AN INVESTIGATION INTO STUDENTS' CHALLENGES IN COMPREHENDING ISLAMIC ENGLISH SHORT STORIES

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out the student`s challenges in comprehending Islamic English Short Stories and how they are presented. The data for this study was gathered through qualitative method by utilizing interviews, observations, and documentation. One student from MTS Pondok Pesantren Darul Hikmah Taman Pendidikan Islam Medan took part in the study. After analyzing the data, the researcher discovered that the students' challenges in comprehending Islamic English Short Stories are divided into five categories: (1) The challenge in understanding the word, where the student could not understand certain vocabularies in the story and needed to use a dictionary; (2) The challenge in combining the words into sentences, where the student could not arrange the translated vocabularies in a logical order; (3) The challenge in coherency, in which the student was unable to translate the translated words into a logical translation; (4) The challenge in reading speed, in which the student was unable to track the important points of the text quickly; and (5) The challenge in inferencing, in which the student was unable to make a perfect conclusion to the story.
Key Words: *Challenges; Reading Comprehension; Islamic English Short Stories.*

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary global landscape, individuals are increasingly expected to possess comprehensive knowledge and diverse abilities to effectively compete. Among these essential abilities, the capacity for effective communication stands out as a critical skill to acquire. Language, defined as a systematic means of intercommunication through the utilization of symbols, sounds, and the articulation of opinions and beliefs (Daulay,

2020), plays a fundamental role in this process. English, as a globally significant language, is considered an essential skill to learn, particularly given its continuous evolution over time (Santoso & Ginting, 2015). Furthermore, within the educational context, English language instructors should demonstrate a thorough understanding of their students, the subject matter they teach, and possess broad pedagogical knowledge (Daulay, Dalimunte, & Ningrum, 2021).

Concurrently, the acquisition of four fundamental skills—speaking, writing, listening, and reading—is deemed crucial for success in English language learning. Among these, reading forms the foundational ability and serves as an indicator of students' literacy proficiency. Literacy, a pivotal concept in academic settings, refers to the process through which students acquire knowledge and information (Daulay et al., 2021:81). Reading, as conceptualized by Baker et al. (2019), is a multifaceted construct encompassing a set of interconnected and complex cognitive processes. Effective reading necessitates active engagement and emotional regulation, requiring readers to go beyond a superficial examination of the text. To achieve comprehension and derive meaningful value from the text, readers must integrate their emotions and prior knowledge. Indeed, learners, especially those studying English as a second language (Daulay, 2019), are expected to gain meaningful insights from reading materials. This is because extracting information from a text not only facilitates understanding of its core arguments but also broadens the readers' overall comprehension.

Reading comprehension, according to Clemens et al., (2021) can support the students' success academically and after they graduate from school. It is because reading comprehension is used in every discipline of study, including social sciences, psychology, art, and mathematics. Reading comprehension is employed not only in education, but also in understanding the world's perspective. Newspapers, magazines, articles, flyers, broadcasts, and other forms of communication media needed to be read to grasp the information. Meanwhile, reading cannot be completed in one sitting. Continuous practice and progress are required. If the text is unclear to someone, he will be unable to comprehend its meaning. The unclarity could be due to a hardness of language or a lack of experience reading literature, such as books, newspapers, or articles. However, reading ability is crucial since it can help students improve their critical reading and analysis skills. In fact, students are having challenges understanding what they are reading. The challenges are reflected in their poor comprehension

scores. Students have challenges in connecting the content they are reading and their real-life experiences and prior knowledge. This may occur because the students are unfamiliar with the text or the faulty of teaching method (Daulay et al., 2020).

Every text can be used to train the reading comprehension. Islamic English short stories is one of them. Islamic stories are the stories about religious principles and religious characters based on the Quran and Hadith. The Islamic stories were presented in simple languages that in line with the development of the reader's brain (Al Qarni, 2021). Islamic stories are typically taught by Muslim teachers at Islamic schools. Based on Quranic and Hadith standards, Muslim teachers are motivated to help students think about and build respectable personal attitudes and behaviors toward the integration of diverse ethnic or religious groups.

