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## Students' Reading Comprehension in Descriptive Text

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**Abstract** This research is discussing about the students' reading comprehension of the second year MTs. Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidimpuan. This research employed descriptive quantitative research. Based on the result of the research, researcher got the description of the data was found that mean score was 56.76. It means that the students' reading comprehension of the second year MTs. Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidimpuan was categorized into enough ability. Then, from the result of the hypothesis testing, the researcher found that  $Z_{count} = -3.57 < Z_{table} 0.3264$ . It means the hypothesis was rejected. Thus, the result of mean scores the students' ability in enough ability and actually it should be accepted hypothesis, but based on the result of that score it is rejected. So, maybe there is a mistake in instrument or in calculation.

**Keywords:** Reading Comprehension; Descriptive Text; Students' Ability; Generic Structures; Language Features.

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**Abstrak** Penelitian ini membahas tentang pemahaman membaca siswa tahun ke-2 MTs. Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidimpuan. Penelitian ini dikerjakan menggunakan penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, peneliti memperoleh nilai rata-rata 56.76. Dari hasil tersebut dapat disimpulkan bahwa pemahaman membaca siswa tahun ke-2 MTs. Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidimpuan dikategorikan ke dalam kategori cukup. Kemudian, dari hasil tes hipotesis, peneliti memperoleh  $Z_{count} = -3.57 < Z_{table} 0.3264$ . Dari hasil tersebut dapat disimpulkan bahwa hipotesis ditolak. Dengan demikian, hasil dari nilai rata-rata kemampuan siswa dikategori cukup dan itu seharusnya hipotesis diterima, tapi berdasarkan dari hasil tes hipotesis ditolak. Jadi, mungkin ada kesalahan dalam instrument perhitungan.

**Kata Kunci:** Pemahaman Membaca, Teks Deskriptif; Kemampuan Siswa; Struktur Teks; Ciri Bahasa.

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## INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of skills that very important in teaching and learning English. It is one of skills that students should learn and care of. Reading is more beneficial to them during their study because it enables them to acquire many things about the knowledge of language and to understand different subject areas.

Reading is the way to get information from something that was written, to obtain information and to improve the science and knowledge. By reading, it will be easier for students to interpret language, and make students able to find every message of the text. Then, "reading is bringing meaning to and getting meaning from printed or written material"(Nurhamidah, et. al., 2018). So, reading is a process to understand a text because there is a transaction between the text and the reader.

The reason of the students' reading in the classroom is to get the information. According to Beatrice and Jeffries (1996), that reading is an important way to improve language skill, help the students to learn to think in English, can enlarge English vocabulary, can improve students' writing, and is a good way to find out about new ideas, facts, and experiences. It means that reading is very important to improve students' language skill in English. Through reading, the students are able to read English text effectively and efficiently.

In addition, reading can improve the science or knowledge and also give pleasure. It is undeniably that reading is necessary for everybody in variety of purpose and needs. Reading is not just saying the words but reading also the process of getting meaning from the text. According to Whorter (1992) "reading is a complex process; it involves much more than adding word meanings together. Reading involves not only understanding ideas, but also recognizing the relationship and structures among ideas". It means that reading is not only saying the word but also understanding the meaning, recognizing the relationship and structures of ideas.

Also, reading is an activity of getting meaning from the text. Besides, the readers must be able to combine their own background knowledge and information from the text build meaning and readers also must understand ideas, recognize the relationship and structures of ideas. Because the goal of reading is comprehension, so the readers must be able to remember and understand about the text.

Reading involves two skills, receptive and active skill. First, receptive skill refers to the fact that readers have to infer meaning, using their knowledge. Receptive means that the reader receivers input from a writer. The readers rarely have opportunity to question the

author about what he/she really had in mind when writing a text. Second, reading as active skill, which a reader finds a reading passage interesting. His/her mind is fully engaged in trying to understand the reading material.

