Chapter Four

Finding and Discussion

This chapter discusses the finding and discussion based on the data analysis. Several points are reported in this section including the difficulties in understanding English textbooks and the strategies in understanding English textbooks. There are four students of English Education Department batch 2014 as the participants of this research. All of the reported findings are based on the information from these participants. The participants are labeled with P1, P2, P3, and P4.

The Difficulties in Understanding English Textbooks

This finding was aimed to answer the first research question.Based on the collected data, the researcher discovered some information related to students difficulties in understanding English textbooks. All of the participants had mentioned various problems while they used English textbooks at English Education Department of UniversitasMuhammadiyah Yogyakarta. There were five problems in understanding English textbooks namely unfamiliar vocabulary, high level of the book, low motivation to read, unfamiliar topic, and length of text.

Unfamiliar vocabulary. The first finding dealing with the difficulties in understanding English textbooks was unfamiliar vocabulary.All of the participants shared the same opinion that unfamiliar vocabulary was one of the difficulties they faced while reading English textbooks. The first participant reported that "Sometimes, there is a lot of vocabulary that I do not understand" (**P1.13)**. The other evidence was **"**First, because we are not English speaking country, so

sometimes we face unfamiliar vocabulary" **(P2.10)**. The third participant's statement was "In this sixth semester, I find more unfamiliar vocabulary" **(P3.16)**. Moreover, the fourth participant's statement was "The first difficulty is of course lack of vocabulary" **(P4.10)**. According to Shehu (2015), a great problem in order to comprehend the text is unfamiliar words. By knowing the meanings of the words they find in text and having the strategies to understand the unknown words, students are able to understand the content of what they read (Boardman et al., 2008).

Another problem as related to vocabulary knowledge, two out of four participants mentioned that they faced the difficulties with words. The difficulties involved the different possible meaning. Students felt confused to comprehend some words with certain possible meaning. For example the word 'left' has more than one meaning depending on the word used as a verb or as a noun. It was seen from second participant's statement "Sometimes I never find the similar word before" **(P2.11)**. The fourth participant also mentioned "Usually, textbook has a word with several meaning. So, one word has several synonyms which are difficult to understand" **(P4.11).** Additionally, the fourth participant gave more information. It can be seen from this following statement:

> "For example the word 'left' can be defined as a left side. But it also can be defined as leaving. The second example, we used to hear someone says blue, which can be defined as a color. However, to express a feeling, we can use I'm feeling blue" **(P4.14)**

According to Nuttal (2000), a word with several meaning is difficult to understand because students need to find a close meaning or other possible meaning. So, they are demanded to read and think carefully.

The further difficulties as related to unfamiliar terms, the third participant mentioned that there were unfamiliar terms used in statistics textbooks that caused difficulties in understanding English textbooks. Those unfamiliar terms consisted of various formulas, which led students to be difficult in understanding. The evidence was "For example in Research Methodology, it consists of some formula which consists of unfamiliar vocabularies for me" **(P3.14)**.

Briefly, all of the participants perceived that they struggled with unfamiliar words. The unfamiliar words involves synonym, words with several meaning, and unfamiliar terms. According to Nuttal (2000) there are several difficulties dealing with vocabulary, those are technical vocabulary, super-ordinates, synonyms, antonym, and word with several meaning.Puspita (2017) students have difficulty in understanding a written message, because it contains a lot of unknown words for students. Thus, unfamiliar vocabulary could be one of difficulties for students in understanding English textbooks.

The high language level of the book. Additionally, two of participants shared the same perception about level of language used in English textbooks. They argued that the language used in English textbooks was difficult to understand. It can be seen from participants' statement that was "Language level used in textbooks is hard to understand **(P1.20)**. The other evidence was "First, the language used in the textbook is difficult to understand"**(P3.12)**.

In agreement with the explanation above, the participants also found some difficulties related to different level of language used that appeared in some expert theories in textbooks. Two participants argued that textbooks consisted of some theories from experts, which affected the problems in understanding English textbooks. This was known from participants" statement "For me, textbook is too difficult to understand because it consists of articles and resources from some expert" **(P1.19)**. It was also supported by the third participant "In textbook, there are some theories from experts. Those experts discuss same points in different explanations" **(P3.15)**.

