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## **PROBLEMS FACED BY ELEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS IN READING COMPREHENSION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Reading is a language skill intended to be utilized in helping the user to comprehend written symbols, words, sentences, or paragraphs. This study was for discovering problems faced by the 11<sup>th</sup> graders of SMAN 7 Banjarmasin in reading comprehension, which the result could be utilized by either teachers or the school for planning appropriate future treatment. This study utilized quantitative, with a subject population is ten classes consisting of 395 students, and then 123 students were chosen by utilizing purposive sampling. The implemented instrument was a questionnaire. The study findings showcased that the study subjects' problems in reading comprehension are comprehending the English texts, translating new vocabulary, and finding specific information from a text. Some factors are believed to be the cause, such as boring reading activities, low interest and motivation toward English as a subject, along with inappropriate reading strategies. Thus, students were suggested to motivate themselves along with to be more interested in reading English text to increase their reading comprehension skill level. It was required that the teacher implement peculiar activities to make students interested and motivated toward the educational process.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, student's problem

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Study Background**

Harris (1969) stated that educational process of a language means learning both skills and components of the language, in this case, English. Reading is one of those skills which is intended to be utilized in helping the user to comprehend written symbols, either words, sentences, or paragraph. There are various skills regarding reading. Particularly, skills in comprehending written material are finding main idea, finding detailed information, making inference and so on. Therefore, reading was considered difficult to be learnt for some students.

In educational domain, reading is the most common to be conducted by students where major percentage of English test was reading test. Additionally, Yukselir (2014) considers reading to be fundamental, beneficial, and central skill to be mastered for learning new information, gaining acces to alternative explanations along with interpretations, and starting the critical evaluation skills synthesis.

In this study, the analyst only concerns with the 11<sup>th</sup> graders of SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin. On the basis of a preliminary study utilizing an interview with the English teacher, it is discovered that the students were accepted without well-selected setting, but majority were just accepted since they live near the schools, thus possessing various background and English capability levels. Therefore, a study regarding problems possessed by them in reading comprehension is required for mapping the problems so that teachers or school could plan appropriate future treatment. Additionally, since the subjects were still 11<sup>th</sup> graders, the problems are expected to be anticipated or solved before they proceed to the next grade.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

The study would revolve around this question: "What are the reading comprehension problems of the students at the eleventh grade of SMAN 7 Banjarmasin Academic Year of 2020/2021?"

### **Study Objective**

The study aimed to discover the problems faced by 11<sup>th</sup> graders in reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin Academic Year of 2020/2021.

### **Study Significance**

The main significances for conducting this study are:

1. It expected to provide information regarding 11<sup>th</sup> graders' problems in reading comprehension.
2. It could be utilized as the reference for other analysts who intended for conducting study around the similar topics.

### **Study Scope**

The study limitations are:

1. SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin in Kota Banjarmasin as the study location.
2. 11<sup>th</sup> graders from the said school were chosen as the subjects
3. Students' problems in reading comprehension was the study main focus.

### **Assumption**

This study was conducted on the assumption that "since English is a foreign language which possesses different vocabulary along with grammar from those in Indonesian, it is assumed that the students face problems in reading comprehension."

## **RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Reading Comprehension Definition**

Reading is meaning construction from print where readers could gather message and information conveyed by the text. Pang et al. (2003) revolved around comprehending written text by utilizing words, sentences, along with connected text making sense process. Readers will utilize their knowledge on vocabulary, grammar, along with other varieties of knowledge for helping them in comprehending the text. Hence, it could be summarized that reading comprehension is a process regarding getting the meaning along with the information of a particular text.

### **Teaching Reading in Senior High School**

English reading capability is one among the most crucial students' comprehensive manifestations on language application. Thus, teaching English reading, which considered as a crucial means of improving one' reading capability possesses significant difference in learners' language education. The deepening of education reform along with the utilization of new curriculum standards which required higher standards of English teaching practice in senior high school. Unfortunately, a large gap between those high standard requirements and the actuality of teaching reading in higher secondary exist along with various difficulties during the educational process.

