The Students' Ability In Comprehending English Descriptive Text of The Eighth Grade Students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur

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ABSTRAK

Tujuan Penelitian: This research has a purpose to analyze the students' ability in comprehending English descriptive text of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur.

Metodologi: This research is classified as a descriptive research type using quantitative methods. The population of this study were students of class VIII SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur. The samples used were class 8A and class 8B, totaling 42 people. The research instrument used was a reading test to measure or analyze their ability to understand English descriptive texts. The data analysis technique used was tabulated data obtained from the reading test, calculated in the assessment classification, calculated in the percentage of data within the range of 0% - 100%, explained the results, and concluded from the research results.

Temuan Utama: The findings of this study indicate that the students' ability in understanding English descriptive texts is low.

Keterbaruan/Keaslian dari Penelitian: The novelty of this research is to analyze students' ability to understand English descriptive text.

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1. PENDAHULUAN

In learning English language, reading is one of the significant factors. By reading, it can help to improve other skills of English language and also increase the ability of vocabulary mastery as well as grammar. It is because when the students read a book, they could learn how the author writes and arranges the words by good grammar, find new words or vocabulary, find new terms in English language, and so on. Furthermore, reading activity is one of the strategies for the students to gain more information and knowledge that are not presented by the teachers in the classroom. But, in order to understand what the author wrote and derive new knowledge from a reading text, a good reading comprehension skill is a needed key and the way-out for the students.

Comprehending a text of reading is a complex process in which the students use their ability to find out the information or messages from the text. It means that the students have to be able to understand the meaning of a reading text because the ability to read is not only reading the text loudly and correctly, but also the ability to comprehend, to absorb, and get something from what they read. If students can read the words but do not understand what they are reading, they are not really reading. Hence, having a good reading skill and being able to comprehend a reading text are the very important things. Since English is a foreign language in Indonesia, there is possibility that students may get difficulties in comprehending English texts. This is probably because of faulting in identification and recognition of word, limited knowledge of vocabulary, limited comprehension

abilities or strategies, and so on. At junior high school level, there are some genres of English text that taught to the students. They are descriptive text, procedure text, narrative text, report text, and recount text. The descriptive text is one of the genres that must be mastered by students in learning English. In this research, the researcher focuses on the student's comprehension of English descriptive text.

Descriptive text is one of the text types that taught to the seventh and the eighth grade students at junior high school. It is a text which describes things, places, or person in specific descriptions. Its function is giving information about definitions and characteristics of objects to the reader. The purpose of teaching English descriptive text at junior high school is hopefully the students are capable in identifying the things, place, or person in specific or detail descriptions, and also the students can find the detail information from the text. To master this kind of text, the students should know well about its components such as social function, generic structure, and linguistic feature in order they can catch the idea that is conveyed by the text. In the aspect of reading, it is significant for the students of junior high school to have a good ability in comprehending genres of English text (descriptive, procedure, narrative, report, and recount) as ability to understand and comprehend English descriptive texts since they usually will appear in the national final examination of English subject.

This research has a purpose to analyze the students' ability in comprehending English descriptive text of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur.

2.   METODE PENELITIAN

This research was classified as the type of descriptive research by using quantitative method. Creswell, stated that quantitative methods involve the processes of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study [1]. In general, quantitative method divided into two parts, namely experimental and non-experimental. Experimental can be divided again into quasi-experiment, single subject, and so on. Whereas non-experimental is divided again into descriptive, comparative, survey, and so on. The researcher used descriptive quantitative design in this research. Descriptive quantitative design can be defined as a method that is used to analyze or describe the results based on the facts found in a research by using quantitative approach.

The population of this study was the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur. The eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur divided into two classes; that are 8A class and 8B class. There were 42 students of the eighth grade at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur, which are in class 8A consisted of 21 students of 12 males and 9 females, and class 8B also consisted of 21 students of 12 males and 9 females. Sample refers to a subset of individuals within a population. All of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur were the participants or sample of this research since the population of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur was less than 100. This sampling technique was taken based on the statement according to [2], she stated that if the number of population is less than one hundred, it is better to take the population as the subject of a research. While, if the population is more than one hundred, it is suggested to take 10-15% until 20-25% of the population as sample.