From both of the reading skill, it is needed to be able to comprehend in understanding the text. To comprehend, the reader must have a wide range of capacities and abilities. The students also must be able to read and catch some paragraph message or information from the text. One of the way to measure the students' comprehension from the text is by asking them some question about the paragraph from the text given. If the students can answer the question well, it can conclude that they can catch the message from the text. If the students can't answer the question , it can conclude that they can't catch the message from the text.

Ability is a quality or state being able, power to perform, whatever to perform, whatever physical moral intellectual, conventional or legal capacity, skill or competence in doing, sufficiency of strength, skill, resource. Ability is a natural tendency to do something successful or well. The ability is a quality or being able, especially in physical, mental or legal power to perform. The ability means the quality or capacity of being able to do something well. As said by Hornby (2000), the definition of ability such as, "ability is: 1) Capacity or power to do something physical and mental, 2) Cleverness, intelligence, 3) Special natural power to do something well that talent. Based on explanation above, the ability is a quality that makes the students be able to do something, easy to understand what they do, and have intelligence well.

Reading comprehension is a good way to develop and understand English. In reading comprehension, the students are not only understanding ideas, but also recognizing the relationships and structures among ideas. So, the students get the information and message from the written text that they have read. In reading comprehension, the students should have the particular purpose of their mind before they interact with the text. The students should have attention, memory, and motivation in reading text. So, the teacher should help them not only to read the text but also help them how to find the meaning or the content of text (Siregar 2018). It means the students need to learn and have the background knowledge about the text that they will read.

According to Manser in oxford learner's pocket dictionary (2008), comprehension is ability to understand. It is the ability to understand a language to get a message and information from the text. Then, reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from the text. Reading comprehension is a skill that can balance and coordinate many abilities that seem easy and enjoyable to fluent readers (Grabe and Stoller, 2002).

When writer's messages are successfully understood, reading can be a wonderfully inspiring, enjoyable and transforming experience. It means that reading comprehension is the process of getting the meaning from the text and it is enjoyable activities for fluent readers and for transforming experience if the writer messages are successfully understood.

Moreover, according to Snow (2002), reading comprehension is the process of extracting and constructing meaning involving the written language. It means that the readers construct meaning from a text being read connected to the background knowledge that they have. From the explanation above, it's concluded that reading comprehension is interaction of thought and analysis for understanding information presented in written form, transforming experience and it is enjoyable for fluent readers. Furthermore, reading comprehension is conceptualized as an interactive process requiring the dynamic combination or readers' background knowledge with the information decoded from text.

Descriptive text is a text that gives information about particular person place, or thing. Gerot states that "descriptive text is a kind of text with a purpose to give information" (Wardani, et. al., 2014) & (Siregar and Dongoran 2020). The context of this kind of text is description of thing, animal, person and others. Mukarto et. al. as cited in Etfita (2014) states that a descriptive text is used to describe something, someone, or place. In other word, descriptive text is the text with function to describe particular person, things or place with the aim to give information to the reader. Descriptive text is a kind of text that can occur as 'stand alone' text. It is often part of a longer text, such as the description of a character or setting in a story or biography (Adam, 2017). It means that descriptive text is to describe the character or setting from the text.

So, the researcher concludes that descriptive text is a kind of text in genre that gives description about things. Descriptive text describes much information about an object, where the information is about the parts, qualities, characteristics of object, or setting that is described. Descriptive text consists of generic structures that can be elaborated as follows: 1) Identification means that to identify the phenomenon that to be describe from text, 2) Description describes parts, activities and characteristic of thing, person, animal and place (Etfita, 2014).

Based on explanation above the generic structures of descriptive text are identification and description person, thing, animal and place. There are three language features of descriptive text they are: 1) Using simple present tense, 2) Using attributive and identifying process, 3) Using adjective and classifiers in nominal group (Kartawijaya, 2017). The researcher can conclude that the language features of descriptive text are using simple

present tense, using adjective, certain noun, thinking verb, action verb, and figurative language.