Furthermore, preserving Muslim identity and ensuring that Islamic principles serve as the foundation of life—particularly in fostering social connections—should be prioritized (Alabdulhadi, 2019). Nevertheless, the integration of Islamic English short stories into the classroom holds significant pedagogical value and should not be overlooked. These stories are both appropriate and effective in enhancing learners' morale and attitudes. According to Pathan (2018), students can enjoy the learning process more deeply when they are engaged with culturally and religiously relevant texts. Through such engagement, students not only develop reading comprehension skills but also gain moral insights and ethical values as exemplified by the characters in Islamic short stories. This, in turn, supports the cultivation of good moral conduct beyond the classroom setting.

Reading comprehension—particularly through the lens of Islamic narratives—can contribute meaningfully to character education. By understanding Islamic short stories, students are exposed to moral virtues that they can apply in real-life contexts. However, as noted by Ibrahim (2019), many students still encounter difficulties in comprehending such texts. Daryanti (2017) also found that students often struggle to grasp the moral lessons embedded in stories when written in English. Furthermore, Irwansyah et al. (2021) identified specific challenges, such as interpreting idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and synonyms within Islamic literary texts. In addition, an English teacher at MTs Darul Hikmah Taman Pendidikan Islam reported that students face persistent difficulties in

understanding Islamic English short stories included in the English for Islamic Studies curriculum. As a result, this study aims to explore the specific challenges students encounter in comprehending Islamic English short stories. The research is guided by the following questions: (1) What are the challenges faced by students in comprehending Islamic English short stories? (2) How are these challenges manifested in the learning process?

Challenge in Reading Comprehension

Challenge is a condition that demands someone to stimulate his attention, effort, and commitment for his self-development without any certainty that the goal would be achieved (Çalıkoğlu, 2019),The term "challenge" here refers to the uncertainty of completing a task. A challenge, on the other hand, is a beneficial event since it allows someone to improve their ability, bravery, and patience. Meanwhile, according to Banegas (2018), challenge is a new opportunity to accomplish someone's dreams and to measure his competence and capability. A challenge in learning can benefit both teachers and students by raising awareness of their levels in learning, what difficulties they may face, and what steps they need to take in the future. Furthermore, according to Thahir (2014), challenges is a dare that necessitates the willingness to conquer the obstacle and get the rewards of the dare. Accepting the challenge requires guts because it is a situation or an act that might be a hardship to someone. When a person has overcome a challenge, he or she will get advantages from either oneself or the challenger.

Reading is the process of gaining knowledge and understanding the context of the text being read (Adha et al., 2020). It indicates that when reading, readers must use their eyes and mind to comprehend whatthe text really says in order to avoid misunderstandings. Meanwhile, Lastri & Arizah (2020:271).claimed that reading entails comprehending the structure of a written text as well as obtaining the key ideas that are constructed through the use of words and phrases. Reading, as can be seen from this explanation, is an activity that involves reading entire passages while also activating the brain to grasp significant information included in the written text. This activity may only be completed successfully if the reader recognizes the importance of the words and phrases in the sentences in obtaining the desired idea or information. Furthermore, according to Stainthorp (2021), reading is the act of acquiring language through eye

movement rather than through hearing." It means that during reading, readers connect themselves with the text through eye movement. Because readers will read the text or see the pictures rather than listening to the information. As a result, if readers become distracted when reading by looking at items other than the text that has to be read, they will miss essential information.

Meanwhile, reading comprehension is defined by Akçamete & Dağli Gökbulut (2018) as delivering the meaning and giving the interpretation of the entire text and using one's own words to reflect them. It means that readers' attention and focus are required for reading comprehension in order for them to provide related and meaningful interpretations of the tezt being read. The readers' understanding can be demonstrated by their ability to communicate their thoughts about the content while reading it using different terms. According to Kong (2019), reading comprehension is an action to transform text and graphs into concepts or meanings. This suggests that reading comprehension occurs not only with printed words, but also with visuals. The movies, posters, pamphlets, and other materials must also be understood in order for the readers to understand what the graphs are about. However, people's interpretations may differ for a variety of reasons, including prior knowledge or gender. Then, to avoid misunderstandings, it is necessary to identify who the text or graphs' audiences are.