Moreover, students felt that because textbooks consist of some theories from experts, it was hard for them to gain the ideas or topic of the text. This case can be occurred because some experts use unfamiliar terminology. Two from four participants perceived that students mostly faced the problems in gaining the ideas or the topic of the text. The participant stated that "I find several difficulties in understanding English textbook. Mostly, I cannot understand point by point of the text" **(P1.10).** The second participant also argued with the same opinion, "Textbook consists of some article which is difficult to understand. Sometimes, I do not know what the ideas of the text despite knowing the meaning of the word" **(P2.15)**. The other additional information was **"**First, maybe in fifth and sixth semester there are so many difficult courses which consists a lot of articles and theories. Sometimes it makes us difficult to understand the content of the text" **(P2.19)**.

Low motivation to read. The difficulties in understanding English textbooks also arisedfrom students themselves. It happened because of students'

internal factor such as the laziness. Actually, students had no interest in reading. Based on the data, students felt that laziness affected to their motivation in reading English textbooks. It can be seen from the first participant'sstatement"Because actually I am not really interested in reading, and it is rather difficult for me to read textbook" **(P1.17)**. The participant also revealed that"Internal factor causes me not to be interested in reading. Actually I am lazy to read" **(P1.18)**. The second participant also gave the same opinion"For me, I am little bit lazy, and so I am not really interested to read textbooks. It also gives influence for my understanding of the content, when I am lazy to read" **(P2.18)**.

In addition, the third participant mentioned the number of book page also gave influence for students' interest in reading English textbooks. Student felt lazy to read due to the book's thickness. The third participants stated that "The book is too thick, and I think that it makes me lazy to read" **(P3.17)**.

From the information above, students' motivation in reading can give influence towards their understanding of English textbooks. By having good motivation, students were more interested in reading English textbooks. Then, they would be easier to find the information of the text. This finding was supported by Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, and Snowling (2014) as they mentioned one of the possible difficulties in reading was motivation. Moreover, Boardman, Roberts, Vaughn, Wexler, Murray, and Kosanovich (2008) stated that readers who are struggling in reading often face low motivation to read.

Unfamiliar topic. To understand a reading text, sometimes students need to have background knowledge of the topic. Students felt difficult to understand

English textbooks when they were not familiar with the topic of the text. For example, junior students will find it difficult when they read a new topic consists of material for senior students.

This problem also affects student in finding the conclusion of a topic. Based on the data gathered, one participant mentioned that unfamiliar topic contributed to students' difficulties in understanding English textbooks. It could be seen from the participants' statement "Second, this is difficult to understand the conclusion of a topic" **(P4.12).** Another statement was "First, maybe we are unfamiliar with the topic. Then when we are not familiar with the topic, we are not able to make a conclusion"**(P4.13)**.

Therefore, background knowledge of the topic is essential for student in order to comprehend English textbooks. Because, when students read a topic that they were familiar with, it would be easier for them to get the point. It is supported by Carrell, Devine, and Eskey (2000) who stated that background knowledge of content gives benefit for readers in order to help them remember and understand the text than someone who is unfamiliar with the topic.

Lengthy text. Another finding related to the content of English textbooks was lengthy text. One out of four participants revealed that students got a challenge in understanding English textbook, because it consisted of many materials. It was seen from participant's statement "The last is it (textbook) consists of a lot of materials. So we are confused to comprehend it" **(P3.13)**.

Based on the data, it showed that student felt confused to understand some points that they have read due to numerous materials in the text. This case leads to

confusion for the students to understand the textbooks. Because textbooks consisted of plenty of materials, students needed to understand all of the information.

The Strategies in Understanding English Textbooks

Students need to implement some strategies in understanding the reading text especially English textbooks. In this section, the researcher asked some questions regarding to strategies used by EED students in understanding English textbooks. Based on the interview result, each participant had different perception related to the strategies used in understanding English textbooks.

