



## Students' Perception Of Reading Difficulties At The Eleventh Grade Students Of SMK Perbankan Yaris

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### ARTICLE INFO

### ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this research was to find out students' perception of reading difficulties at SMK Perbankan Yaris Duri. This study investigated the eleventh grade students' perceptions of reading difficulties at SMK Perbankan Yaris, aimed to identify key challenges, and explored their underlying causes. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to 12 students and analyzing using descriptive statistics. The findings this study revealed that students faced several challenges in reading English texts, particularly in understanding long sentences, recalling information, and maintaining concentration. Students struggled with recalling information they had just read, particularly when dealing with lengthy or information-dense passages. Some students reported that they became confused or discouraged when encountering difficult words or unfamiliar topics, leading them to abandon reading tasks or skim without understanding. These findings suggest that enhancing students' concentration skills, through strategies such as guided reading and chunking information, could improve their reading performance.

### Introduction

English proficiency is crucial for vocational school students, especially those entering professional fields such as banking. Reading plays a significant role in English language acquisition, contributing to the development of other skills,

including writing, listening, and speaking (Blachowicz & Ogle, 2017). In the era of globalization, mastery of English is crucial, especially for graduates of SMK Perbankan. In the context of vocational schools, English reading skills are particularly important because many technical and business-related resources are available primarily in English. For students of SMK Perbankan Yaris, who are preparing for careers in banking and finance, proficiency in reading English texts is essential for understanding financial documents, international banking regulations, and economic trends. Thus, their ability to comprehend English reading materials will significantly impact their career readiness and ability to compete in a globalized job market.

However, numerous studies have identified common barriers to reading proficiency among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Factors such as limited vocabulary (Nation, 2001), weak grammar mastery (Harmer, 2003), ineffective reading strategies (Grabe & Stoller, 2019), and difficulties in concentration (Cain, Oakhill, & Bryant, 2004) contribute to poor reading comprehension. These difficulties can lead to frustration and decreased motivation, further hindering students from engaging in extensive reading practices that could improve their skills. Many students of SMK Perbankan Yaris admit to having difficulties in understanding English reading texts. This study aims to dig deeper into students' opinions regarding the reading difficulties they face. Specifically, this study will identify the types of difficulties they encounter most often, as well as the factors that they think are the main causes.

These difficulties mirror results from previous studies, such as Annisa et al. (2023), which found that EFL students often struggle with comprehending extended sentences due to limited vocabulary and inadequate grammar mastery. According to Nation (2001), vocabulary knowledge serves as the foundation for reading comprehension; without sufficient vocabulary, students find it difficult to construct meaning from text, especially when faced with unfamiliar or academic words. In this study, students' limited vocabulary made it harder for them to grasp the meaning of long and complex sentences, affecting their ability to follow the flow of ideas. Harmer (2003) also emphasized that grammar mastery is essential for effective reading because it allows students to parse sentence structures accurately. Students who lack this skill often experience confusion when interpreting sentences, particularly those with embedded clauses or sophisticated grammatical constructions. This condition aligns with Sweller's (1988) cognitive load theory, which suggests that processing complex syntactic structures increases cognitive demand, ultimately reducing comprehension efficiency.

Another difficulty is common among EFL learners, as highlighted by Hamid and Yulianto (2022), who noted that concentration problems often stem from low motivation, anxiety, and lack of reading practice. Perfetti (2007) argued that sustained attention is critical for connecting ideas across sentences and paragraphs, forming a coherent representation of the text. Students who frequently lose focus while reading often fail to recognize relationships between key points, which disrupts

comprehension. Krashen (1985) also mentioned that learners who are overwhelmed by new vocabulary and grammar often disengage mentally, further compounding concentration issues.

Cain, Oakhill, and Bryant (2004), who argued that working memory capacity significantly affects students' ability to retain and connect pieces of information in reading. Perfetti (2007) further explained that successful reading comprehension requires the reader to build a coherent mental representation of the text, which depends on the ability to hold information in memory while integrating new input. When students' working memory is overwhelmed by the amount of information or the complexity of the sentences, they often forget what they have read, leading to fragmented understanding. Anderson and Pearson (1984) also highlighted the importance of prior knowledge in supporting comprehension; without the ability to relate new information to existing schemas, students are more likely to forget content quickly.