Reading comprehension stems from two words, namely "reading," which implies the interpretation of written text into spoken words, and "comprehension," which means the figuration of meaning from spoken words (Barzani, 2020). Reading and comprehension cannot be separated. Reading comprehension is looking at a written text and generating a logical interpretation of what has been read. Reading comprehension then relies on the readers' ideas and opinions to translate the material into spoken language.

Types of Reading Comprehension Challenges

According to Nuttall & Alderson (1996), there are three types of challenges in reading comprehension: (1) challenges in vocabulary, where students do not have large vocabularies to deal with the text they are reading; (2) challenges in syntax, where students do not understand the structure of the text they are reading; and (3) challenges in understanding

discourse, where students do not understand the value of the author's text. Furthermore, according to Klingner et al., (2007), some of the challenges in reading comprehension include: (1) challenges in decoding, where students were unable to recognize the words in the text using the rules of the language; (2) challenges in fluency, where students were unable to read fluently and accurately; and (3) challenges in vocabulary, where students lacked sufficient vocabulary to comprehend the text well.

Furthermore, according to Oakhill, Cain & Elbro (2015), there are five categories of reading comprehension issues for students: (1) Literal understanding, which means that students only understand the text as it is said, but they do not understand when the teacher asks the same question using a different word choice; (2) Limited vocabulary, which means that the text being read contains some words that the students are unfamiliar with, requiring assistance from a dictionary or the teacher; (3) Making inferences, indicates that children are unable to draw conclusions from the content being read, indicating that they are still disconnected from the text. (4) Comprehension monitoring, which allows students to recognize their lack of comprehension, as well as their lack of coherency; (5) Memory, which required students to recall key features from the text, such as storyline, character, and place.

According to Van Dyke (2021), there are four challenges in reading comprehension: (1) the eye-movement process, which describes how students track the text with their eyes. The rapidity with which the students' eyes move presents a hurdle. They may lose understanding and have to re-read the material if they do not alter their speed; (2) Word recognition process, which relates to understanding the words and sentences in the text. The difficulty may arise as a result of the students' lack of vocabulary; (3) the integration process, which refers to the students' prior knowledge and the material being read. The students may face challenges here if they have not read enough literature or if the text is unfamiliar to them; (4) the inferencing process, which relates to the students' activity in summarizing the text. Challenges may arise in the final because students have not yet activated earlier skills, the text is too long, or they have lost attention on the text.

Meanwhile, according to Kong (2019), there are four process of challenges in reading comprehension: (1) Activating perception, which refers to the action in which students look at the text or picture first and then give their perspective. The challenges arise from the students' lack of focus or

attention. Their perception could be influenced by the position of their gaze. As a result, students will have various perceptions that may or may not be related to the true meaning; (2) Combining words into a meaningful sentence, which refers to the process in which students relate one word to another until it has meaning. (3) Relating perception and text structure to get idea, which refers to the students' activity of using their cognitive senses to grasp the information in the text and to get what needs to be accomplished in the text. The challenges here is in activating and using critical thinking to comprehend what the text says; (4) combining the text with the students' prior knowledge, which means that the students must have prior knowledge of the topic being read and relate it to the text so that the text becomes meaningful. The challenge here is determining how many literatures the students have read previously that are similar to and related to the book

Furthermore, according to Beard (202), there are two processes of reading comprehension challenges: (1) decoding, which refers to the ability to recognize single words in a text by knowing and applying the rules of the language; and (2) linguistic comprehension, which refers to the ability to transfer the words that have been recognized into one's own interpretation. These two processes are obviously linked and cannot be separated. The decoding process required readers to study the text's words, whereas linguistic comprehension entailed providing concepts or interpretations based on those analyzed words.