Using dictionary. The first finding that was found to solve problem in understanding English textbooks was using dictionary. Using dictionary was necessary for student in order to find out the meaning of words. From the collected data, all of the participants mentioned that using dictionary was one of the strategies used by students in understanding English textbooks. By using dictionary they were easier to interpret the information of the text. The first participant stated "I have to open the dictionary in order to get the point of a sentence" **(P1.14)**.

The second and fourth participant shared that they used online dictionary to search the meaning of words. It could be seen from these following statements "Then, I search the meaning of words through online dictionary" **(P2.13).** It was in line with the fourth participants who stated that "Usually I search the meaning of the word through the dictionary application in my phone" **(P4.17)**.

Thus, this activity was used to overcome the problem related to unfamiliar vocabulary. This is stated by the third participant. He mentioned that "For the vocabulary difficulties, I always open the dictionary when I read and I write the meaning" **(P3.19)**.

It showed that by using dictionary, it helped students to know the meaning of unfamiliar words such as the synonym, antonym, or word with several meanings. Then, it would be easier for them to understand the whole text and to interpret the information of the text. According Hayati and Fattahzadh (2006) suggest the learners to check the dictionary to measure either their assumption about unfamiliar word based on the contextual information is correct or not. It was in line with Xueping (2014) dictionaries give plenty information for learner in finding specific word list to increase their vocabulary.

Taking notes. The second finding related to strategies in understanding English textbooks was by taking a note. Students used two strategies regarding to taking notes, namely taking notes by vocabulary and taking notes by content. The explanation would be showed as follows.

Taking notes for vocabulary. Three out of four participants shared that underlining the difficult words as one of the strategy in understanding English textbooks. This strategy was used after students found out the word meaning in dictionary. Then they wrote the meaning of the underlined word. This was stated by fourth participant. The fourth participant mentioned that "After I search the meaning of the word, then I take note of this word meaning" **(P4.16)**.

This strategy was used to overcome problem of unfamiliar vocabulary. It was proven by the first participant's statement"I usuallywrite the difficult words above the text. Then I try to read in a sentence" **(P1.15)**. Moreover, the other evidence was "Usually, I mark/underline the difficult sentences and unfamiliar words" **(P2.12)**. Therefore, students can comprehend the text easily through this activity. By taking notes for vocabulary, it helped students to know the meaning of unfamiliar word that they already found.

Taking notes for content. One participant revealed that it was not necessary for them to read the whole text to understand the meaning. This activity helped students to overcome problem regarding of lentgthy text. The student stated that they underlined the important points from lecturer explanation about the text. This was stated by the third participant "The strategy is I underline some points which are explained by my lecturer" **(P3.18)**. The third participant also mentioned additional information that students recorded the lecturer explanation to write some points. The evidence was"I record my lecturer's explanation. Then I replay it and I write some points that I do not understand from that textbook" **(P3.21)**. Thus, this activity helped them to understand the content easily.

Guessing. The third finding related to strategies in understanding English textbooks was guessing. The second participant shared that students guessed the meaning of unfamiliar words to understand the whole meaning. It could be seen fromthis perception "Usually, I just guess" **(P2.14)**. The other proof was "There are words in the passage that I do not know, I will just guess the meaning of the word by the overall meaning" **(P2.22)**.

Accordingly, this strategy could be implemented as one of the strategies to overcome the problem of unfamiliar vocabulary. Students used it when the students did not bring the dictionary. In this activity, students guessed the meaning of the word by the overall meaning. It helps students to gain the information faster than searching the meaning of each word. According to Huang & Eslami (2013) Guessing strategies are used by students in order to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words in the case that they have lack of vocabulary knowledge, grammar, or other linguistic elements.

Using collaborative learning. The further finding was collaborative learning as the students' strategy in reading English textbooks.Collaborative is one of the methods used in the teaching and learning process, where the students are allowed to participate in sharing ideas and experiences about the lesson (Suprihatiningrum, 2016). This strategy can be implemented to solve several problems in understanding English textbooks.

