

**TEACHERS' STRATEGIES AND PERCEIVED CHALLENGES IN
TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION
(A STUDY IN MTsS MUHAMMADIYAH MEUKEK)**

THESIS

Submitted by

AYU AGUSTINA

NIM. 210203153

Student of *Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*
Department of English Language Education



**FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN
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by:

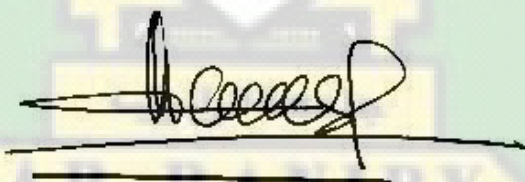
AYU AGUSTINA

NIM. 210203153

Student of *Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*
Department of English Language Education

Approved by:

Supervisor:



Prof. Dr. Muhammad AR, M, Ed

Date : 25 / 03 / 2025

It has been defended in *Sidang Munaqasyah*
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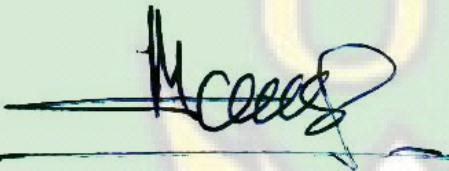
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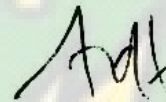
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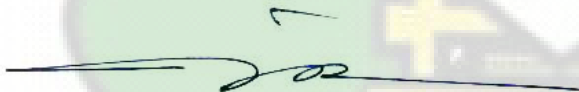
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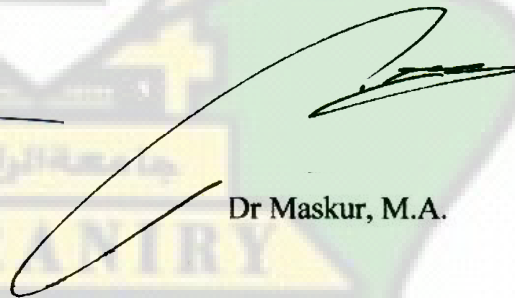
Azizah S. Ag., M. Pd

Member,

Member,



Dr Muhammad Nasir, M. Hum




Dr Maskur, M. A.

Certified by:

The Dean of Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan
Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh




Prof. Safri Muluk, S. Ag., M. A., M. Ed., Ph. D.
NIP. 197301021997031003

SURAT PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN
(Declaration of originality)

Saya yang bertanda tangan dibawah ini

Nama : Ayu Agustina
Nim : 210203153
Tempat /tanggal lahir : Tapaktuan ,01 Agustus 2003
Alamat : le Dingen Meukek ,Tapaktuan ,Aceh Selatan

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**Teachers Strategies And perceived challenges In Teaching Reading Comprehension (A
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Ayu Agustina

