A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMP MUHAMMADIYAH 1 PEKANBARU IN COMPREHENDING DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS

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Abstract : *This descriptive research was aimed to find out the ability of the second year students of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Pekanbaru in comprehending descriptive texts. The research data were collected on March 2017. The subjects of this research were class VIII 2 consisted of 30 students. The data were collected by administering a test to the students in the form of multiple choice test. The framework of the test covered with six kinds of descriptive text and each text has five question items. The test contained 30 items. Based on the data analysis, it was found out that the highest score obtained by the students was in finding factual information with the mean score of 87.5 categorized into good to excellent level, and the lowest score was in finding inference with the mean score of 68 categorized into average to good level. As a conclusion, the ability of the second year students of comprehending descriptive texts was in the average to good level with the mean score of 77.4. The implication of the finding is that the students should increase their comprehension in order to reach excellent level.*

Keywords: *Students' ability, Descriptive texts*

SEBUAH PENELITIAN MENGENAI KEMAMPUAN SISWA KELAS 8 SMP MUHAMMADIYAH 1 PEKANBARU DALAM MEMAHAMI TEKS DESKRIPTIF

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Abstrak: Penelitian deskriptif ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kemampuan siswa kelas delapan SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Pekanbaru dalam memahami teks deskriptif. Data penelitian dikumpulkan di bulan Maret 2017. Subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas VIII 2 yang terdiri dari 30 siswa. Data dikumpulkan dengan memberikan test kepada siswa dalam bentuk pilihan ganda. Test tersebut terdiri dari 30 soal. Hasil dari penelitian yang diperoleh adalah nilai tertinggi diperoleh siswa dalam memahami informasi faktual berada pada level baik hingga sangat baik. Sedangkan nilai terendah diperoleh siswa dalam memahami kesimpulan berada pada level sedang hingga baik dengan nilai rata-rata 68. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa kemampuan siswa dalam memahami teks deskriptif berada pada level sedang hingga baik dengan nilai rata-rata 77.4. Implikasi dari hasil menunjukkan bahwa siswa harus meningkatkan pemahaman mereka agar mencapai level unggul.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan Siswa, Teks Deskriptif

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the important basic skills in English and the students should learn. However, reading is one of the main skills that students need to be mastered at junior and senior high school. According to Nunan (1999), to obtain information for some purposes or use curious about some topics, students who learn English as foreign language have to enlarge their knowledge through reading many English materials. Burnes and Page (1991) state that reading is an interactive process; a process in which the readers engage in exchange of ideas with an author via the texts. It is accepted that reading is the way to communicate between writers and readers. In this case, students are expected not only to understand the explicit information, but also the implied meaning existed in the text. Based on the 2013 Curriculum (K13), the students must learn about text types such as; descriptive text, narrative text, and recount text. In learning descriptive text, the students are expected able to identify the topic of the text, the content and the generic structure of the text.

Hornby (1974) points out that comprehension is an exercise aimed at improving or testing one's understandings of a language whether in written or spoken form. Beside that, comprehension has the same meaning as understanding. It can be explained that comprehension is the ability to understand meaning in a text and also the writer's idea. Reader should have more concentration in reading activity in order to get better understanding. It is not guarantee that when readers have known the meaning of the words, they can comprehend the text. Harmer (1998) states that reading comprehension is very important for students because in fact the textsbook for most science and technologies are written in English. This means that learners are expected to be able to understand English textbook that they are reading. In this case, reading ability is needed by learners of English language.

Based on the interview with English teacher in SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Pekanbaru, the students' scores in exam about this texts are more than 50% students achieve the minimum passing rate (KKM) that is 80. On the other hand, the result of the interview with a few students, so many students state that the descriptive text is hard for them. From the scores, it's known that some of the students do not comprehend the descriptive text well, but the level of students' ability in comprehending descriptive text has not been identified. This fact indicate that most of the students should pay attention to ways of comprehending the text well, because the learners will take the reading in the final examination.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research was a descriptive research that is used to describe the data in order to get a generalization or a conclusion of the population. Kane (2000) states that descriptive research involves collecting the data, testing hypothesis or to answering questions concerning with the current status of the data.

The population of this research were the second year students of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Pekanbaru in academic year 2016 - 2017. The numbers of the population were 200 students from six classes.

Due to a big number of the population, the sample should be taken. The number of the population were not homogeneous in various factor, it is not suitable to take random sample. Therefore, cluster random sampling is suitable to determine the sample size. In this case, the over all classes are six groups of students from VIII-1 to VIII-6. Due to all classes are possible to be the sample of the population, the VIII-2 classes was selected based on the lottery way in which that classes came up

Instruments Technique and Analysis

This research used quantitative data to find the result of this research. Quantitative data is basically data measured on a numerical scale. In collecting the data, researcher used multiple choice test. The data were analyzed from the students' score. Before the test was administered to the sample class, the test will be tried out in order to determine the validity of the test. The material of the test was about present perfect tense.