Next, translation can initially aid comprehension, Blachowicz and Ogle (2017) cautioned that overreliance on this method can prevent learners from developing the ability to process meaning directly in the target language. Grabe and Stoller (2019) also suggested that direct engagement with the target language fosters deeper language acquisition, as students learn to infer meaning from context and use various reading strategies. Translating every sentence can slow down reading speed and reduce students' confidence in their English skills, creating a cycle of dependency. Strengthening vocabulary and grammar knowledge remains fundamental, as supported by Nation (2001) and Harmer (2003). Additionally, teachers should address cognitive challenges by incorporating exercises to improve working memory and concentration, as suggested by Perfetti (2007) and Anderson and Pearson (1984). Guided practice in reading strategies such as summarizing, predicting content, and identifying main ideas can help students build mental models of the text, reducing their dependence on translation.

This study are expected to provide a clearer picture of the challenges faced by students of SMK Perbankan Yaris in learning English, as well as provide input for the school in an effort to improve the quality of learning. Previous research has identified several common reading challenges, including limited vocabulary (Nation, 2001), weak grammar mastery (Harmer, 2003), ineffective reading strategies (Grabe & Stoller, 2019), and difficulties in concentration (Cain, Oakhill, & Bryant, 2004). This study aims to explore the reading difficulties faced by eleventh-grade students at SMK Perbankan Yaris, providing insights into their perceptions and suggesting potential interventions as well.

## **Method**

This study used quantitative approach. Survey research design was used in this study. The research was analyzed using descriptive to analyze students' perceptions of

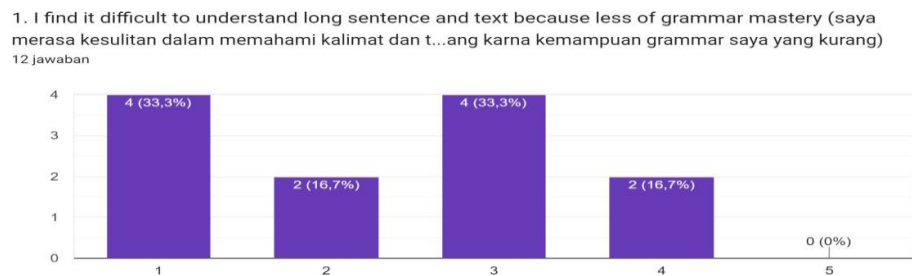
reading difficulties. The study involved 12 eleventh-grade students from SMK Perbankan Yaris. Although the sample size was small, it provided an initial insight into the challenges faced by vocational students. Data were collected through an 18-item Likert-scale questionnaire adapted from Rianti et al. (2023), the researcher shared the questionnaire to the students through the google form. The findings of the research show several points that consist of students' difficulties in reading. The researcher analyzed the responses of 12 students to know more about students' opinion on reading difficulties.

The researcher used a Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, less agree, disagree, and strongly disagree). The statements focused on students' difficulties with vocabulary, grammar, reading strategies, and concentration. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency analysis, were applied to examine students' responses.

### Finding and Discussion

In obtaining the data, the researcher shared the questionnaires to the students through Google form. The findings of the research show several points that consist of students' difficulties in reading. The researcher analyzed the responses of 12 students to know more about students' opinion on reading difficulties. The researcher employed a Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, less agree, disagree, and strongly disagree).