The researcher used reading test as the research instrument to measure or analyze their ability in comprehending English descriptive text. The reading test consisted of three descriptive texts with 30 questions, where each descriptive text contained of 10 questions. The researcher used some procedures in collecting the data as follows: 1. The researcher provided reading test that consisted of three English descriptive texts with 30 questions in multiple choices with four options. Each descriptive text had 10 questions. 2. The students had 50 minutes to answer the questions of reading test. 3. The students were asked to answer the questions by choosing one of the correct answers based on the descriptive texts given by the researcher.

The techniques of data analysis are the important part in a research, by using this method the researcher can conclude the result of the research. In analyzing the data, the researcher used techniques include: the data that obtained from the reading test were tabulated, counted into scoring classification, counted into percentage data in the range of 0% - 100%, explained the results, and concluded the results of the research. Firstly, the researcher analyzed the result of reading test to determine the students' ability in reading comprehension, in what classification their ability in comprehending English descriptive text. The researcher distinguished the students' ability from their correct answer in answering reading test. In scoring system, to know the classification of student's ability from the reading test, the researcher used formula:

$$\text{Student's score} = \frac{\text{The number of correct answer}}{\text{The total number of item}} \times 100$$

To obtain the information concerned with the ability of the students, this research determined a table of percentage scale and classification as follows:

Table 1. Percentage of Scale and Classification

Percentage Scale	Classifications
81 – 100	Very Good
61 – 80	Good
41 – 60	Sufficient
21 - 40	Low
< 20	Very Low

Secondly, from the initial data above, the researcher tabulated the data and counted the percentage of the data. To know the percentage of the data, the researcher used formula:

$$P = F/N \times 100\%$$

Finally, the researcher explained the percentage of the data, what he found about the students' ability in comprehending English descriptive text, and result conclusion of this research in the descriptive form.

3.   HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

Based on the criteria of scoring, the highest score is 100 and the lowest score is 20 or less. From the result of the test, the researcher found that the highest score was 57, and the lowest score was 27. The table below presents the percentage of the eighth grade students' ability at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in comprehending English descriptive text.

Table 2. The percentage of students' ability in comprehending English descriptive text

No	Scoring	Classification	Number of Students	Percentage
1	81 – 100	Very Good	0	0%
2	61 – 80	Good	0	0%
3	41 – 60	Sufficient	14	33.33%
4	21 – 40	Low	28	66.67%
5	< 20	Very Low	0	0%
	Total		42	100%

From the table above, in comprehending English descriptive text, it can be seen that there was 0% students (0 students) who got classification "very good", there was 0% students (0 students) who got classification "good", there were 33.33% students (14 students) who got classification "sufficient", there were 66.67% students (28 students) who got classification "low", and there was 0% students (0 students) who got classification "very low". In addition, 14 students (33.33%) who got classification "sufficient" achieved score 43, 47, 50, 53, and 57. They consisted of four students got score 43, two students got score 47, two students got score 50, three students got score 53, and three students got score 57. Furthermore, 28 students (66.67%) who got classification "low" achieved score 27, 30, 33, 37, and 40. They consisted of three students got score 27, five students got score 30, six students got score 33, seven students got score 37, and seven students got score 40. From the result of data analysis above, it showed that the ability of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in comprehending English descriptive text was categorized as "low" category. It was proved by the finding that 66.67% of the students (28 students) got classification "low" in the test, in which they just achieved score ranged from 27 to 40.

Based on the criteria of scoring, the highest score is 100 and the lowest score is 20 or less. From the result of the test, the researcher found that the highest score was 100, and the lowest score was 33. The table below presents the percentage of the eighth grade students' ability at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in identifying topic and social function of English descriptive text.

Table 3. The percentage of students' ability in identifying topic and social function of English descriptive text

No	Scoring	Classification	Number of Students	Percentage
1	81 – 100	Very Good	5	11.90%
2	61 – 80	Good	20	47.62%
3	41 – 60	Sufficient	6	14.29%
4	21 – 40	Low	11	26.19%
5	< 20	Very Low	0	0%
	Total		42	100%

From the table above, in identifying topic and social function of English descriptive text, it can be seen that there were 11.90% students (5 students) who got classification "very good", there were 47.62% (20 students) who got classification "good", there were 14.29% students (6 students) who got classification "sufficient, there were 26.19% students (11 students) who got classification "low", and there was 0% students (0 students) who got classification "very low".