Islamic English Short Stories

The Holy Quran, according to Alemi et al., (2020), depicts religious themes in the form of a story. For some people, those stories are delivered in understandable language. Although some stories in the Quran are difficult to understand without more examination, they are nevertheless relevant and appealing because they are not fanciful. All of the stories in the Quran are based on events that have occurred in the past, are currently occurring, or will occur in the future. We must believe all of the stories in the Quran as Muslims since it originates from Allah. The benefit of this hypothesis is that it demonstrates the miracle of the Quran, which can be valuable to everyone. However, some stories in the Quran may be incomprehensible to some individuals since the Quran contains meanings that only Allah can

comprehend. As a result, Islamic leaders such as Imams are extremely valuable in explaining the full meanings of those scriptures.

According to Pathan (2018), stories from the Holy Quran or any Islamic stories about Muhammad Saw and his companions can be good and ideal for supporting the moral and attitude of Libyan Arab EFL learners. By familiarizing students with these stories, they will be able to enjoy the learning process because the theme and issues are so close to and relevant to their lives, while also boosting their cultural and moral values. Finally, Islamic stories will benefit students not only in improving their foreign language skills, but also in instilling moral values in them during the learning process.

Sari (2017), also claimed that Islamic English short stories are beneficial in improving reading comprehension as well as faith and religiosity. Students will not only read the text, but will also immerse themselves in the characters' moral values and apply them to their own lives. The Islamic English short stories can also be beneficial in reinforcing Allah SWT's beliefs and bringing students closer to Allah, the Prophet and his companions, as well as the good and negative things that Allah likes and should be avoided.

According to Russell (2009), short stories can be classified as follows:

Fable

A fable is a form of short fiction produced from the imagination that includes animals and other natural aspects as well as human features. Furthermore, the fable employs straightforward explanations of places and settings to help readers grasp the plot. The fable also includes a sarcastic connotation in the story so that readers can take away a valuable moral after reading it. The values and norms of society are frequently discussed in fables.

The Myth

The myth is a short story about how the universe and the people, animals, and things that live in it came into being. It involves the writer's religious beliefs. It was written because many people are curious about themselves and their surroundings. It also has a moral lesson and can be judged either true or false. Readers can learn about their own identities as well as the shape and construction of the universe by reading the creation tale.

Fairy tale

A fairy tale is a form of short story in which imaginary characters and powers, such as magic and fairies, are presented. The moral lesson in the fairy tale is written both implicitly and explicitly. This moral lesson can then be used to the teaching of moral and social skills. They build the characters and thoughts of readers, particularly children, on how they should act in their lives. Children can be creative in their lives by utilizing mystical figures and skills. Fairy tales can also be adapted. They can alter throughout time depending on how the story is told by the authors.

Art-tale

Short stories made for aesthetic and political purposes are known as art-tales. The authors discovered that stories can be used to influence society's behavior and characters, which led them to assume that a story can also be written by incorporating arts and politics to help readers comprehend how those two components form and play a role in community.

METHODS

The researcher employed a qualitative method in this study. A qualitative method is a methodology for examining and comprehending the role of individuals or communities in a social or human issue (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It suggests that a qualitative method seeks to learn more about something rather than evaluating or testing it. There are several types of research designs, according to Syaukani (2018), including descriptive design (which includes descriptive research, case study, naturalistic observation, and survey), correlative design (which includes case control study, observational study, cohort study, longitudinal study, cross sectional study, and general correlational study), causal comparation, and semi-experimental design (which includes field experiment, quasi- experiment), and twin studies (which consist of true experimental design and double blind experiment). In this experiment, the researcher chose case study based on the aforementioned explanation. A case study, according to Nugrahani (2014) is a contextual study that focuses on the specialty of a phenomenon but does not generalize it into the broader phenomenon.

The data for this study was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. According to Sugiyono (2016), an interview is a meeting between two people in which they exchange thoughts and information by asking questions and giving replies in order to find significance in a certain issue. The researcher employed a semistandardized

interview in this study, which implies that she wrote the questions ahead of time and reordered them during the interview. The researcher also made notes and recorded the students' responses.