Today, almost all students only read but did not comprehend the content of the text. Based on interview between researcher and the students in MTs. Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidempuan, it was known that there are some problems that made students' reading comprehension was not perfect. There were 60% students can not reading well when students were asked to do reading activity.

The First, the students were seldom to do reading activity in the school moreover in the house and made them still confused to determine the main idea from the text. Whereas, to make students comprehend in reading, the students should have many times to do reading activity. When the students tried to catch the content of the text in learning process, the students were difficult to do it. It caused the students were seldom to do reading activity.

The Second, they were seldom to repeat the material at home. It is not meaningful if the students not repeat it anymore. So, the students still have low ability in reading comprehension and everything that had been learned by them will be lose and not develop.

Based on the problems above, the researcher was interested on how the reading comprehension of students when reading descriptive text. So, the researcher decided to analyze the students' reading comprehension in Descriptive Text.

## **METHOD**

The researcher used the quantitative research with descriptive method. This researcher observed one variable. Descriptive method is determiners and describes the way things are. The researcher used multiple choice test to take the data that consist of 20 items. The researcher analyzed the data with mean score. The population is the whole the students at grade VIII of MTs. Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidempuan. The researcher use total sampling to take the sample that was 30 students. The researcher used themultiple choice test as the instrument in collecting the data.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher collected the data and gave the test about reading comprehension in descriptive text. The researcher gave a test to the students, then collected the students' answer sheet and the last researcher checked the students' answer sheet and gave the score. The researcher used the formulation of Z-test to test the.

The total scores of the second year MTs.Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidempuan in reading comprehension test was 1703. It can also see that there were three students got 95 as the highest score, two students got 90, one student got 85, one student got 80, four students got 75, one student got 70, one student got 65, two students got 50, six students got 40, five students got 35, two students got 30, one student got 25, and one student got 20 score as the lowest score.

To know the quality score each of the students in reading comprehension can be seen as below:

**Table 1**  
**Quality Score of The Students' Reading Comprehension Test**

No	Students' Initial name	Total score	Quality score
1	AGM	40	Low
2	AFH	90	Very High
3	AV	40	Low
4	AG	35	Low
5	AR	35	Low
6	DMH	80	High
7	FHSD	95	Very High
8	FPRS	40	Low
9	FMH	50	Enough
10	KF	40	Low
11	LAR	35	Low
12	LN	95	Very High
13	MFP	50	Enough
14	MHAH	75	High
15	MIR	75	High
16	MYP	40	Low
17	NFD	25	Low
18	NFL	85	Very High
19	NVAH	70	High
20	NZ	75	High
21	RA	30	Low
22	ROB	65	High
23	SSS	40	Low
24	SRS	35	Low
25	SKH	90	Very High
26	UHH	75	High
27	URMH	20	Very Low
28	WMH	35	Low
29	YA	95	Very High
30	YAL	30	Low
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1703</b>	

Based on table 1, the quality of the students' scores in reading descriptive text were different. There were 1 student or 3.33% who has very low score, 14 students or 46.67% who have low score, 2 students or 6.67% who have enough, 7 students or 23.33% who have high score, and 6 students or 20% who have very high quality of score. It means that the ability at grade VIII students MTs.Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidempuan of the second year in reading descriptive text test was various.

The test score become the data that were needed for testing hypothesis is the data are tabulated as follow:

**Table 2**  
**Resume of Score in Reading Comprehension Test**

No	Statistic	Variable
1	High score	95
2	Low score	20
3	Mean score	56.76
4	Median	19.5
5	Mode	38.18