First, collaborative learning was used as the strategy to overcome problem related to high level of the book as stated by second participant. Students asked their friend who understoodto explain when they face the problem in understanding textbooks consisted of some theories from experts. That participant reported "Usually, I asked my friend who understands more to explain me" **(P2.16)**.

Second, students asked another student to re-tell the content of the book when they were lazy to read it. This was stated by second participants "Usually, I

listen to my friends who already read to retell the content ofthereading" **(P2.21)**.

Thus, this strategy was used to solve problem regarding to lowmotivation to read.

Third, this strategy was also used to solve problems of unfamiliar vocabulary. When students did not have dictionary or online dictionary, they asked their friend about the unfamiliar words. It was stated by the fourth participant"Through asking my friend who already read" **(P4.18)**. Moreover, the second participant gave additional information related to collaborative learning was through group work. Students were able to overcome their problem dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary by sharing the information for the other members. It was known from participants' statement "Maybe, the strategy is by making a group work. Maybe, through group work we can have member of the group who help us to understand the meaning of the text" **(P2.24)**.

It showed that this activityhelped students to overcome some difficulties which are high level of the book, low of motivation probem, and unfamiliar vocabulary. By using collaborative learning in reading, students could share their knowledge to other students such as the meaning of a word. So, students were easier to understand the content of a reading text.This finding is in line with Shehu (2015) who stated that a teacher can determine each student to read some parts of, and then asks them to share to other students by paraphrasing based on information they have read. Furthermore, this strategy also helped students to solve motivation problem because students could ask their friend who understand more about the content of a reading. It was supported by Guthrie and Humenick (2004) who stated that collaborative learning could be used for students to

increase motivation in reading and to increase understanding of what is read through social interaction.

Asking the lecturer. The secondparticipant mentioned one of the strategies used by students was through asking the lecturer. Instead of asking friend, students asked the lecturer when the lecturerallowedthem to ask question. Student asked the lecturer when they found the difficulties related to high level of the book. In this case, they found theories from experts which made them confuse to understand the content of the text. This was stated by second participant "I will ask my lecturer in question and answer section"**(P2.17)**. Thus, this activity was used to overcome problem of high level of the book.

Students used this strategy to overcome problems in understanding the content problem such as unfamiliar topic. It means that students asked the lecturer to explain which part or topic that they did not understand. This was as stated by the fourth participant "For example, in research methodology course there are a lot of unfamiliar topics for me such as regression line. Then, I have understood after the lecturer explains to me" **(P4.21).**Sometimes, students were hard to understand the topic of a text. Then, students needed to ask someone who is more proficient in that course as well as the lecturer. Students could ask the lectureras the facilitator in the classroom to explain the material in a simple explanation. Thus, by asking the lecturer, it helped students to clarify their understanding about the information they get in English textbooks. According to Pullupaxi (2012), student can activate prior knowledge by making list of questions of what he/she has known to correlate with topic.

Increasing self-motivation. Another finding was self-motivation, which wasused by student to overcome low of motivation problem. It means that students forced themselves to read English textbooks. Students tried to gain the information by skimming the whole text at once. The evidence was "Even though we only read slightly, we should force ourselves to read. At least we still get the information of the book" **(P1.21)**. The students expected to get informationfrom the reading, even though they only read the general meaning of the text. This can be happened because students read only for obligation from the lecturer not for pleasure. This is as stated by the third participant:

> "Usually it depends on the teacher when it comes to our laziness to read. There are some lecturers who will scold us if we did not read. The lecturer will ask every student in the class and every student is required to answer the question. For me, it can motivate me to read because I do not want the lecturer to scold me. So, I read to avoid in getting scold" (P3.23)

Therefore, this strategy helps students to overcome lack of motivation to read. Students were motivated to read because afraid of getting scolded by the lecturer. Therefore, they force themselves to read, although they only read several pages.

Writing summaries. One out of four participants argued that one of the strategies in understanding English textbooks was by writing summaries.Students used this activity to understand the content easily. This was known from participants' answer "My strategy is by writing main points in order to summarize

the topic" **(P4.19)**. The other proof was "So, I underline important words, and then I can summarize it through the underlined-words" **(P4.20)**.