In addition, 5 students (11.90%) who got classification "very good" achieved score 83 and 100. They consisted of two students got score 83, and three students got score 100. Furthermore, 20 students (47.62%) who got classification "good" achieved score 67, 6 students (14.29%) who got classification "sufficient" achieved score 50, and 11 students (26.19%) who got classification "low" achieved score 33. (The students' score, see Appendix 2.)

The data analysis above showed that the ability of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in identifying topic and social function of English descriptive text was categorized as "good" category. It was proved by the finding that 47.62% of the students (20 students) got classification "good" in the test, in which they achieved score 67.

Based on the criteria of scoring, the highest score is 100 and the lowest score is 20 or less. From the result of the test, the researcher found that the highest score was 58, and the lowest score was 17. The table below presents the percentage of the eighth grade students' ability at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in identifying detail and factual information of English descriptive text.

Table 4. The percentage of students' ability in identifying detail and factual information of English descriptive text

No	Scoring	Classification	Number of Students	Percentage
1	81 – 100	Very Good	0	0%
2	61 – 80	Good	0	0%
3	41 – 60	Sufficient	16	38.10%
4	21 – 40	Low	21	50%
5	< 20	Very Low	5	11.90%
	Total		42	100%

From the table above, in identifying detail and factual information of English descriptive text, it can be seen that there were 0% students (0 students) who got classification "very good", there were 0% students (0 students) who got classification "good", there were 38.10% students (16 students) who got classification "sufficient", there were 50% students (21 students) who got classification "low", and there were 11.90% students (5 students) who got classification "very low". In addition, 16 students (38.10%) who got classification "sufficient" achieved score 42, 50, and 58. They consisted of two students got score 42, twelve students got score 50, and two students got score 58. Furthermore, 21 students (50%) who got classification "low" achieved score 25 and 33. They consisted of four students got score 25, and seventeen students got score 33. The last, 5 students (11.90%) who got classification "very low" achieved score 17.

The data analysis above showed that the ability of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in identifying detail and factual information of English descriptive text was categorized as "low" category. It was proved by the finding that 50% of the students (21 students) got classification "low" in the test, in which they just achieved score 25 and 33. Based on the criteria of scoring, the highest score is 100 and the lowest score is 20 or less. From the result of the test , the researcher found that the highest score was 67, and the lowest score was 0. The table below presents the percentage of the eighth grade students' ability at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in checking the reference words of English descriptive text.

Table 5. The percentage of students' ability in checking the reference words of English descriptive text

No	Scoring	Classification	Number of Students	Percentage
1	81 – 100	Very Good	0	0%
2	61 – 80	Good	3	7.14%
3	41 – 60	Sufficient	9	21.43%
4	21 – 40	Low	14	33.33%
5	< 20	Very Low	16	38.10%
	Total		42	100%

From the table above, in checking the reference words of English descriptive text, it can be seen that there were 0% students (0 students) who got classification "very good", there were 7.14% students (3 students) who got classification "good", there were 21.43% students (9 students) who got classification "sufficient", there were 33.33% students (14 students) who got classification "low", and there were 38.10% students (16 students) who got classification "very low". In addition, 3 students (7.14%) who got classification "good"

achieved score 67, 9 students (21.43%) who got classification "sufficient" achieved score 50, and 14 students (33.33%) who got classification "low" achieved score 33. Furthermore, 16 students (38.10%) who got classification "very low" achieved score 0 and 17. They consisted of seven students got score 0, and nine students got score 17.

The data analysis above showed that the ability of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in checking the reference words of English descriptive text was categorized as "very low" category. It was proved by the finding that 38.10% of the students (16 students) got classification "very low" in the test, in which they just achieved scores 0 and 17. Based on the criteria of scoring, the highest score is 100 and the lowest score is 20 or less. From the result of the test , the researcher found that the highest score was 83, and the lowest score was 0. The table below presents the percentage of the eighth grade students' ability at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in checking vocabulary items of English descriptive text.