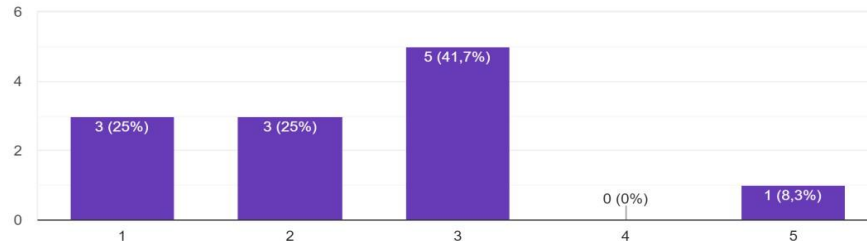
**Graph 1: Questionnaire No.1**



The Graph shows 33.3 % of the students selected strongly agree and less agree on the first statement. Because of a less grammar mastery, it was difficult to interpret long sentences and texts. Students who selected this option agree that there are 16,7 %. Students that decided to agree are unable to understand the phrase due to a limited vocabulary, making it difficult for them to comprehend extended sentences and writings. 16,7 % of student chose less agree because they believe they can understand longer sentence. Finally, no students voted to completely disagree. Students may struggle to comprehend longer sentences and text due to less grammar mastery.

## Graph 2: Questionnaire No.2

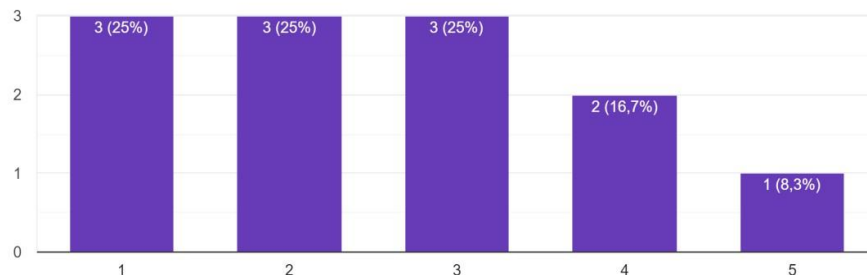
2. Understand long sentence and text, difficult for me because lack of vocabulary (memahami kalimat dan teks yang panjang sulit bagi saya karena kurangnya kosakata)  
12 jawaban



There are 25 % of students selected strongly agree and agree on second statement. Interpreting long sentences and paragraphs was challenging due to a lack of vocabulary. They are unable to structure the phrase and substance because their main attention is on the lack of vocabulary. 8,3 % of the students decided to strongly disagree because they had no problem with the vocabulary on long sentences and text.

## Graph 3: Questionnaire No.3

3. I find it difficult to remember what I read in long sentence and text (saya merasa kesulitan untuk mengingat apa yang saya baca ketika kalimat dan teks panjang)  
12 jawaban

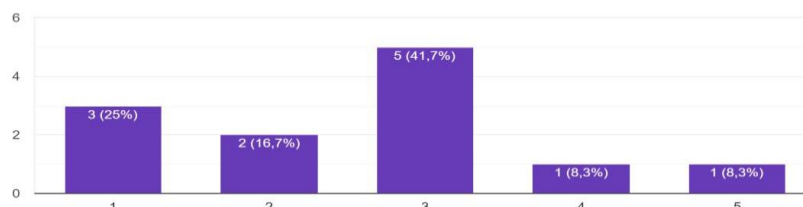


The Graph shows 25% of the students strongly agree, agree and less agree on statement number 3. They firmly agree that extended sentences and texts make it difficult for them to remember what they read. It indicates that they are having difficulty recalling what they have read since texts that are extremely long are difficult for them to memorize. While 16,7% of the students selected disagree and 8,3% totally disagree, they knew how to remember long sentences and texts. They believe they had no trouble recalling what they have read in long sentence and text. It could be suggested that students' challenges in reading arise from their failure to remember what they read in long sentences and texts.

