

## **An Analysis of Reading Comprehension by Using Descriptive Text at the Eleventh-Grade Students of SMA N 9 Jambi**

Fadia Nurhidayati, Suyadi, Siti Aisyah

English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Educational Sciences, University of Batanghari

### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims to determine students' reading comprehension by using descriptive text. This research uses descriptive quantitative. The research instrument in this research used a test. The test consists of 20 multiple-choice questions, there are two different descriptive texts with 10 questions in each descriptive text. The data for this research are class XI students at SMA N 9 Jambi with a total of 36 students. In this research, data collection uses a test that functions to determine students' reading comprehension, data collection includes the following: the researcher gives a test in the form of 20 multiple choice questions, there are two different descriptive texts with 1 text each for 10 questions, then the researcher ask students to read and understand the text in depth after that student are given 90 minutes to answer the questions. Data analysis uses analysis of students' reading comprehension using descriptive text. These results indicate that students' reading comprehension using descriptive text in class XI F 2 is in the "High" category. The results show the mean score of the students' reading comprehension of descriptive text is 83,5%. That is 29 students (81%) obtained the "High" category with a score range of 70-100. The highest score was 100 and the lowest score was 25. Most of them in the "High" category showed a very good understanding of descriptive text. They demonstrated strong reading comprehension skills and were able to understand the descriptive text provided by the researcher. Students are also able to recognize and differentiate the generic structure of the text, which contains: identification, description, and conclusion.

**Keywords:** *Reading, comprehension, descriptive text*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Reading is one of those skills that are considered as the most important activity to get knowledge and information in human life, especially for the students in learning English. Reading comprehension is a part of reading subject which is emphasized in reading comprehension of the content. In other word, reading comprehension is meant as the act of grasping the reading content with the mind.

Mardianti & Ohoiwutun (2014) states that the teaching of reading is very important because it helps the students develop more skills in comprehending and interpreting the content of an English text. Through reading, learners can build vocabulary and sentences that help them improve their listening and speaking skills as well. It means that reading can develop other skills in language learning.

According to Nunan (2003), reading is a smooth process wherein readers integrate information from the text with their background knowledge to construct meaning. It means that the act of reading involves the creation or interpretation of meaning from the text. Grabe (2009) states reading is centrally a comprehending process; in which the reader understand what the writer intended to convey in writing. It means that in reading, comprehension is really important to be known

in order to catch the intended information provided by the writers in the form of written text. Based on the experts explanation above the researcher can say that the point of reading aspect is about comprehension, where students act as readers who can understand the content of the reading.

In the students' twelfth grade of high school, there is a lot of material used in the reading comprehension process. To understand it and one method that is often used in the teaching process is to use descriptive text. Description text is a type of written text paragraph in which has the specific function to describe about an object (living or non-living) things and it has the aim that is giving description of the object to the reader clearly (Pardiyono (2007: 34) cited in Sumarsih and Sanjaya 2013: 108). Moreover, Artono (2008:115) stated descriptive text is a text that describes the features of someone, something, or a certain place. It means that descriptive text is a very good material to use for the process of teaching reading comprehension because it provides specific information in the text so that it functions effectively to make it easier for students to understand in the process of teaching reading comprehension.

Based on the unstructured interview result with the teacher to find a solution concerning students' reading test, there are some difficulties probably faced by students in reading activities such as: First, most of students just have the ability to pronounce and recognize the individual words without assigning the message what the author extends. Second, they actually have good knowledge of words and sentence meaning but they fail to understand longer reading materials like stories. Third, they are hardly to concentrate as they read. After students read a story, a small part of them find it difficult to analyze the schematic structures of the story concerning identification, description, and conclusion whereas they had read the text for several times. It also could make the students lack of interest in reading. The students just read without knowing why they read the material given and what elements they should look for. They did not know what the important elements in the text. At the end of reading activity, they could not even tell other people about what they have already read comprehensively. As a result, they have difficulty in figuring out the plot of the story. Those cases are quite problematic one and according to the writer, it should be solved because it can be arisen further difficulties to the next reading lesson if their low degree of reading comprehension is not improved soon. Furthermore, for the need research the researcher chose the eleventh-grade student especially XI F2 because it is based on the recommendation from the teacher, a small part of them difficult to understand the text, and it could be seen from they difficult to retell the story from the text that they have read. Based on the text and questions, the researcher found that a small part of students could not understand the descriptive meaning of the text so that students could not answer questions from the descriptive text.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Definition of Reading

Reading is the process of a reader mental or process of mind activity in trying to interpret the perception of symbols that present language (Aebersold & Field, 1997). Reading is a process involving an interactive exchange between readers and text researcher to obtain information through the process of understanding. Linse (2005), points out that

reading is a set of skills involved in making sense and deriving what means from the printed word. It means reading is an attaining meaning from the author to the reader in order to get new information. The successful reading of the students, the students have to understand the text. A good reader can discover by the reader understanding what the text talking about, making a conclusion and taking data from the text.