Table 6. The percentage of students' ability in checking vocabulary items of English descriptive text

No	Scoring	Classification	Number of Students	Percentage
1	81 – 100	Very Good	1	2.38%
2	61 – 80	Good	6	14.29%
3	41 – 60	Sufficient	8	19.05%
4	21 – 40	Low	15	35.71%
5	< 20	Very Low	12	28.57%
	Total		42	100%

From the table above, in checking vocabulary items of English descriptive text, it can be seen that there was only 2.38% students (1 student) who got classification "very good", there were 14.29% students (6 students) who got classification "good", there were 19.05% students (8 students) who got classification "sufficient", there were 35.71% students (15 students) who got classification "low", and there were 28.57% students (12 students) who got classification "very low". In addition, 1 students (2.38%) who got classification "very good" achieved score 83, 6 students (14.29%) who got classification "good" achieved score 67, and 8 students (19.05%) who got classification "sufficient" achieved score 50. Furthermore, 15 students (35.71%) who got classification "low" achieved score 33. The last, 12 students (28.57%) who got classification "very low" achieved score 0 and 17. They consisted of four students got score 0, and eight students got score 17.

The data analysis above showed that the ability of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in checking vocabulary items of English descriptive text was categorized as "low" category. It was proved by the finding that 35.71% of the students (15 students) got classification "low" in the test, in which they just achieved score 33. This part presents the discussion and review based on the findings of the research. It concerns about the students' ability in comprehending English descriptive text and some points that related with comprehension; identifying topic and social function, identifying detail and factual information, checking the reference words, and checking vocabulary items. An understanding of a reading text can be measured by whether or not the students are able to answer the questions related to it, and the ability can be seen from the correct answer they did while working on the test [3], [4]. Therefore, the ability in understanding a reading text can be seen from the high number of percentage of participants who answered correctly the questions of the test.

The result of data analysis revealed that there were 28 students (66.67%) who just achieved ranging score 27 – 40 in the test of comprehending English descriptive text. Overall, they only got 8 – 12 correct answer of 30 questions. There was no single student (0%) who got very good and good score/ability. There were only 14 students (33.33%) who got sufficient score/ability that achieved score 43 - 57. It means that majority of the eighth grade students at SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur had "low ability" and still have difficulties in comprehending English descriptive text. It might because they were lack of vocabulary knowledge, or limited knowledge of English descriptive text.

Furthermore, the researcher found that the eighth grade student of SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur had "good ability" in identifying topic and social function of English descriptive text. There were 20 students (47.62%) who achieved score 67 in this point. Overall, they got 4 correct answer of 6 questions. It means that they had "good ability" and have no difficulties in identifying topic and social function of English descriptive text. It might because they had good strategy in reading, like skimming. Skimming helps students to summarize general sense of a reading text [5]-[7].

In addition, based on the findings of the test, the researcher found that the eighth grade students of SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung timur had "low ability" and "very low ability" in three points of comprehension of English descriptive text. They are identifying detail and factual information, checking the reference words, and checking vocabulary items.

The findings of the test revealed that there were 21 students (50%) who just achieved score 25 and 33 in identifying detail and factual information of English descriptive text. Overall, they only got 3 – 4 correct answer of 12 questions. There were no students (0%) who got classification very good and good score/ability in

this point. It means that they had "low ability" and still have difficulties in identifying detail and factual information of English descriptive text.

In checking the reference words of English descriptive text, the researcher found that there were 16 students (38.10%) who just achieved score 0 and 17. Overall, they only got 0 – 1 correct answer of 6 questions. There were only 3 students (7.14%) who got good score/ability. It means that they had "very low ability" and still have difficulties in checking the reference words of English descriptive text.

The last, the researcher found that there were 15 students (35.71%) who just achieved score 33 in checking vocabulary items of English descriptive text. Overall, they only got 2 correct answer of 6 questions. It means that they had "low ability" and still have difficulties in checking vocabulary items of English descriptive text. An English reading text is difficult to understand because it contains many words that are unknown or unfamiliar to the students [8]. Therefore, sometimes the students experienced difficulties in identifying detail and information, reference words, or vocabulary items in the text.

4. KESIMPULAN

Based on the research findings that have been discussed in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the ability of class VIII students of SMPN 28 Tanjung Jabung Timur in understanding English descriptive texts is low. This is supported by the presence of 66.67% of students who have low ability on the test.

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