Therefore, Students took a note by several important points of the text. Then they wrote the summaries based on several main points that they had found Therefore by writing summaries, they were easier to mark some important points. This finding was in line with Pressley and Woloshyn (1998) who stated that in order to increase students' understanding they can use summarization or description strategies. In addition Hasani, Rahimy, Arjmandi (2014) stated that students can employ some strategies including practice to relate the text with their background knowledge, draw conclusions, arrange questions at the text, and summarize information in order to gain the comprehension in reading.

Re-reading the text. The further finding was re-reading the text in order to understand English textbooks. By reading the texts in several times, students were able to get the point of the text that they read. Two out of four participants had the same perception. The first participant revealed that students needed to read in many times to gain the information or point of the reading text. It was proven from the statement "Usually, I have to read two or three times. Then, I can get the point" **(P1.12)**.

As related to the previous finding, students needed to re-read the text after students took a note of unfamiliar words. It could be seen from the third participant's argument "After I write the vocabulary difficulties in closed book journal. Usually, I re-read the text in order to understand the content" **(P3.20)**.It can be concluded that the first and the third participant admitted that by re-reading

the passage, it could help them to find out the point of the text easily. This finding was supported by Shehu (2015) who stated that it is necessary for students to re-read passages in order to help them in increasing their reading speed and fluency. It can also increase the knowledge through what they read.

Using intensive reading. A strategy used in understanding English textbooks was intensive reading. "Intensive reading on the other hand focuses on accuracy rather than fluency by emphasizing detailed study of vocabulary and grammar" (Mart, 2017, p.85). The first participant stated that students needed to read in detail to get the ideas of a text. The evidence was "Sometimes, there are a lot of articles in textbooks. So, we need to read in detail to get the point" **(P1.11)**.

On the other hand, the first participant also shared additional information. In order to understand the text, students needed to read every sentence. The First participant stated that "The strategy is through reading sentence by sentence. I have to understand a sentence first to continue reading in a paragraph" **(P1.16)**.

Therefore, intensive reading was included as one of the strategies used by students in understanding English textbooks. This activity helped them to overcome the problem in unfamiliar topic.When students read an unfamiliar topic, they were difficult to find the point of the text. Then students needed a detailed analysis of what the text are going to discuss in order to gain the point of a topic. It was in line with Mart (2017) who stated that intensive reading encourages students to master the language effectively by using detailed analysis of the reading materials.

Focusing on the content goals. Another finding that the researcher found was focusing on the content goals. "A content goal is a question or purpose for reading which emphasizes the importance of and increases interest in learning from what we read" (Guthrie & Humenick, 2004, p.29). One participant mentioned that one of the strategies used was focusing the content goals. It could be seen from the following statement:

"The first strategy is we have to decide our reading purpose. For example in quiz or test, we decide to read only the important parts which going to be examined. However, in making a summary, we need to know the whole parts of those textbook" **(P4.21)**.

Hence, this strategy was mentioned as one of the strategy by students in understanding English textbooks.In this activity, students decide the purpose of reading, they only focused on thr parts thar they were going to read instead of reading the whole text. Then, by focusing on the content goals, it would be easier for them to find out the information of a passage of reading text.

Based on the data above, there were ten strategies used by participants in this research. The strategies involved using dictionary, taking a note, guessing, using collaborative learning, asking the lecturer, writing summaries, increasing self-motivation, re-reading, using intensive reading, and focusing on the content goals.

In conclusion, the data showed that there were some strategies belong to certain difficulties in understanding English textbooks. In solving unfamiliar vocabulary, students used some strategies which are using dictionary, taking notes

for vocabulary, guessing and using collaborative learning. In solving the high language level of the book, students used some strategies namely using collaborative learning and asking the lecturer. In solving unfamiliar topic problem, students used asking lecturer as the strategy. In solving lengthy text, students used taking notes for content as the strategy. In solving low of motivation problem, students used collaborative learning and increase self-motivation to read. Additionally, the participants also mentioned some strategies to understand English textbooks in general. The strategies involve writing summaries, re-reading, intensive reading, and focusing on the content goals.