According to (Suyadi, 2021), Reading plays an important role in learning a language, achieving academic improvement, and reaching career promotion [1]. Reading could construct a mindset and boosting students' vocabulary, and grammar knowledge. Reading is not merely hearing words [2], but also understanding added dimensions of it, paying more attention of text, analyzing of messages, and acting of possibly basis of text. While, [3] adds academic success and achievement can be reached through reading which means that the better reading skill the students can reach, it would be the better learning achievement they obtained. Reading has an important role in improving students' language skills while it is taught by combining with another skill. [4] stated that there is a correlation among four language skills and through reading learners may develop reading skill.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher review that reading is like a conversation between readers and text researcher where we understand and gather information. It is the thinking of process of figuring out what the written symbols mean. It also reading is a receptive activity, meaning we actively take part in it. Successful reading means understanding the text, and good readers can get the message, make conclusions, and find important information.

### Purpose of Reading

According to Anderson and Anderson (2003), there are seven objectives in the process of reading, which can be seen below:

1. Reading for details and facts involves discovering the subject matter of the story.
2. Reading for main ideas is conducted to grasp the problem statement.
3. Reading for the order of organization entails understanding each part of the story.
4. Reading to a conclusion is performed to discern the author's intended meaning.

5. Reading to classify involves identifying elements that deviate from the ordinary.

6. Reading to evaluate aims to determine the value of the story.

7. Reading to compare or contest focuses on comparing the story with the reader's life experiences.

### **Types of Reading Technique**

In reading skills, there are techniques that readers can use to obtain information faster or more effectively. According to Planet Spark (2021) There are four types of reading techniques, which can be seen below:

#### **1. Skimming**

Skimming is a reading technique that involves quickly going through a text to get identify the main ideas. Skimming is useful when you need to gather the main points of a text quickly.

#### **2. Scanning**

Scanning is a reading strategy in which the reader has a predetermined idea of what they are searching for and wants to focus on retrieving particular details.

#### **3. Intensive Reading**

Intensive reading is to gain a deep and detailed understanding of a small portion of a text by analyzing it grammatically and syntactically while also paying close attention to its meaning and significance.

#### **4. Extensive Reading**

Extensive reading tends to provide broad, general understanding, not focused on details, just getting the core of the reading material.

### **Concept of Reading Comprehension**

According to Harris & Hodges (1995), reading comprehension is described as the process of constructing meaning from a written text through an interactive exchange of ideas between the reader and the message within the text.

The idea of reading comprehension encompasses the skill to comprehend and interpret written text, extending beyond mere word recognition. It involves the capability to derive meaning, make inferences, and understand the overall message conveyed in the text. Reading comprehension entails various abilities, such as grasping context, establishing connections between ideas, and synthesizing information to achieve a more profound understanding of the content.

From the statement, it is clearly understood that comprehension is the most important in reading. Reading comprehension is complex skill that requires an active interaction between text elements and the reader. Since comprehension of the text is the ultimate goal in reading. Understanding comprehension processes is crucial to the study of reading.

### **Reading Ability**

Ability is defined as the capacity of individuals to perform various tasks in a particular job. The ability basically means that you have the potential to do something. According to Brown (2001) reading abilities are best developed in connection with writing, listening, and speaking activities. While according to Hornby (1987: 2) defines "ability as (1) the capacity or power (to do) something physical or mental; (2) cleverness; intelligence; (3) the special natural power to do something well; talent. Meanwhile, in the Longman dictionary, the ability is defined as the mental skill or physical power to do something".

Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that ability is the skill or power to do something in other words talent. Reading is an interpretation that means responding to a written text as a piece of communication between the reader and the writer. It is also an interactive process that continues between the reader and the text, which leads to understanding. The process includes the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text. The text presents letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills, and strategies to determine the meaning.

### **Level of Reading Ability**

Reading abilities According to Gillet and Temple (2004:134-137) reading abilities:

#### **1. The independent level**

This level of difficulty allows students to read texts easily without help. The comprehension of what is read is generally excellent, and silent reading at this level is quick because almost all words are recognized and understood in sight.

#### **2. The Level of Instruction**

This level of the material is not really easy but it is still comfortable. Here, the student is challenged and will benefit most from the teaching Comprehension is good, but help is needed to understand some concepts. The silent

reading rate is fairly fast, although usually slower than at the independent level.

### 3. The Level of Frustration

This level of the material is too difficult in vocabulary or concepts to be read successfully. The comprehension is bad, with the main ideas forgotten or misunderstood. Both oral and silent reading are usually slow and exhausting, with frequent stops to analyze unknown words

### Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a kind of text with a purpose to give information. The context of this kind of text is the description of particular thing, animal, person or others, for instance: our pets or a person we know well (Gerot & Wignell, 1994). Based on the expert's statement above, the researcher can conclude that the descriptive text is a type of text that we use to tell character traits and information about something we want to tell, it can be person, place, object, animal and whatever we want to tell. Descriptive text is used to tell and describe a person animal, object, places, things or any objects in specific details.

