issue is difficulty understanding and retaining content. Respondent 6 stated that the main problem was understanding the content, while another respondent identified difficulty remembering information. These responses suggest that students may experience challenges after decoding the words because they still have to organize and retain the information presented in the text. Long texts can contain several ideas, examples, and supporting details, which may make it difficult for students to maintain an overall representation of the text.

One practical response to this problem is summarizing. Respondent 1 suggested summarizing what has been read. Summarizing requires students to identify important information and restate it in a shorter form. It can therefore serve both as a comprehension check and as a way to support retention. Instead of attempting to remember every sentence, students can focus on the main idea and the most relevant supporting information.

Another important finding concerns active reading and vocabulary building. Respondent 2 suggested active reading, learning new words, and practicing every day. This suggestion is consistent with Par (2020), who found a relationship between reading strategy use and reading achievement. It also corresponds with the strategies identified in previous research, including using context clues, dictionaries, skimming, scanning, highlighting, translating, and rereading (Ramadhianti & Somba, 2023; Ratnasari et al., 2023). These strategies can make students more active readers because they require students to monitor their understanding rather than simply move from one sentence to another.

The respondents also emphasized reading habits. Respondents 3, 5, and 6 recommended reading regularly, reading articles, or reading books. Developing a regular reading habit may help students become more familiar with English vocabulary and sentence patterns and may gradually increase their ability to sustain attention. However, simply increasing the quantity of reading may not be sufficient if students do not understand what

they are reading. Regular practice should therefore be accompanied by appropriate strategies and materials that match students' levels and interests.

The finding concerning noise also shows that reading difficulties are not entirely located within the student. Respondent 4 identified noise as a factor. This represents an external condition that can interrupt attention and make sustained reading more difficult. The finding is relevant to the distinction between internal and external factors discussed by Hayati and Puspitaloka (2022). It suggests that improving reading performance may require attention to the learning environment as well as students' individual skills.

The findings also have implications for the selection of reading materials. Lendo, Liando, and Olii (2022) suggest that teachers should select texts that are readable, understandable, and suitable for students. Based on the present responses, suitability should include not only linguistic difficulty but also topic relevance and manageable text organization. Teachers can introduce longer texts gradually, divide them into sections, provide pre-reading vocabulary support, and ask students to identify the main idea of each section before connecting the sections into a complete understanding.

Technology and multimedia may provide additional support. The literature reviewed in this study reports that technology-based and multimedia interventions can support learners with reading difficulties (Kilag et al., 2023; Lumapenet et al., 2022). However, technology should function as a support for comprehension rather than replace the reading process. For example, digital dictionaries, annotation tools, and multimedia explanations can help students deal with unfamiliar vocabulary or difficult concepts while they continue to engage with the original text.

Overall, the findings suggest that the difficulty of reading long English texts should not be explained by text length alone. The six respondents described a combination of linguistic, cognitive, affective, and environmental factors. Vocabulary limitations and unfamiliar language can affect comprehension; lack of interest can reduce motivation; concentration difficulties can interrupt the reading process; and noise can create external distractions. Consequently, effective support should combine vocabulary development, comprehension strategies, interesting and appropriate materials, regular practice, and a supportive reading environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, fourth-semester students' difficulties in reading long English texts are not caused solely by the length of the texts. The students reported difficulty maintaining concentration, becoming bored or sleepy, understanding the content, dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary, and retaining information. The factors identified by the respondents included lack of vocabulary, lack of interest in the content, unfamiliar language, noise, difficulty understanding the text, and difficulty remembering information.

The students suggested several strategies for addressing these difficulties, including summarizing what they have read, practicing active reading, learning new vocabulary, reading regularly, choosing interesting topics, and developing a reading habit. These

strategies indicate that students recognize the importance of active engagement and consistent practice in improving reading skills.

Therefore, reading instruction for long English texts should not focus only on asking students to read more. Teachers should provide appropriate texts, support vocabulary development, teach comprehension strategies, divide long texts into manageable sections, and encourage students to read materials related to their interests. Students also need to develop regular reading habits and learn to monitor their own comprehension. Although the present study is limited by its small number of respondents and reliance on questionnaire data, it provides an initial description of the reading difficulties perceived by fourth-semester English Education students.

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