#### Graph 4: Questionnaire No.4

4. I find it difficult to understand the reading text before knowing the topic (saya merasa kesulitan saat memahami teks bacaan sebelum mengetahui topiknya)

12 jawaban

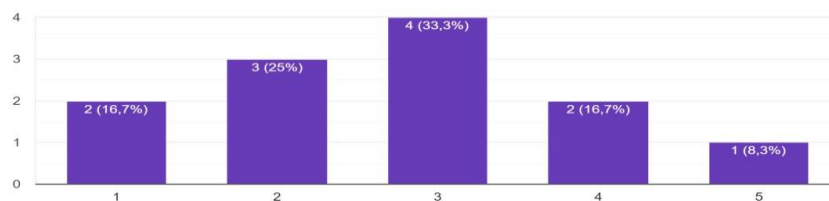


Most of the students selected less agree on the statement 4. It meant that they can comprehend the reading material before knowing about the topic, indicating that they comprehend before grasping the topic. The students do not need to understand the topic first before appreciating reading text. While 25% and 16% of the students Strongly agree and agree that they have difficulty to understand a text before knowing the issue, as if the topic is grasped first, they will understand the reading text. It suggests that they will have difficulties understanding the text being discussed since they will be unable to read the material if they are unaware of the topic.

#### Graph 5: Questionnaire No.5

5. Knowing the background is important when I want to read a text (mengetahui latar belakang itu penting ketika saya ingin membaca sebuah teks)

12 jawaban

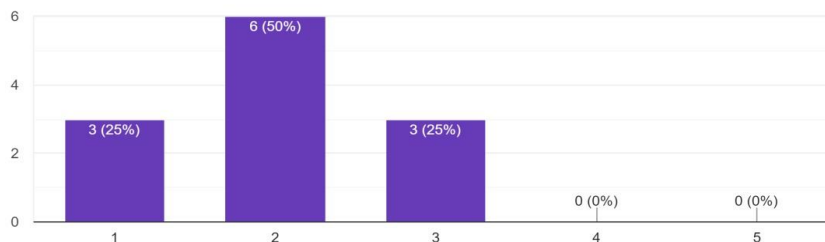


Knowing the background, according to the graph, 33,3% of the students less agree, 16,7% disagree and 8,3% totally disagree. The students believe that knowing the background is not necessary when reading a book, and knowing the history is not as significant. But for the rest of the students they struggle with reading comprehension when they attempt to comprehend reading text without first understanding its context. Understanding the context is essential when reading a book. It suggests that in order for readers to comprehend text, they must first be aware of its context.

### Graph 6: Questionnaire No.6

6. I fell confuse while reading when I don't know the background (saya merasa bingung saat membaca ketika saya tidak tahu latar belakangnya)

12 jawaban

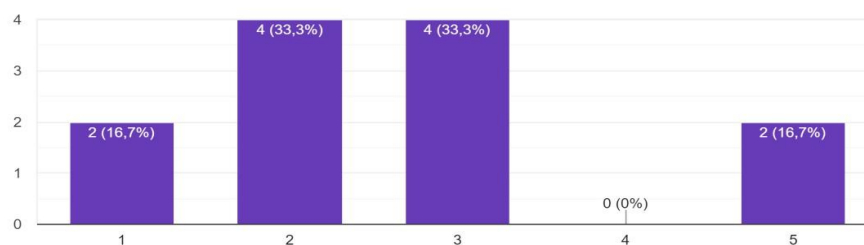


The Graph shows that most of the students fell confuse while reading if they are unfamiliar with the background. Knowing the history will help them grasp the material better and avoid confusion. It means students must understand the background so they do not become confused when reading material.

### Graph 7: Questionnaire No.7

7. When I have difficulty understanding the reading text I become lazy to read (ketika saya kesulitan dalam memahami teks bacaan saya menjadi malas untuk membaca)

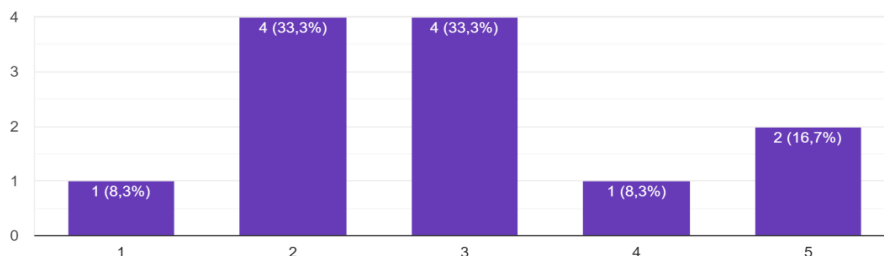
12 jawaban



There are 16,7% Strongly agree and 33,3% agree. It indicates that generally the students have trouble understanding the reading text, they become hesitant to read. While 33,3% of the students chose less agreement since it ensures that students do not become lazy even if they do not comprehend the text. Furthermore, 16,7% of the students chose to strongly disagree since they believe they can read more even if they do not understand the text.