Meanwhile, Siyoto & Ali (2015), defined observation as a focused attention on an object while collecting data by utilizing all of the researcher's senses. So, observation is a direct examination by employing the senses of sight, smell, hearing, touch, and, if required, spelling. The researcher examined how the reading learning process took place in the classroom and how the students reacted to it. Additionally, documentation, according to Sugiyono (2016), are records of past events. By using this technique, the researcher gathered the data from the documents that were available, allowing her to write detailed notes on what had occurred on the field.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Findings
The Result of Observation

The researcher discovered that the student had challenges in comprehending Islamic English Short Stories. Certain words depicted in their textbooks' Islamic English Short Stories were not understood by the student. When she was asked to explain what the story meant, the student simply laughed and hid her face. Meanwhile, the student was having trouble putting the translated words into a logical order. Furthermore, the student lacked the ability to track words fast, preventing her from immediately highlighting important ideas. Furthermore, the student struggled with the text's conclusion. The researcher created a table summarizing the students' challenges in comprehending Islamic English Short Stories and how they are presented.

Table 1. The Student`s Challenges in Comprehending
Islamic English Short Stories based on Observation

No	Types of Challenges in Comprehending Islamic English Short Stories	Description of Challenges in Comprehending Islamic English Short Stories

1	The Challenge in understanding the word	When she was asked to interpret the first sentence of the Islamic English Short Stories, the student simply laughed and covered her face. If she could not figure out what the story was about, she turned to her friend for help.
		When she could not understand the meaning of certain terms in the Islamic English Short Stories, the student stayed silent.
		The student looked up the meanings of the unfamiliar words of the story in her dictionary.
		Because of the time duration of the English lesson in the classroom, the student was helped by the researcher and friends if she did not know the meanings of specific terms in the story.
2	The Challenge in Combining the Words into Sentences	The student had no idea how to put the words she had translated into a comprehensible order.
		After translating the story word for word, the student was unable to come up with a suitable combination of words.
		When prompted to integrate the words into sentences, the student stuttered and read softly.
3	The Challenge in Coherency	When the student misinterpreted the story, she hid her face.
		Some phrases in Islamic English Short Stories were difficult to translate for the student.
		If the researcher provided examples of the events regarding the story in Bahasa, the story became more understandable for the student.
		The student utilized a dictionary to translate the words, but the results were still incorrect.

No		
4	The Challenge in Reading Speed	The student struggled to read quickly and frequently misspelled words.
		The student was struggling to track the words in her dictionary swiftly.
5	The Challenge in Inferencing	The student only could make a few points about the story she was reading and could only use Bahasa.
		When asked to conclude the story, the student remained quiet, but she was able to do so after being provided some hints.

As can be observed from the table above, the student had some challenges in comprehending Islamic English Short Stories. These challenges are: the challenge in understanding the word, which deals with the student's difficulty in recognizing and understanding words; the challenge in combining the words into sentences, which deals with the student's difficulty in properly arranging the words; the challenge in coherency, which deals with the student's difficulty in making a logical interpretation; and the challenge in reading speed, which deals with the student's difficulty in tracking the words and skimming; and the challenge in inferencing, which deals with the student's difficulty in concluding the text.

The Result of Interview

Based on an interview, the researcher revealed the student's challenges in comprehending Islamic English Short Stories. The researcher met the student face to face during the interview so that she could consider the student's response based on her gestures or facial expression. Because she had no one to support her and answered all of the questions, the researcher could ensure that the student answered based on her own experience. The table below shows the student's responses.

Table 2. The Student`s Challenges in Comprehending
Islamic English Short Stories based on Interview