### **The Problems of Reading Comprehension**

Putri in Irawan (2010) mentioned several causes of poor comprehension, namely insufficient vocabulary knowledge; inappropriate reading strategies; along with reading speeds. While the associated factors were boring reading activities; low interest towards the material; uncomfortable situation; and insufficient time spent in reading. Additionally, Lussiana (2007) conveyed that majority of students faced difficulties in

various aspects like comprehending English text, specific information, acquiring the general information, grammatical, vocabulary, along with paragraph's main idea.

## **The Factors in Reading Comprehension Achievement**

### ***The Internal Factor***

The internal factors are those originated from one self (Kahayanto, 2005) which mostly dealt with interest and one's self-motivation.

#### **1. Interest**

Ones reading comprehension achievement could be influenced by interest, where good interest or motivation could bring about the good achievement from them.

#### **2. Motivation**

Motivation is crucial aspect in comprehending a text. The students will possess motivation for reading when they feel that they require things (i.e. information) from the text. Brown (2001) divided this aspect into intrinsic along with extrinsic motivation. Additionally, Edward Deci in Brown (2001) defined intrinsic motivation activities were ones that not requiring apparent reward with finishing the activity as the sole goal which could bring about particular rewarding consequences (e.g. feelings of competence, self-determination). While the extrinsic motivation is the opposite, which are requiring reward (e.g money, prizes, grades, positive feedbacks) for concluding activities.

### ***The External Factor***

External factor possesses a close bond with students' capability in reading comprehension. External factors are those originated from outside of oneself which influencing in various ways

#### **1. Reading Material**

Gilakjani and Saubori (2016) explained that students' reading comprehension could be depended on the text difficulty level. Whereas a reading text contained numerous unfamiliar words would possess higher difficulty compared to a text with opposite type. Furthermore, distributing a text with uninteresting topic would influence their reading comprehension as well.

#### **2. Teacher's Ways of Teaching Reading**

Teacher is the main player in educational process, Antoni (2010) even stated that teachers should utilize appropriate strategies for teaching reading therefore the students are capable of developing reading comprehension. There are strategies which could be implemented for various part of teaching, in the pre-reading stage are brainstorming along with predicting; in the while-reading stage could implement retelling the passage, reading aloud, and discussing unfamiliar words; while reviewing, clarifying, along with justifying implemented in the post-reading stage.

### **Previous Study**

This study was inspired by several previous study. The first is the study entitled "Students' Problems on Reading Comprehension at an Islamic Junior High School in Sungai Bahar" by Nila Dwianasari (2015) which showcased that there are various problems faced by the subject. First, the problem related to students' spelling that utilized proper intonation. And then, students' grammar that caused by the lack of grammar

knowledge, students vocabularies that caused by the difficulties in understanding in vocabulary. Next, students faced difficulty due to teacher provides uninteresting material. Students difficulties on reading speed, reading a long text can cause students to spend much time in comprehending a passage. The second study was conducted by Rohani Genie, Deliana, and Rahmadsyah Rangkuti (2019) entitled “Reading Comprehension Problem on English Texts Faced By High School Students in Medan”, which showed that that the problems faced by students in English text reading comprehension was majoring in three parts: (1) Problems from the students themselves which consist of students’ basic English ability, less attraction on the subject and not motivated, (2) Problems from the teacher such as not using any method while teaching and utilized inappropriate method, and (3) External problems which were the reading materials and the learning environment.

## STUDY METHOD

### Study Design

The design utilized in this quantitative study was descriptive study with students’ problem in reading comprehension as chosen variable. It was chosen since the design is capable of describing the students’ problem in learning reading comprehension.

### Population and Sample

This study population are 11<sup>th</sup> graders of SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin, which consisted of ten classes, namely: XI IPS I, XI IPS II, XI IPS III, XI IPA I, XI IPA II, XI IPA III, XI IPA IV, XI IPA V, XI IPA VI, XI IPA VII with cumulatively 395 students. While the sample was 123 students after utilizing purposive sampling technique.

### Study Instrument

#### Questionnaire

For gathering required data on the students’ problems while learning reading comprehension, the analyst distributed a questionnaire focusing on the factors causing the problems to arise in form of close-ended questionnaire which result is utilized in supporting the observation result.