### Graph 8: Questionnaire No.8

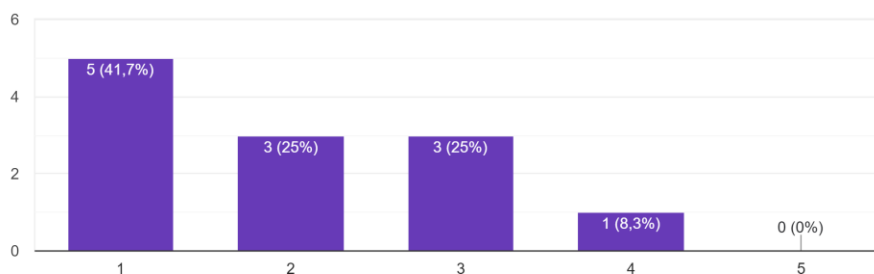
8. I understand reading material so far (saya memahami materi bacaan yang diajarkan selama ini)  
12 jawaban



There are 8,3% of the students selected strongly agree, 33,3% Agree. So far, they comprehend the reading material. Since they must understand and acquire reading comprehension skills, it indicates that they only have a basic understanding of the reading topic. 33,3% of the students selected less agree indicating that they are not familiar with the reading strategies that have been covered so far. Additionally, 16,7% of the students selected strongly disagree and 8,3% disagree. They don't think they grasp the reading material yet. They are still having trouble in understanding the material.

### Graph 9: Questionnaire No.9

9. I have my own strategy to understand reading text (saya mempunyai cara tersendiri untuk mengerti sebuah teks)  
12 jawaban

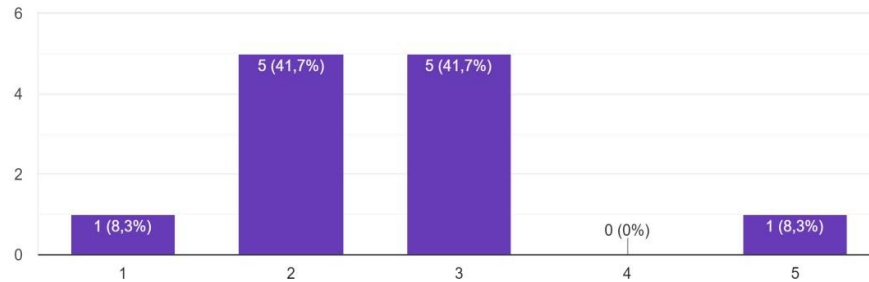


Most of the students read the text to increase their understanding when text becomes difficult. It can be seen from the 33,3% of the them selected strongly agree and 33,3% selected agree. The students read challenging texts repeatedly in order to increase their comprehension. While the rest of the students who select less agree, disagree and strongly disagree they feel capable of understanding the text without having to read it again. It can be inferred that they read texts to improve their comprehension when they get challenging.

### Graph 10: Questionnaire No.10

10. I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand what I am reading (saya membaca perlahan dan hati hati untuk memastikan saya mengerti)

12 jawaban

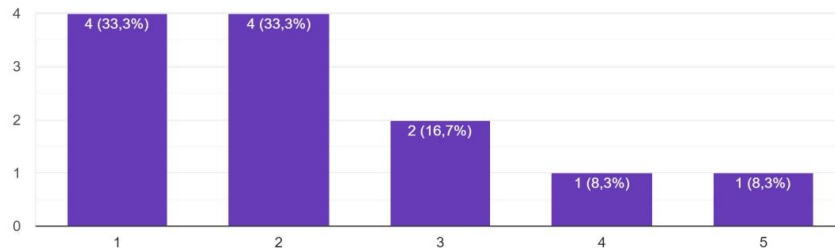


Based on the graph above, 41,7 % of the students selected "agree". They have read slowly and carefully to ensure that they comprehend what they are reading. While other 41,7% of the students less agreed who doesn't think they need to study texts slowly and carefully.