No	Questions	Student`s Answers
1	Have you ever read the Islamic English Short Stories?	Yes, in English for Islamic Studies subject
2	Have you ever had any	Yes, there are moments when I

	challenges reading Islamic English Short Stories? What exactly are they?	lack vocabulary. I also have no idea how to say the words in the story.
3	Can you give examples of the story's difficult words to pronounce?	"Sin" and "Battle"
4	Why can it be difficult for you?	Because they are difficult to understand and I only use them occasionally at this boarding school
5	Can you comprehend the Islamic English Short Stories when you read them?	Just a little
6	Could you give some examples of what you got from the story?	Only the words in the story that are easily understood
7	What about the parts of the story that you didn't understand?	I'm having trouble interpreting the vocabularies and meanings
8	What do you usually do if you do not know the vocabularies?	First, I look it up in the dictionary, and if that does not work, I ask my classmates or teacher.
9	Is there any confusion in your understanding of the Islamic English Short Stories?	Yes
10	What examples of confusion did you come across?	It was difficult for me to translate and concluding
11	Why would those be difficult for you?	Because English and Bahasa are two distinct languages. I do not grasp the story either.
12	What would you do if you were in that situation?	I ask my teacher in the classroom, and outside of the classroom I ask my seniors.
13	What do you usually do if you had the chance to understand Islamic English Short Stories?	If I can, I just use dictionary to look for the vocabulary. If I am unable to do it, I ask my teacher.
14	Do you often open your dictionary when translating vocabularies?	Yes, I am
15	Why do you translate the	Because, instead of asking my

	vocabularies with a dictionary?	teacher, I want to translate on my own.

According to the table above, the student was still having challenges in comprehending Islamic English Short Stories. The vocabulary was the most difficult obstacle she faced. Because she did not frequently utilize the word in the Islamic English Short Stories in her daily life, the vocabulary could be difficult for her. As a result, the student was unable to completely comprehend the material and should rely on her dictionary. When she could not discover the vocabularies she needed, she asked her teacher, friends, or seniors for help.

Discussion

The researcher would like to explore and clarify the findings regarding the students' challenges understanding Islamic English Short Stories in this section. Students' challenges in comprehending Islamic English Short Stories can be divided into four categories: challenges in understanding words, challenges in combining words into sentences, challenges with coherency, challenges with reading speed, and challenges with inferencing. The researcher gave the explanation of each challenge categorization. In addition, the researcher outlined the challenge's process.

Challenges in Understanding the Word

The student had difficulty understanding the vocabularies in the Islamic English Short Stories because of the difficulty in grasping the word. When the student was asked to act out the story's meanings, she was unable to do so on her own. As a result, the student need assistance from a dictionary, friends, or her teacher. The student stared at her seatmate while giggling, then covered her face and laughed when she could not make sense of the story, according to the observation data. This problem indicated that the student did not comprehend the text's topic because she encountered several vocabulary she had never heard or used before. Her difficulty to comprehend the phrases could also be perceived as a lack of confidence in her translation and a fear of making mistakes. When the student was requested to read Islamic English Short Stories and then translate them into Bahasa, the issue was revealed. The student had only stuttering in translating and was reading the text slowly and softly. The student also utilized the dictionary to look up the definitions of the words she did not understand. Furthermore, the student required assistance from her teacher

and companions in order to comprehend the meaning of specific phrases in the story.

According to the interview, the student did not know the vocabularies and did not understand the meaning. So she would search up the needed words in her dictionary first, then asked her classmates in class, and if none of her classmates knew what those terms meant, she would ask her teacher. When the student was required to translate Islamic English Short Stories, she stammered and just laughed awkwardly at her friends and the researcher. She also used her dictionary for clarification. She also asked her friend to assist her in translating the words she didn't understand. Furthermore, if a student does not comprehend a language, she may simply disregard it and go on to the vocabulary that she understood only.

The student could also only respond to the question after it has been translated. She might first comprehend what the question truly means, and the story should be translated first, so that she might grasp the story with the question that she has previously translated, either with the assistance of a dictionary, teacher, or friends, or by herself. This process could be seen when the student was asked questions about Islamic English Short Stories that she had previously read without being translated. The student simply remained silent and did not respond. However, after translating the questions into Bahasa, the researcher began attempting to answer the question by looking at the translated text.