Table 1. Questionnaire Blueprint

Variable	Factor	Item Number		Total
		Favourable	Unfavourable	
Reading Comprehension Problem	Internal Factor			
	- Motivation	3, 4		2
	- Interest	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10		8
	External Factor			
	- Reading Material		11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19	7
	- Teacher’s ways of teachingreading	16, 17		2
Total				19

Table 2. Utilized Questionnaire

Nama :  
Kelas :  
Tanggal :

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

Bacalah setiap pertanyaan dengan teliti dan jawablah setiap pertanyaan dengan jujur dengan memberikan tanda (√) pada salah satu jawaban yang paling sesuai.  
A : Always (selalu)  
O : Often (sering)  
S : Sometimes (kadang-kadang)  
R : Rarely (jarang)  
N : Never (tidak pernah)

No	Question	A	O	S	R	N
1	Apakah kamu sering membaca bacaan bahasa Inggris di sekolah?					
2	Apakah kamu sering pergi ke perpustakaan untuk membaca bacaan bahasa Inggris?					

3	Apakah kamu sering mengerjakan dan menjawab pertanyaan dalam pelajaran reading comprehension?					
4	Apakah kamu sering membahas tugas dan pekerjaan rumah dengan gurumu di kelas?					
5	Apakah kamu sering meminta gurumu menjelaskan kata-kata yang tidak kamu mengerti setelah kamu selesai membaca?					
6	Apakah kamu sering bertanya kepada gurumu jika kamu kurang memahami isi bacaan bahasa Inggris?					
7	Apakah kamu sering bertanya kepada temanmu apabila kesulitan dalam menjawab pertanyaan reading comprehension?					
8	Apakah kamu sering merangkum isi dari suatu bacaan bahasa Inggris?					
9	Apakah kamu sering mencatat kata-kata yang sulit atau baru dalam bacaan bahasa Inggris?					
10	Apakah kamu sering memakai kamus dalam mengartikan kata-kata yang sulit atau baru dalam bacaan bahasa Inggris?					
11	Apakah kamu sering mengalami kesulitan dalam mengerjakan pekerjaan rumah atau tugas tentang reading comprehension?					
12	Apakah kamu sering mengalami kesulitan dalam mengerjakan soal-soal latihan tentang reading comprehension?					
13	Apakah kamu sering mengalami kesulitan dalam memahami suatu bacaan bahasa Inggris?					
14	Apakah kamu sering mengalami kesulitan mengartikan kata-kata yang sulit dalam bahasa Inggris?					
15	Apakah kamu sering mengalami kesulitan dalam memahami kalimat bahasa Inggris?					
16	Apakah gurumu sering menjelaskan pelajaran reading comprehension?					
17	Apakah kamu memahami penjelasan gurumu?					
18	Apakah kamu merasa bosan saat membaca teks bacaan bahasa Inggris yang panjang?					
19	Apakah kamu mengalami kesulitan dalam mencari informasi penting dalam suatu teks bacaan bahasa Inggris?					

**Data Collection**  
**Content validity**

The analyst utilized content validity due to the needs of seeking evidence representing a balanced along with adequate sampling of all of the relevant skills, knowledge, as well as dimensions making up the content. Hence, for measuring the achievement, the utilized test should be created based upon material appropriacy which is easy for comprehension or appropriate for students' level.

### **Reliability**

A test might be considered unreliable when the items were calibrated badly which resulted in difficulty, unfairly distributed, or poorly designed. Occasionally, a test yields unreliable due to factors beyond the test writer control and originated from the test taker, such as a bad day, illness, or insufficient sleep the previous night (student-related reliability). Score reliability occasionally referred toward the scoring consistency conducted by two or more scorers. Unfortunately, classroom-based assessment setting rarely possesses the luxury of a second scorer or grader. Furthermore, unclear scoring criteria, carelessness, fatigue, or a bias could possess a role in unreliability. However, if scoring directions are specific and including clear details, then scoring can be reasonably dependable and consistent.