### Graph 11: Questionnaire No.11

11. When text become difficult, I read it to increase my understanding (ketika teks menjadi sulit saya membacanya kembali untuk meningkatkan pemahaman saya)

12 jawaban

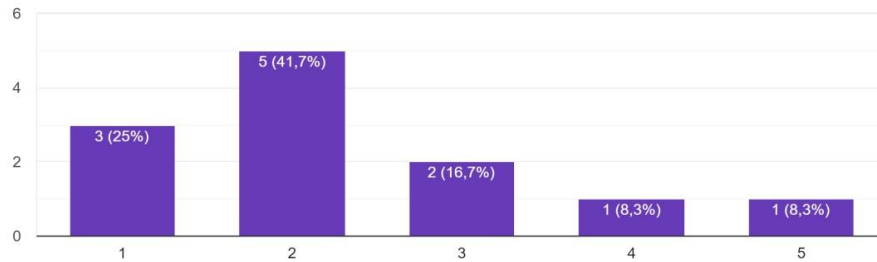


Most of the students read the text to increase their understanding when text becomes difficult. It can be seen from the 33,3% of the them selected strongly agree and 33,3% selected agree. The students read challenging texts repeatedly in order to increase their comprehension. While the rest of the students who select less agree, disagree and Strongly disagree they feel capable of understanding the text without having to read it again. It can be inferred that they read texts to improve their comprehension when they get challenging.

### Graph 12: Questionnaire No.12

12. When reading, I translate from English into my native language (saat membaca saya menerjemahkan dari bahasa Inggris ke Bahasa asal saya)

12 jawaban

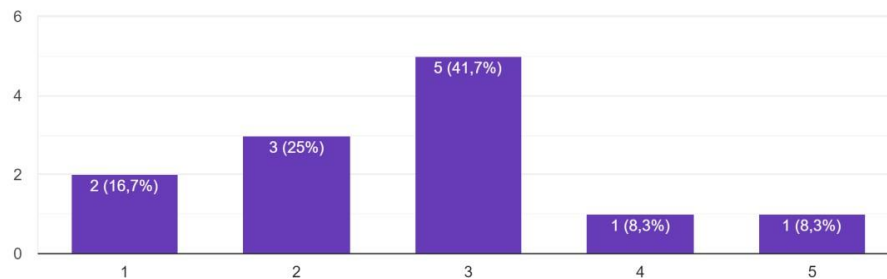


This graph shows as much as 41,7% of students chose agree and 25% strongly agree. That is when reading they translate from English into native language by translating English into their native language, students are easier to understand the text. Students who chose less agree, they don't feel if translate from English into their native language the wrong way. While only small percentage of students chose disagree and totally disagree that is because the students feel capable to understand the text without translate from English into native language; without translate from English into native language the students understand. It can be inferred that when reading, they translate from English into their native language.

### Graph 13: Questionnaire No.13

13. Summarize reading text material in my own word (meringkas materi teks bacaan dengan kata kata saya sendiri)

12 jawaban

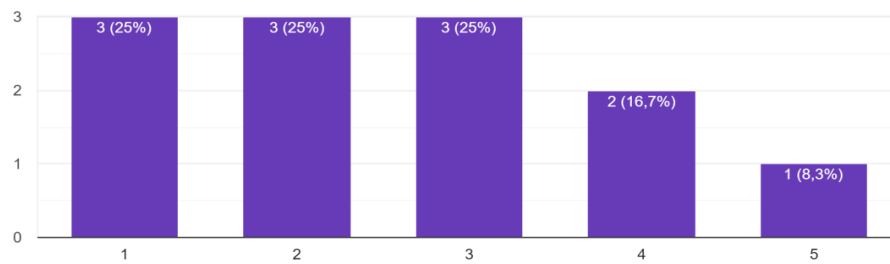


From the graph above, we know that generally students less agree to summarize reading text material in their own. Summarizing reading content in their own words is not a way that they feel is effective. Additionally, as much 8,3% of the students selected "disagree" and 8,3% is totally disagree." While 25% of students agree and 25% other strongly agree to summarize text material in their own word. It implies that summarizing reading material in one's own words is a useful tactic for improving comprehension of a text's substance. In conclusion, one tactic that can aid

in their comprehension of a reading material is to read it in their own words.