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The Researcher,

Ayu Agustina

ABSTRACT

Name : Ayu Agustina
Req. Number : 210203153
Faculty : *Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*
Major : Departmen of English Language Education
Thesis Title : Teachers' Strategies and Perceived Challenges in Teaching Reading Comprehension (A Study in MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek)
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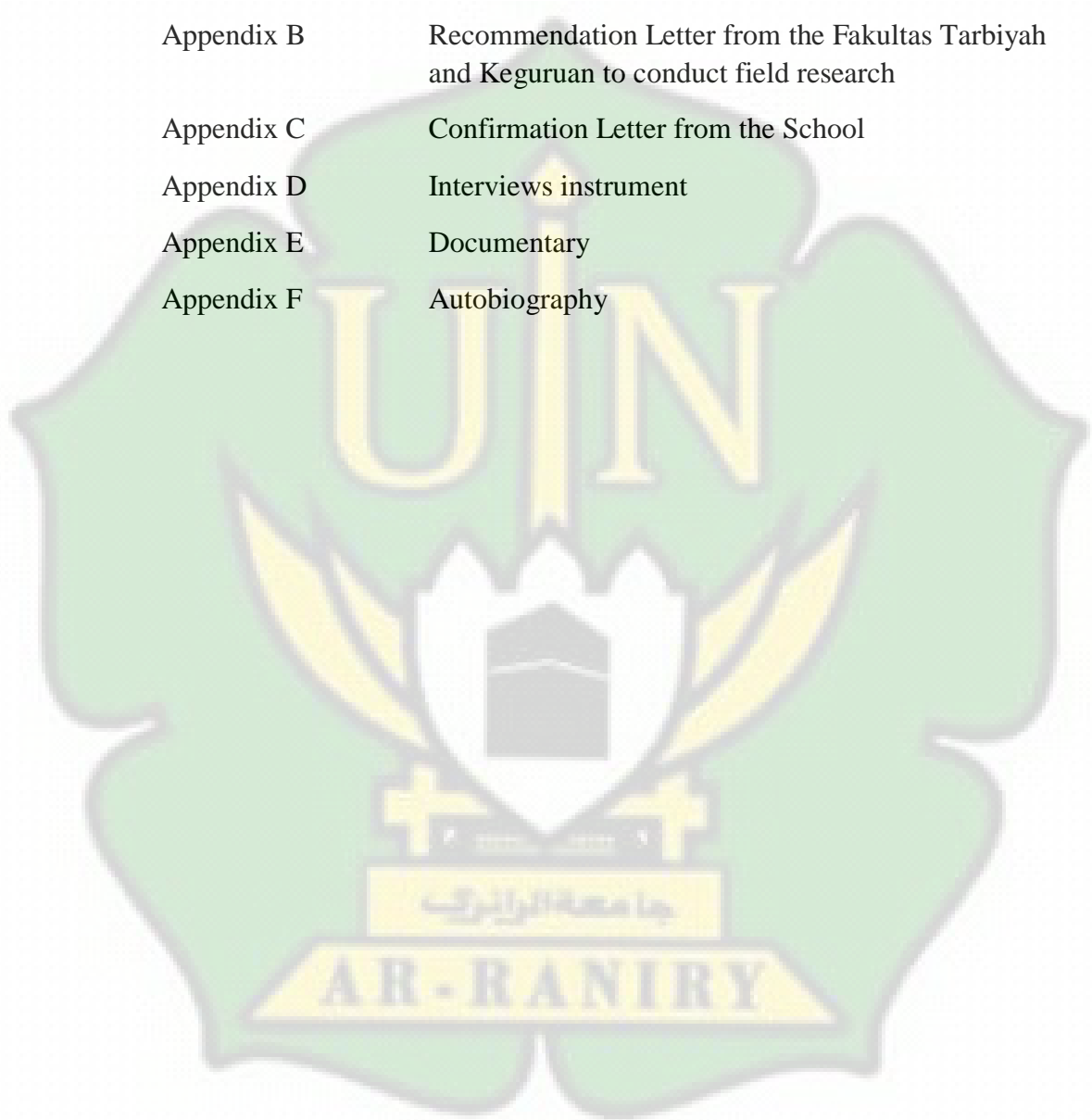
This study was conducted to discover the challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading comprehension at MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek and the strategies to enhance students' reading comprehension. The study highlights the critical importance of reading comprehension as a foundational skill for academic success and cognitive development. Through qualitative case study methodology, data were collected via semi-structured interviews with two English teachers and classroom observations. The findings reveal several significant challenges, including students' limited reading abilities, lack of vocabulary knowledge, classroom management issues, and insufficient teaching resources. Teachers reported that many students face challenge with fluency and comprehension, particularly during the transition from elementary to junior high school, where the focus shifts from vocabulary to understanding complex texts. Additionally, the study identifies that students often do not utilize dictionaries, which hampers their vocabulary acquisition and retention. Overall, this research contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of teaching reading comprehension, offering practical recommendations for educators to enhance instructional practices and improve student outcomes in reading comprehension.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains briefly about the objectives of the study based on the research questions. This chapter also describes about some terms related to the topic of this study.