### **Data Analysis Method**

Gathered data was grouped into two groups which is quantitative along with qualitative data. A basic analysis was utilized for determining the students' problems systematically in reading comprehension.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Description of the Data Analysis**

The data was gathered by distributing a questionnaire to the 11<sup>th</sup> graders of SMAN 7 Banjarmasin from October 31<sup>th</sup> until November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020. There were ten 11<sup>th</sup> grader classes at this school namely the class XI IPA 1 which consist of 39 students; XI IPA 2 which consist of 40 students; XI IPA 3 which consist of 40 students; XI IPA 4 which consist of 39 students; XI IPA 5 which consist of 39 students; XI IPA 6 which consist of 40 students; XI IPA 7 which consist of 40 students; XI IPS 1 which consist of 39 students; XI IPA 2 which consist of 39 students; along with XI IPA 3 which consist of 40 students. The chosen sample was determined by implementing purposive sampling technique. The utilized questionnaire was distributed to all 11<sup>th</sup> graders of SMAN 7 Banjarmasin by utilizing Google forms. Unfortunately, only 123 from 395 students filled the distributed questionnaire.

### **Study Findings**

There are 19 items, which are utilized for investigating problem faced by students in reading comprehension for the internal factors. While the rest are for the external factors. The findings are summarized in table below:

Table 3. Students' Problems in Reading Comprehension

Item Number	Percentage % of the Responses				
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	2.4	23.6	54.5	22.8	1.6
2	0	2.4	22.8	47.2	29.3
3	4.9	32.5	43.1	15.4	6.5
4	0	14.6	43.1	26	19.5
5	5.7	20.3	42.3	26	10.6
6	7.3	22	39	28.5	5.7
7	14.6	48.8	26	14.6	0
8	0.8	16.3	37.4	27.6	19.5
9	12.2	27.6	38.2	17.9	5.7
10	22.8	30.9	35.8	11.4	1.6
11	4.1	24.4	50.4	21.1	0.8
12	6.5	19.5	53.7	20.3	0
13	4.1	24.4	48.8	24.4	0
14	8.1	38.2	43.9	13	0.8
15	3.3	22	49.6	23.6	2.4
16	9.8	32.5	56.9	7.3	1.6

17	2.4	34.1	56.9	7.3	1.6
18	10.6	30.9	43.9	10.6	6.5
19	5.7	22	48	22.8	2.4

It was shown by the table above that number 1 which asks regarding whether they often read English text at school, 54.5% of the students responded that they sometimes read the English text in the school. For the item number 2 asks regarding whether they often go to the library for reading English text, 47.2% students responded that they rarely go to the library. For the item number 3 which asks regarding whether they often do the tasks in reading, there were 43.1% of the students responded that they sometimes they do the reading task. Number 4 asks regarding whether they often discuss the tasks with the teacher in the class, there were 43.1% of the students responded that they sometimes discuss the task in the class. For the item number 5 asks regarding whether they often ask the teacher to explain the words that they did not understand after read an English text, there were 42.3% of the students responded that they sometimes ask the teacher to explain the difficult word. For the item number 6 which asks regarding whether they often ask to the teacher if they do not understand with the text, 39% responded that they sometimes ask the teacher if they do not understand with the English text. Number 7 asks regarding whether the students often ask their friends if they can not answer the question in the English task, there were 48.8% of the students responded that they often ask their friends if they can not do the task. For the item number 8 which asks regarding whether they often summarize the English text, there were 37.4% of the students sometimes summarize the English text. Item number 9 asks regarding whether they often write down the new word or difficult word in English text, 38.2% of the students sometimes write down the new or difficult word in English text. For the item number 10 that asks regarding whether they often use dictionary to translate the new or difficult words, 35.8% of the students responded that they sometimes use dictionary.