Language features is the features of language which supports the meaning of the text. Bima, Kurniawati, and Susiningsih (2017) have stated that descriptive text has language features consist of: using certain noun, using simple present tense, using some kinds of adjectives which has characteristics as describing, numbering, and classifying, using relating verb for giving the information about subject, using action verb, using adverb to give the additional information.

### METHODOLOGY

The design used in this research is Descriptive Qualitative research design. According to Sugiyono (2012: 13) descriptive research is research carried out to determine the value of independent variables, either one or more variables (independent) without making comparisons, or connecting them with other variables. Which mean descriptive research is a study conducted to determine variables, either the variable is one or even more without making comparison or connect with other variables. Quantitative descriptive research methods are used to systematically collect and analyze numerical data to describe or summarize a population or phenomenon. This method is

typically suitable when the main objective is explanation or evaluation.

The population is described as encompassing all members of any clearly defined group of people, events, or objects. Arikunto (1992) similarly asserts that the population refers to the entirety of the research object. The setting of this research is Senior High School 9 Jambi. According to Brink ((Brink, 2001)), a sample is delineated as a portion or subset of a larger whole, chosen by the researcher for inclusion in a research project. It comprises a selected group of elements or units from a specifically defined population. The researcher took the eleventh grade students of senior high school 9 Jambi as the subject of this study. The subject of the research were 36 students in class XI F2 of Senior High School 9 Jambi.

The instrument of collecting data is used by the researcher to get data by using test. Arikunto (1992) states that a test is a series of questions or exercises employed to measure the skills, intelligence abilities or talents possessed by an individual or a group.

Researchers collect this research data by giving tests to students. The researcher gave instructions to students to follow the directions given, the researcher asked students to read the descriptive text carefully and the researcher asked students to understand the reading. The researcher provided 2 descriptive texts with different text content. 1 text contains 10 multiple choice questions, which means there are a total of 20 questions. Researchers gave students 90 minutes to read the descriptive text, understand the text, and then answer 20 multiple choice questions. The test aimed to get information about students' ability of reading comprehension after the teaching-learning process and to obtain data to be processed by researchers.

Benjamin Bloom (1956) statement that scoring student learning outcomes based on correct responses and classifying them into various levels of understanding or mastery. The data analysis was carried out through the following steps: Scoring: Each student's test was evaluated by counting the number of correct answers, Classification: The scores were then categorized using a specific interpretation table. According to Sugiyono (2012), the formula for descriptive analysis is as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%.$$

Note:

P = Percentage

F = Frequency respondent

N = Number of data/samples

In the book "SPSS for Windows Step by Step" published in 2011, George and Mallery explain how to score in categories "High", "Medium", and "Low". The detailed number is:

**Table 1. Reading Score Criteria Table**

Criteria Score Interval	Interpretation
70-100	High
40-69	Medium
0-39	Low

George and Mallery (2011)

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The students reading comprehension of descriptive text is categorized into "High Category". From the result, the researcher found that the total score was 3005 and the mean score result of the students' reading comprehension of descriptive text is 83,5%. The highest score was 100 and the lowest score was 25. It means that the students reading comprehension by using descriptive text is categorized in "High Category".

It can be seen that out of a total of 36 students there were 29 students (81%) obtained "High" category with a score range of 70-100, 4 students (11%) obtained "Medium" category with a score range of 40-69, 3 students obtained "Low" category with a score range of 0-39.

The highest percentage of scores is the "High" category which has a percentage of 81% with a total of 29 students, while the "Medium" category which has percentage of 11% with a total of 4 students, and the lowest percentage of score is the "Low" category which have a percentage of 8% with a total of 3 students.

In class XI F2 which has "High" category, there are 29 students out of a total of 36 students who meet these criteria. Of the 29 students who had the "High" category, there were 22 female students and 7 male students.

It means that the average reading comprehension of female students is quite high compared to the reading comprehension of male students in class XI F2. The female students' reading comprehension has quite "high" category because the number of female

students in the class is greater than the number of male students, and the female students have quite "high" focus than the male students. It can also be concluded that of all class XI F2 students, female students have excellent reading comprehension.

The researcher concluded that the reading comprehension level of class XI F2 students was in the high category, because most of them in the "High" category showed very good understanding of descriptive text. They demonstrated strong reading comprehension skills and were able to understand the descriptive text provided by the researcher. Students are also able to recognize and differentiate the generic structure of the text, which contains: identification, description and conclusion. while a small number of others in the "Medium" category have a fairly good understanding of reading comprehension in descriptive text but still make some mistakes. They demonstrate the ability to understand and apply concepts well, although may require more guidance to achieve full understanding. Then a small number of others in the "low" category show limited understanding of descriptive text. They often make mistakes and experience difficulty in understanding the descriptive text and experience difficulty in applying the concepts learned, so they need additional intervention and guidance to improve their reading comprehension of descriptive text.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data presentation and data analysis in the previous chapter, the researcher gets conclusion from the research. From the result, the researcher found that the total score was 3005 and the mean score result of the students' reading comprehension of descriptive text is 83,5%.

The highest score was 100 and the lowest score was 25. It means that the students reading comprehension by using descriptive text is categorized in "High Category".

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