The Challenge in Combining the Words into Sentences

The student struggled to arrange the words she had been translated in order due to the difficulty in merging them into phrases. The student could not organize the translated words into logical and understandable sentences after looking them up in a dictionary or asking her classmates and teacher. The student could not figure out where the first and last words should be placed. It signified that the student was unable to convey the words in a logical order in Bahasa from the previously translated material. She could not put the words in order from the first to the last. This problem can be witnessed when the student was asked to translate the Islamic English Short Stories. The student should take out her dictionary and began translating the unfamiliar words one by one. However, she found it difficult to order the words she had been translated, making the translation more difficult to comprehend.

The student also could not locate the vocabulary in the dictionary quickly, thus the researcher had to wait a few minutes for the student to locate the needed vocabularies in the story. When the student was instructed to look up unknown words in the dictionary, she had difficulty deciphering the meanings of those words because she needed to discover them alphabetically. The student was also unable to use her smartphone because she was not allowed to bring it to school. When the student became frustrated with her inability to find the words, she turned to the researcher for help.

The Challenge in Coherency

The student struggled to make the interpretation of Islamic English Short Stories become understandable because of the issue in coherency. When confronted with this problem, the student opened her dictionary to hunt out the vocabularies she wanted and translated them word for word. When asked to interpret the entire line and paragraph, however, the student simply laughed and covered her face. The student could also not understand how to translate the words in short and produce a coherent translation of the text she was reading, as evidenced by the facts in the observation. However, the Islamic English Short Stories, as well as other forms of English stories, use metaphorical language, and many sentences could not only be translated using a dictionary, but also by utilizing all of the senses and applying prior knowledge to the story told in Islamic English writings.

The process of reading Islamic English Short Stories in the classroom demonstrates this issue. When asked to translate the story independently, the student simply laughs and looks at her friends or the researcher. She began searching for the appropriate words when the researcher instructed her to open her dictionary. After struggling to find the vocabularies she required in her dictionary or by asking her classmates and teacher, the student was unable to properly interpret the sentences in the story and merely translated them literally. She simply translated word for word, making the story more difficult to comprehend. This demonstrated her failure to convey the Islamic English Short Stories in an accurate and clear manner. When asked to interpret the Islamic English Short Stories, the student just used the translation from her dictionary. The student struggled to find a good translation that was simple to comprehend.

In the interview, the student also said that she was having trouble understanding Islamic English Short Stories, especially interpreting. When

the researcher questioned why she was struggled, she said that translating English into Indonesian is not the same. The distinction here refers to the language's structure, rules, and writings. When the student was requested to interpret phrases from Islamic English Short Stories, the presentation of this problem was seen. Specifically, in the phrase "lay stress." The student looked up the translation in the dictionary for each word. "Lay" means "berbaring," and "stress" means "menekankan" in the dictionary. As a result, the student translated it literally according to the dictionary. But it didn't make sense when it came to the interpretation. Meanwhile, when we put them together, "lay stress" logically translates to "menekankan."

The Challenge in Reading Speed

The student's reading speed problem meant that she could not keep track of the words in the Islamic English Short Stories quickly enough to find the important information in the stories. When the student struggled to keep track of the words quickly, she should reread the text to catch important points. The student was unable to adjust their reading speed to read and recognize the Islamic English Short Stories. When the researcher asked the student to read the Islamic English Short Stories, the issue became clear. She read it slowly and spelled numerous words incorrectly. This challenge prompted the student to use her dictionary or consult her teacher to learn how to pronounce it. However, if the student did not receive assistance, she would simply let her pronunciation deteriorate and her comprehension of the story became incomplete since she might have a different perspective of the meaning of the words.

If the student read slowly, it would be difficult for her to comprehend the word because the length of the text made her strain to read it, thus she should first translate it using her dictionary. Because the time allotted for English lesson in the classroom was so limited, the student's inability to modify her speed would be a problem. In such little period, the student might locate key elements of the text, such as the text's theme, and so on. However, reading comprehension is considered to be success if the student was able to interpret what she had been reading in a short amount of time. However, if the learner was unable to do so, she would be unable to fully comprehend the language and the story. As a result, she should read the entire text again to understand the plot. When students made mistakes in the classroom, they are rarely reprimanded by their teacher. When the

teacher failed to correct her, she simply continued to pronounce the words incorrectly.