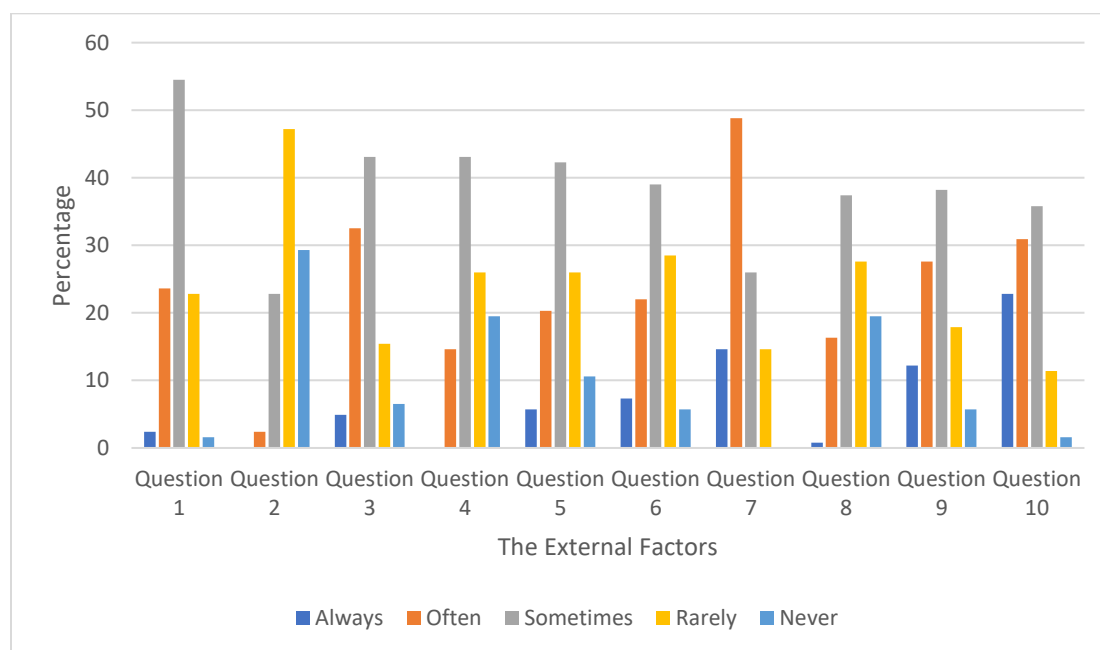


Figure 1. Reading Comprehension Problems based on the Internal Factors

For the item number 11 which asks regarding whether they often possess difficulty in doing the reading comprehension task, 50.4% of the students responded that they sometimes possess difficulty in do the



homework and test about reading comprehension. For the item number 12 which asks regarding whether they often possess difficulty when they answer reading comprehension test, there were 53.7% of the students sometimes possess difficulty to answer the reading comprehension test. The item number 13 which asks regarding whether they often possess difficulty to understand the reading text, 48.8% of the students sometimes possess difficulty in understanding the reading text. For the item number 14 which asks regarding whether they often possess difficulty to translate the difficult word or new word in English text, 43.9% of the students sometimes possess difficulty in translating the new word or difficult word in reading text. The item number 15 which asks regarding whether they often possess difficulty in understanding the English sentences, 49.6% of the students responded that they sometimes possess difficulty in understanding the English sentences. The item number 16 asks regarding whether the teacher of reading often explain of teaching about reading comprehension, there were 44.7% of the students responded that sometimes the teacher explain about reading comprehension. For the item number 17 which asks regarding whether they understand with the teacher explanation, there were 56.9 of the students sometimes understand with the teacher explanation. Item number 18 asks regarding whether they often get bored when read a long English text, there were 43.9% of the students responded that they sometimes get bored when read a long English text. For item number 19 which asks regarding whether they often possess difficulty in finding the crucial information from an English text, there were 56.9% of the students responded that they sometimes possess difficulty in finding crucial information from an English text.