#### Graph 14: Questionnaire No.14

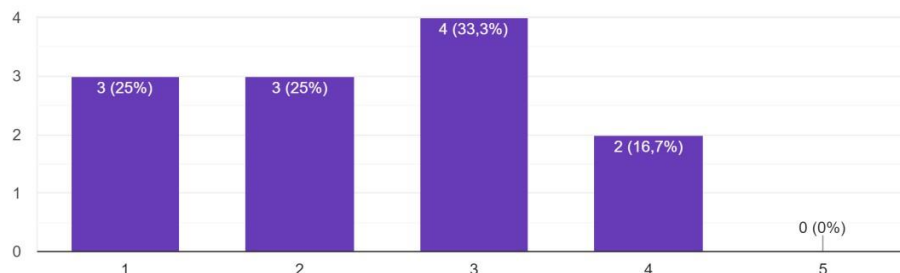
14. I have trouble concentrating While reading (saya merasa sulit konsentrasi saat membaca)  
12 jawaban



As much as 25% of the students selected Strongly agree and 25% agree that they find it difficult to concentrate while reading. It indicates that individuals struggle to focus when reading. While other students viewed that it is crucial for them to have strong concentration since they will struggle to comprehend the text's contents if they don't. Additionally, students' challenges with reading comprehension are caused by their inability to focus when reading.

#### Graph 15: Questionnaire No.15

15. I find it difficult to concentrate reading long texts (saya merasa sulit konsentrasi saat membaca teks yang panjang)  
12 jawaban

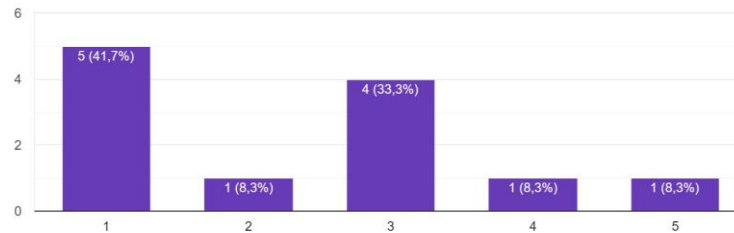


As much as 25% of the students selected Strongly agree and 25% agree that they find it difficult to concentrate reading long texts. It means that reading a text can be difficult to concentrate at times, especially if the text is long. Meanwhile, 33,33% of the students less agree and 16,7% disagree on the statement. They find it's not difficult to concentrate reading long texts.

### Graph 16: Questionnaire No.16

16. I find difficult to concentrate in understand the text because of less of vocabulary (saya merasa sulit konsentrasi saat memahami teks karena kurangnya kosa kata)

12 jawaban

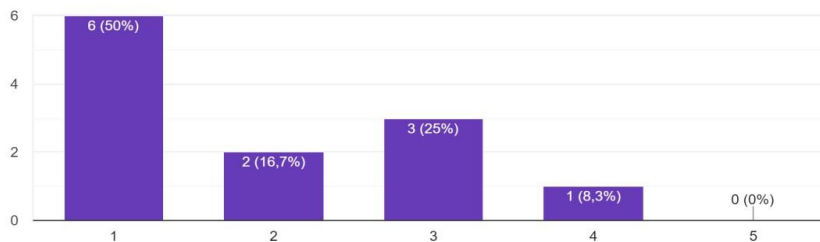


The graph shows that generally, it is difficult for the students to concentrate in understand the text because of less of vocabulary. On the other hand, 33,3% of the students who choose less agree because they mastery the vocabulary and understand of the text. While the rest of them do not have difficulties to concentrate in understand the text because of lack of vocabulary.