The Challenge in Inferencing

The student struggled to conclude the Islamic English Short Stories using her own interpretation due to the difficulty in inferencing. However, the student was expected to be able to draw inferences from the book she had read in order for the reading activity in the classroom to be meaningful. Meanwhile, the researcher discovered that the student had difficulty concluding the story using her own interpretation in this study. The student was still struggling to come up with a meaningful ending to the story. The student found it difficult to translate and make assumptions, according to the interview. This could indicate that the student was unable to deduce the meanings of the text, especially when she was unfamiliar with them. This information was discovered when the researcher inquired about the aspects of the Islamic English Short Stories that challenged the student. The student said that she had difficulty translating and making inferences.

When the researcher asked the student about story's conclusion, the student only spoke Bahasa rather than English and could only point some. Meanwhile, the subject is English for Islamic Studies, and the story was written in English. The student expected to conclude the text in English. The stories were written in English as well. Although the student has translated the text into Indonesian, it would be preferable if she also drew inferences in English to improve her English skills. However, if the student is unable to do so, the student would not develop and will remain in the same spot. The student's incapacity to comprehend the story may have an impact on her academic performance. If the learner could not identify what the stories were about, she would not be able to locate text elements like the main ideas, supporting points, and inferences.

The student might also be unable to respond to questions from the teacher about the Islamic English Short Stories that have been read. As a result, she would receive poor grades in class, which would have an impact on her other subjects. When the student was asked to conclude the story, the process of this situation was seen. The students simply remains silent. However, when the researcher provided some clues by mentioning the lines of the conclusion, the student was able to form conclusions despite the fact that she simply stated what the text said.

According to the findings, there are five challenges in understanding Islamic English Short Stories that were discovered at MTS Pondok Pesantren Darul Hikmah Taman Pendidikan Islam Medan: the challenge in understanding the word, the challenge in combining the words into sentences, the challenge in coherency, the challenge in reading speed, and the challenge in inferencing. These findings were supported by Nuttall & Alderson (1996) theory, who said that there are three types of obstacles in reading comprehension: syntax, vocabulary, and discourse. However, the researcher only discovered two obstacles in this study that are similar to Nuttal and Alderson's, namely, the challenge in syntax and the challenge in vocabulary.

In addition, the theory of Klingner et al., (2007) stated that there are three challenges in reading comprehension: challenges in decoding, which refers to the student's ability to recognize words, challenges in fluency, which refers to the student's ability to pronounce the words in the text, and challenges in vocabulary, which refers to the student's mastery of words and word meanings. All of the obstacles in this theory, notably the challenge of understanding words, the challenge of combining words into sentences, the challenge of coherency, the challenge of reading speed, and the challenge of inferencing, are compatible with the researcher's findings. This demonstrates the student's difficulties with reading comprehension.

Furthermore, Oakhill, Cain & Elbro (2015) stated that there are five types of challenges in students' reading comprehension: literal understanding, which refers to the student's ability to understand the text as it is, limited vocabulary, which challenged the student in recognizing words, inference making, which refers to the ability to conclude, and comprehension monitoring, which refers to the ability to monitor the student's comprehension. Meanwhile, the researcher only discovered two obstacles in this study that are same with Oakhill, Cain, and Elbro's theory: the challenge in vocabulary and the challenge in inferencing.

CONCLUSIONS

The researcher develops a conclusion based on the results of data analysis after assessing the student's obstacles in comprehending Islamic English Short Stories that are encountered by students in the second grade of MTs Pondok Pesantren Darul Hikmah Taman Pendidikan Islam Medan. It can be shown that the student had five challenges in comprehending Islamic

English Short Stories. These challenges are: the challenge in understanding the word, which deals with the student's difficulty in recognizing and understanding words; the challenge in combining the words into sentences, which deals with the student's difficulty in properly arranging the words; the challenge in coherency, which deals with the student's difficulty in making a logical interpretation; the challenge in reading speed, which deals with the student's difficulty in tracking the words and skimming; and the challenge in inferencing, which deals with the student's difficulty in making conclusion.

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