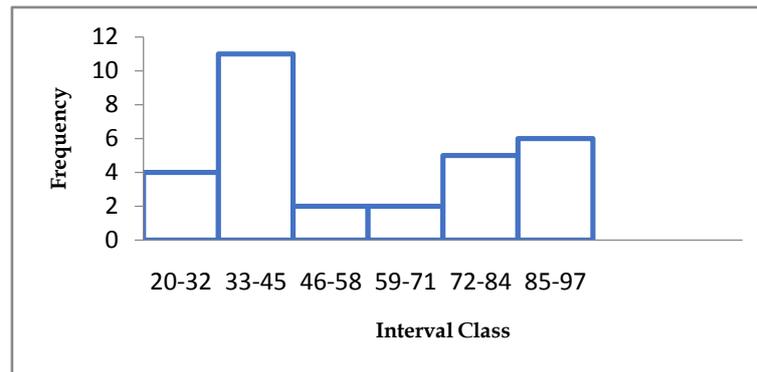
From table above, it was known that the high score for variable in reading descriptive text test had been searched from 30 students, and based on the total of sample research the highest score is 95 and low score is 20, mean score 56.76, median is 19.5 and mode is 38.18.

Based on the calculation mean score were 56.76. So, application of reading comprehension was enough. To know revelation of data done to group the variable scores in reading descriptive text which interval 13.

**Table 3**  
**Frequency Distribution in Reading Comprehension Test**

No	Interval Class	Frequency Absolute	Frequency Relative
1	20 - 32	4	13%
2	33 - 45	11	37%
3	46 - 58	2	6.75%
4	59 - 71	2	6.75 %
5	72 - 84	5	16.5%
6	85 - 97	6	20%
	<b>i = 13</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Based on table 3, it can be drawn at histogram as below:



**Figure 1: Histogram of Students' Reading Comprehension in Descriptive Text**

Based on table 3, it was known that the variable revelation of students' reading comprehension in descriptive text shown that the respondent at 20 - 32 were 4 students (13%), interval 33 - 45 were 11 students (37%), interval 46 - 58 were 2 students (6.75%), interval 59 - 71 were 2 student (6.75%), interval 72 - 84 were 5 students (16.5%), interval 85 - 97 were 6 students (20%). So, the meaning of interval in this research is showing the count of sample that got score in percentage.

The researcher found that the students' reading comprehension in descriptive text is enough ability. It can be seen from the value of mean score was 56.76 . The researcher found that the the result of Z score is lower than Z table. It can be proved from  $Z_{count} = -3.57 < Z_{table} = 0.3264$

The researcher discussed the result of this research and compared with related findings. The first is Poso Harahap. He concluded that in comprehending a text were enough categories (Harahap, 2015). The second is Sari. She concluded the students were good in comprehending English text for literal and creative level, but they are low in comprehending English text for interpretive and critical level (Sari, 2017). The third is Sekarni. She concluded that the perception of students about Narrative text, which 13.3% is easy, 86.7% is difficult (Sekarni,2017). The fourth is Nona Tari Pulungan. She concluded that students' reading comprehension can be categorized into enough categories (Pulungan, 2018). The fifth is Kartawijaya. He concluded that the students' ability in comprehending descriptive text was low (Kartawijaya, 2017). The last is Eka Sustrri Harida. She concluded that students' reading comprehension are still low (Harida, 2014).

From the result of the research that is previously stated. It was proved that the ability of students' reading comprehension was enough ability. In summary, the researcher found all the related findings support this research.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research and calculations of the data, the researcher got the conclusion that students' ability in reading comprehension in descriptive text at grade VIII of MTs. Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidempuan was categorized into enough ability. It can be seen from the value of the percentage from mean score gotten by students, that is 56.76 mean score. Then, the hypothesis is "students' reading comprehension in descriptive text at grade VIII MTs. Muhammadiyah 22 Padangsidempuan is enough ability". Then from the result of the hypothesis testing, the researcher found that the hypothesis is rejected. It can be proved from  $Z_{count} = -3.57 < Z_{table} = 0.3264$ . Thus, the result of mean score the students' ability in enough ability and actually it should be accepted hypothesis, but based on the result of that score it is rejected. So, maybe there is a mistake in instrument or in calculation.

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