A. Background of Study

Reading comprehension is an essential skill for students to master, as it not only contributes to academic success but also supports cognitive development and critical thinking. In the Indonesian context, teachers face various challenges in developing students' reading comprehension abilities, especially in junior high schools like MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek. These challenges stem from students' limited language proficiency, the complexity of reading materials, and a lack of appropriate strategies to support comprehension development. Research has highlighted several factors contributing to these difficulties, including insufficient vocabulary, poor engagement with texts, and inadequate cognitive preparation for understanding complex content (Meihami & Abdoli, 2024).

One of the key obstacles in teaching reading comprehension is students' limited vocabulary and language proficiency. Meihami & Abdoli (2024) emphasize that in online learning environments, teachers challenge to adopt effective teaching strategies due to students' inadequate preparation in both content and technological aspects. For students with special needs, particularly

those with autism, challenges in communication, sensory processing, and language structure further complicate comprehension. Furthermore, teachers face difficulties in selecting appropriate reading materials, managing complex language in texts, and motivating students (Parhadjanovna, 2023).

To address these challenges, various strategies have been proposed and tested. For example, Fitria et al. (2024) argue that selecting reading passages that align with students' interests, combined with techniques like skimming, scanning, and mind mapping, can significantly improve comprehension. These strategies aim to make reading more engaging and manageable for students by breaking down complex texts and providing them with effective tools for understanding. Additionally, Ratnasari et al. (2023) suggest that methods such as silent reading, question and answer relationships, and reciprocal teaching have also proven beneficial in enhancing students' comprehension skills.

Another promising development in improving reading comprehension is the integration of technology, such as web-blogs and online learning tools. Setiawan et al. (2024) found that web-blogs, when used in educational settings, can increase students' motivation, engagement, and overall reading comprehension. However, their effectiveness is not without challenges. Teachers often face challenge with technical issues, distractions, and the need for ongoing professional development to integrate technology effectively into language instruction (Meihami & Abdoli, 2024). This highlights the importance of equipping teachers with the necessary tools and skills to leverage technology in a

way that enhances reading comprehension without compromising learning outcomes.

Despite these advancements, several persistent challenges remain. A recurring issue in many studies is the difficulty teachers face in finding the right balance between teaching strategies and the diverse needs of students. Parhadjanovna (2023) emphasizes that teachers must adapt their methods to fit the varying levels of student language proficiency, cognitive preparation, and learning styles. Similarly, Ntshangase (2023) point out that teachers in South African schools' challenges with organizing effective reading strategies for at-risk students, especially when dealing with diverse learning abilities. These challenges are exacerbated by the diversity in students' cognitive preparation, both in terms of content knowledge and technological skills, which can affect their ability to comprehend complex reading materials (Fitria et al., 2024).

In the specific case of MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek, these challenges are further magnified by the limited availability of appropriate textbooks, insufficient time allocation for reading instruction, and student absenteeism (Attah, 2024). To overcome these obstacles, teachers must focus on developing students' reading skills through consistent, daily practice, employing a range of strategies, such as SQ3R, Think-Aloud, Scaffolding, and Reciprocal Teaching (Junita et al., 2023). Sustained professional development on explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction has shown positive effects on teacher knowledge and practice, which ultimately benefits student outcomes (Medina et al., 2021).

Although previous studies have explored various strategies for improving reading comprehension, there is a lack of research focused specifically on the challenges faced by teachers at MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek. While general studies have highlighted the role of vocabulary and reading strategies (Fitria et al., 2024), few have addressed the context of this particular school and the specific obstacles teachers face. Moreover, while technological tools like web-blogs have been recognized for their potential benefits, their practical application in classrooms with varying levels of technological infrastructure remains under-explored (Setiawan et al., 2024; Meihami & Abdoli, 2024).

This research aims to fill this gap by examining the challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading comprehension at MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek. By identifying the obstacles in the local context and evaluating the strategies that have been most effective in overcoming them, this study will contribute valuable insights for improving reading instruction and student comprehension in similar settings.

B. Research Question

In order to facilitate this research, the researcher formulates the following research question:

1. What are the challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading comprehension to students at MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek?
2. What strategies do teachers at MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek employ to improve students' reading comprehension skills??