To analyze the data, the followings formula was applied

a) To know the difficulty level

$$F.V = \frac{R}{N}$$

Where:
F.V = Difficulty level
R = the number of correct answer
N = the number of the students
(Adopted from Heaton, 1991)

b) To know mean score

$$M = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

Where:
M = the mean score in each topic
$\sum fx$ = The sumof the respondents' score
N = the number of the respondents
(Adopted from Heaton, 1991)

c) To know standard deviation

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2}{N-1}}$$

Where:

SD = Standard deviation

$\sum d^2$ = The total mean of the test

N = The number of the students

(Adopted Heaton, 1991)

d) To know the reliability

$$Rii = \frac{N}{n-1}\left[1 - \frac{m(N-M)}{NX^2}\right]$$

Where:

Rii = the reliability of the test

N = the number of items in the test

M = the means score on the test for all the tests

X^2 = the standard deviation of all test score

(Adopted from Heaton, 1991)

e) To know the percentage of the classification of the students' ability in answering question, the following formula could be used:

$$P = \frac{X}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = Percentage of the students per group/level

X = the number of frequency in one level

N = the number of students

(Adopted from Hatch and Farhady, 1982)

Furthermore, the level of the student's scores was classified into four levels of mastery. The classification could be seen in this following table:

Table 1: The Classification of Students' Score

No	Scores	Category
1	80-100	Good to Excellent
2	60-79	Average to Good
3	50-59	Poor to Average
4	0-49	Poor

(Adopted from Harris, 1974)

RESEARCH FINDING

The result of this research was presented by showing the percentage of the students' scores and the classification scores of the students' ability in comprehending descriptive texts. The data were analyzed based on students' score in terms of five components. They were finding main idea, finding factual information, finding meaning of vocabulary, finding reference and finding inference.

Percentage of the students' scores

No	Score Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Ability	Mean score
1	80 - 100	14	46.7	Good to Excellent	77.4
2	60 - 79	16	53.3	Average to Good	
3	50 - 59	0	0	Poor to Average	
4	0 - 49	0	0	Poor	
	Total	30	100 %		

The above table shows that mean score of students' ability in comprehending descriptive texts is 77.4. There are 14 students (46,7 %) are in *good to excellent* level, 16 students (53.3%) are in *average to good* level, and 0 students (0%) are in *poor to average* level and *poor* level. It can be concluded that the students ability in comprehending descriptive texts is in average to good level.

The students' ability in terms of finding main idea

No	Range score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean score
1	80-100	17	56.7%	Good to Excellent	78.4
2	60-79	13	43.3%	Average to Good	
3	50-59	0	0%	Poor to Average	
4	0-49	0	0%	Poor	
	Total	30	100%		

As seem from the above table, it indicates that in finding main idea, 17 students (56.7%) are in *good to excellent* level, 13 students (43.3%) in *average to good* level, and 0 students (0%) are in *poor to good level* and *poor* level. It can be stated that the students' ability in term of finding main idea is in *average to good* level with mean the score of 78.4

The students' ability in terms of finding factual information

No	Range score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean score
1	80-100	25	83.3%	Good to Excellent	
2	60-79	5	16.7%	Average to Good	
3	50-59	0	0%	Poor to Average	87.5
4	0-49	0	0%	Poor	
	Total	30	100%		

As shown in the above table describes that 25 students (83.3%) are in *good to excellent* level, 5 students (16.7%) are in *average to good* level, 0 students (0%) are in *poor to average* level and *poor* level. It can be stated that the students' ability in term of finding factual information is in *good to excellent* level with the mean score of 87.5.

The students' ability in terms of finding meaning of vocabulary

No	Range score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean score
1	80-100	18	60%	Good to Excellent	
2	60-79	9	30%	Average to Good	
3	50-59	3	10%	Poor to Average	79
4	0-49	0	0%	Poor	
	Total	30	100%		

The table shows that 18 students (60%) are in *good to excellent* level, 9 students (30%) are in *average to* good level, 3 students (10%) are in *poor to average* level, 0 students (0%) is in *poor* level. It can be concluded that the students' ability in term of finding meaning of vocabulary is in *average to good* level with the mean score of 79.

The students' ability in terms of finding reference

No	Range score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean score
1	80-100	14	46.7%	Good to Excellent	
2	60-79	12	40%	Average to Good	
3	50-59	4	13.3%	Poor to Average	
4	0-49	0	0%	Poor	74
	Total	30	100%		

As seem from the above table, it describes that 14 students (46.7%) are in *good to excellent* level, 12 students (40%) are in *average to good* level, 4 students (13.3%) are in *poor to average* level, and 0 students (0%) are in *poor* level. It can be stated that the students' ability in finding reference is in *average to good* level with the mean score of 74.

The students' ability in terms of finding inference

No	Range score	Frequency	Percentage	Ability	Mean score
1	80-100	13	43.3%	Good to Excellent	
2	60-79	10	33.3%	Average to Good	68
3	50-59	4	13.3%	Poor to Average	
4	0-49	3	10%	Poor	
	Total	30	100%		

From the above table, shows that 13 students (43.3%) are in *good to excellent* level, 10 students (33.3%) are in *average to good* level, 4 students (13.3%) are in *poor to average* level, and 3 students are in *poor* level. It can be stated that the students' ability in term of finding inference is in *average to good* level with the mean score of 68.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATION

Based on the data description above, the researcher draws a conclusion. That is the ability of the second year students of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Pekanbaru in comprehending descriptive texts was in *average to good* level with the mean score 77.4. There are 14 students (46,7 %) are in *good to excellent* level, 16 students (53.3%) are in *average to good* level, and 0 students (0%) are in *poor to average* level and *poor* level.

Concerning the conclusion, there are several recommendations that are useful for teaching and learning English. Firstly, students should learn more about descriptive text and should do much improvement to get perfect result. Secondly, English teacher should have some effort to develop the students' motivation and encourage them to practice in reading comprehension in order to make the students familiar with reading materials in terms of five indicators of reading comprehension and component of the text. The last one, it can be recommended other research to focus on other kinds of the text types or in different design of the research, for example pre-experimental research.

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