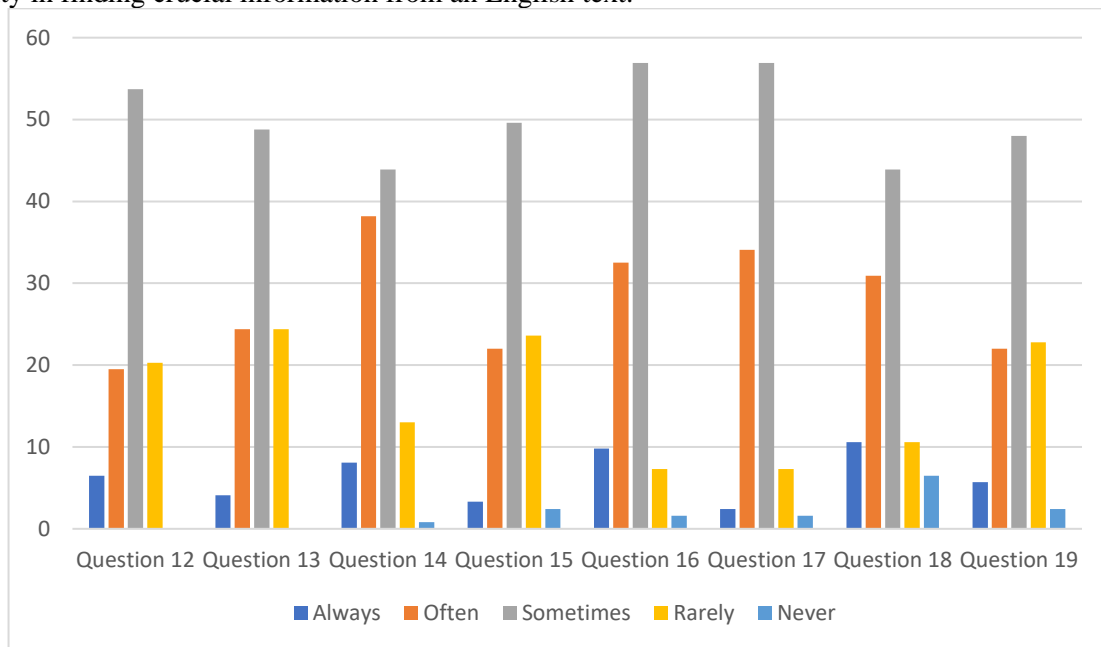


Figure 2. Reading Comprehension Factors based on the External Factors

### Study Discussion

Based upon the findings, the students possess some problems in reading, which are comprehending the English texts (50.4% students), translating new vocabulary (43.9%), and finding specific information from a text (56.9%). The students' responses about these problems can be connected to their strategies in reading. As shown in the findings, the students mentioned that they asked teacher if they did not understand a text (39%), opened dictionary to find words' meanings (35.8%), summarized the content of a text (37.4%), and asked their classmates if they had problems in answering the questions (48.8%). Thus, only a few students did these strategies to help them comprehend English texts. It implies that only a few of them tried to solve their problems while the rest of the students did nothing.



Moreover, the findings of this study showed that the students had moderate motivation in reading English texts because they mentioned that they often read English texts (54.5%), go to the library to read English books/magazines (47.2%), and discuss the reading tasks with their classmates (43.1%). Another finding is about whether the students get bored when they read English texts. There are 43.9% of the students mentioned that they sometimes get bored when they read English texts. It indicates that they do not possess high motivation in reading English. As stated by Brown (2001), motivation is an internal aspect that can determine student's success in learning, in this case is in reading comprehension.

These findings are similar to those found by Lusiana and Irawan that numerous students get difficulties in comprehending English reading text, acquiring the general information, specific information, vocabulary, grammatical, main idea of paragraph of a text, and there are some of causes poor comprehension such as; insufficient vocabulary knowledge, inappropriate reading strategies and reading speeds, some factor associated with students boring activities in reading, low interest material, uncomfortable situation, and insufficient time spent in reading. Reading comprehension is one of the crucial skills in English lesson of the senior high school students. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the content of the passage in order to get information from the text.

To comprehend an English text accurately, students should possess good skills in reading comprehension such as finding main idea, finding details information, making inference, improving vocabulary, and locating reference. This study showed that the 11<sup>th</sup> graders of SMAN 7 Banjarmasin possess problem in reading comprehension.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusions**

From study finding, it was concluded that the students possess some in comprehending the English texts, translating new vocabulary, finding specific information from a text, where several factors associated with students boring activities in reading, low interest level motivation, and inappropriate reading strategies.

### **Suggestions**

The analyst proposed several suggestions:

1. The 11<sup>th</sup> graders of SMAN 7 Banjarmasin should improve their reading skills in finding specific information. Along with motivate themselves and be more interested in reading English text. They also should read English text either in school or outside of the school. Reading English text can increase their vocabulary mastery which help the students to understand the English text. The students can read a variety of English book such as newspaper, articles, magazines, etc.
2. The teacher should not only give the exercise and answering the question but also using interesting activities to make the students more motivated and interested to learn English.

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