C. The Objective of Study

Based on research questions above, the objectives of this study can be stated as follow:

1. To identify the challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading comprehension to students at MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek.
2. To explore the various strategies employed by teachers at MTsS Muhammadiyah Meukek to enhance students' reading comprehension skills.

D. Research Significance

Theoretically, this study contributes to the broader understanding of reading comprehension instruction, particularly in the Indonesian context, by exploring the challenges teachers face and the strategies they employ to address these challenges. While existing research has examined reading comprehension in various educational settings, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the specific challenges and strategies used in Indonesian junior high schools. By investigating these factors, this research will provide a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics between teachers' instructional methods and students' comprehension skills. The findings are expected to enhance theoretical frameworks related to teaching reading comprehension, especially in diverse educational environments like MTs Muhammadiyah Meukek.

Practically, the significance of this study is evident for various stakeholders in the educational system:

1. For Teachers: This research will offer valuable insights into the specific challenges faced by teachers when teaching reading comprehension. By examining the strategies that have been effective in overcoming these challenges, the study will provide practical recommendations for improving instructional practices. Teachers can utilize these findings to refine their teaching methods, adopt new strategies, and enhance their professional development to better support students' reading comprehension skills.
2. For Students: The ultimate beneficiaries of this study are the students. By improving the strategies teachers use to teach reading comprehension, students will have better opportunities to develop essential literacy skills. The research findings will contribute to creating a more engaging and effective learning environment, leading to improved student performance in reading comprehension, a critical skill for academic success across subjects.
3. For Researchers: This study will also serve as a foundation for further research in the field of reading comprehension instruction, particularly in Indonesia. By highlighting the challenges teachers face and identifying effective strategies, this research will open up avenues for future studies on the role of teacher training, curriculum development, and the integration of innovative teaching methods in reading instruction.

Researchers can build on this study to explore how different contexts or educational levels may influence the effectiveness of reading comprehension strategies.

E. Terminology

To avoid any misinterpretation and misconception, this section provides definitions of important terms related to the topic of this study.

1. Strategies

Strategy in the context of education refers to the approach or plan used by teachers to achieve specific learning objectives, involving the planning, implementation, and evaluation of techniques that can enhance students' skills. According to Jonassen et al. (2008), learning strategies are broad teaching plans designed to facilitate students in achieving academic goals through structured and organized methods. Schunk (2012) further explains that learning strategies are techniques or approaches applied to help students overcome difficulties in understanding learning materials and achieving better outcomes. In this study, strategy refers to the methods or approaches employed by teachers at MTs Muhammadiyah Meukek to improve students' reading comprehension, particularly in vocabulary acquisition and text understanding. This research aims to explore the effectiveness of various strategies, including technology-based and interactive techniques, in addressing the challenges students face in comprehending texts and mastering English vocabulary.

2. Challenges

Challenge refers to something that tests a person's strength, skill, or ability, particularly in an engaging or stimulating way. It involves confronting tasks or situations that are difficult and require effort, perseverance, or problem-solving. According to Mariani (2015), challenge involves putting oneself to the test, engaging with something intriguing, and dealing with the unexpected or unpredictable. In the context of this study, challenge refers to the difficulties faced by teachers and students in the process of improving reading comprehension. These challenges include limited vocabulary, difficulty in understanding narrative structures, and student disengagement. Teachers at MTs Muhammadiyah Meukek face the challenge of selecting effective strategies that can overcome these barriers, while students encounter challenges in grasping the meaning of complex texts. This research aims to explore these challenges in depth, focusing on how teachers can address them through targeted teaching strategies.

3. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process through which readers construct meaning from a text by combining the information in the text with their own background knowledge. According to Nunan (2005), reading is a fluent process where the reader's ability to extract meaning depends not only on the text itself but also on their prior knowledge and experiences. This interaction between text and prior knowledge is crucial for successful comprehension. Dorn and Saffos (2005) further describe reading as a complex cognitive process that involves multiple actions working together to build understanding. In this research, reading

comprehension is the primary focus, as the Story Face strategy will be used to help 7th-grade students at MTs Muhammadiyah Meukek improve their ability to understand and analyze narrative texts by visually organizing key story elements.