### Graph 17: Questionnaire No.17

17. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration (saya mencoba kembali ke jalur ketika saya kehilangan konsentrasi)

12 jawaban

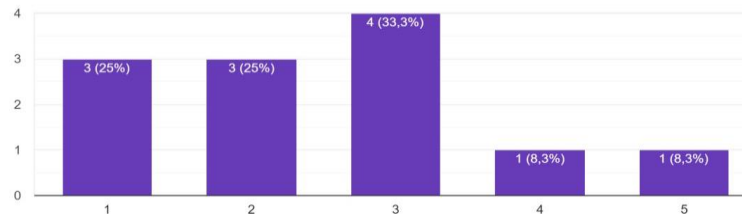


The above graph indicates that generally, the students try to get back on track when they lose concentration. They are attempting to regain concentration. While as much as 25% of students who chose less agree, think they do not need to regain concentration when they lose it. And for a student who chose to disagree, that student does not have difficulty concentrating when they lose concentration. Meanwhile, no one chose to totally disagree.

### Graph 18: Questionnaire No.18

18. When I lose concentration, I find it difficult to conclude the content of Reading (ketika saya kehilangan konsentrasi saya merasa kesulitan untuk menyimpulkan hasil bacaan)

12 jawaban



The graph shows half of the students stated that when they lose concentration, it is difficult for them to conclude the content of reading. Meanwhile, 33,3% of the students chose less agree that they focus while reading. Only few students think that even if they loses concentration, the reading can still be completed.

The findings of this study revealed that students faced several challenges in reading English texts, particularly in understanding long sentences, recalling information, and maintaining concentration. Furthermore, the study found that students struggled with recalling information they had just read, particularly when dealing with lengthy or information-dense passages. Another challenge observed in this study was students' struggle to maintain concentration while reading English texts. In this study, some students reported that they became confused or discouraged when encountering difficult words or unfamiliar topics, leading them to abandon reading tasks or skim without understanding. These findings suggest that enhancing students' concentration skills, through strategies such as guided reading and chunking information, could improve their reading performance. The study showed how students' inability to remember content affects their confidence and overall reading experience. Ultimately, difficulties in recalling information prevent students from fully grasping the main ideas and details in the texts they read.

Moreover, many students in this study resorted to translating English texts into their native language as a coping strategy. The present study supports this perspective, showing that students who frequently translated tended to struggle more with reading fluency and comprehension. Teachers should consider incorporating activities that gradually reduce students' reliance on translation, encouraging them to use context clues, prediction, and inference instead. Such strategies can build students' confidence and competence in processing English texts more naturally. Overall, this study underscores the multifaceted nature of reading difficulties among EFL learners and highlights the need for comprehensive instructional interventions. Furthermore, creating a supportive learning environment that reduces anxiety and builds motivation may help improve students' focus and persistence in reading tasks. With targeted interventions in these areas, students are more likely to develop greater reading confidence and achieve better comprehension outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

In this study, there are 12 students give their response on reading difficulties. Students had trouble specifically with understanding long sentences. A significant difficulty was recalling information they had just read, especially in lengthy or dense passages. This inability to remember content directly affected their confidence and prevented them from grasping the main ideas and details. Students struggled to maintain concentration while reading English texts. Difficult or unfamiliar words/topics often made students feel confused or discouraged, causing them to abandon reading or resort to ineffective skimming. Strategies like guided reading and chunking information can help students improve their focus and persistence. Teachers

should incorporate activities that gradually reduce the need for translation. Students should be encouraged to use context clues, prediction, and inference to process texts more naturally. Creating a supportive learning environment is crucial to reduce anxiety and build motivation, which will further help improve focus and persistence. In short, the study emphasizes that reading difficulty is multifaceted. Overcoming these challenges requires not only skill-based training (like strategy and recall) but also addressing students' habits (reducing translation) and the emotional/attention barriers they face.

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