A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE STUDENTS IN COMPREHENDING RECOUNT TEXTS

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Abstract: This research was conducted to find out the students' ability in comprehending recount texts. This descriptive research design took place in SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang. The sample was 22 students from VIII2 class that were selected by using cluster random sampling. There were 40 questions in this test. The researcher used the validity and reliability formula of theory Heaton 1991 in analysis data by using manual calculation, it was found that the reliability of the test was 1.13 which means that the reliability of the test was very high. The data were analyzed by calculating the students' score individually and finding out the mean score. The students' scores were classified into four ability levels; poor, mediocre, good, and excellent. Based on the results of this research, the students' ability in comprehending recount text at second year of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang was in good level. Meanwhile, the mean score of the whole students' scores was 71.9. It was found that the highest mean score is in finding social function and finding generic structure with the mean score 75.4. The lowest aspect in comprehending recount text was in making inferences with the mean score was 65.45.

Key Words: Students' Ability, Comprehending Recount Text

SEBUAH ANALISA TERHADAP KEMAMPUAN SISWA DALAM MEMAHAMI TEKS RECOUNT

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui kemampuan siswa dalam memahami teks recount. Penelitian deskriptif ini bertempat di SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang. Pesertanya terdiri dari 22 siswa dari kelas VIII2 yang dipilih secara acak. Terdapat 40 soal yang digunakan dalam tes tersebut. Peneliti menggunakan rumus validitas dan reliabilitas teori Heaton 1991 dalam menganalisis data dengan menggunakan perhitungan manual, didapatkan reliabilitas tes sebesar 1,13 yang berarti reliabilitas tes sangat tinggi. Data dianalisa dengan mengkalkulasikan nilai siswa secara individual dan menentukan nilai rata-rata. Nilai siswa dikelompokkan menjadi empat level kemampuan: lemah, rata-rata, bagus, dan unggul. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, kemampuan siswa dalam memahami teks recount di tahun kedua dari SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang berada di level bagus. Sementara itu, nilai skor dari keseluruhan nilai siswa adalah 71.9. Ditemukan bahwa skor rata-rata tertinggi adalah dalam menemukan fungsi sosial dan menemukan struktur generik dengan skor rata-rata 75.4. Aspek terendah dalam memahami teks recount adalah dalam membuat kesimpulan dengan nilai rata-rata 65.45.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan Siswa, Memahami Teks Recount

INTRODUCTION

Reading is likewise a skill that teachers simply expect learners to acquire (Brown, 2004). By reading, the readers can increase their understanding about the text or what they have read, enrich their vocabularies and knowledge. Reading is a language skill that is important to be taught to the students because it helps them to understand and to analyze all written text. The students are also expected to be able to use it in their daily lives.

Harmer(2007) states that reading is useful for language acquisition, provided that students more or less understand what they read, the more they read, the better they get it all. The aim of teaching reading is to make students expected to read effectively and efficient. It means that they really understand the content. Students do not only have to know about the structure of the texts, but also comprehend the meaning of what they have read.

According to Harmer (1998), reading comprehension is very important for students because in fact the textbook 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 skill is needed by learners of the English language. However, comprehending the reading text is not easy to learn, because English is still our foreign language and students should not have fully understanding of the text. There are some language components to be mastered by the learner, such as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.

According to the 2013 curriculum, the government set up a lot of expectations from the students after learning English students must be able to analyze social function, text structure, and language features in recount text related to the simple experience and events according to its context. The ideal reading comprehension ability that should be achieved by the students especially in the second year to comprehend recount text is they need to comprehend the purpose, structure and linguistics component of recount text, in both spoken and written text.The goal of teaching reading at Junior High School based on the 2013 curriculum is to develop student's communicative competence in written form to achieve functional literacy standard.

Based on the researchers' interview with English teacher and the students at SMPN 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang especially for the eighth grade students, it was found that most of the students faced some problems in comprehending recount text. The students are not able to identify the main idea of recount text, finding factual information, vocabulary, and identifying the generic structure of the text. Most of them confessed that they often found that it is hard to complete the reading test in comprehension section because they have limited vocabulary knowledge and can't understand the text well. The problem can be seen from their score in their daily test. The average score of their exercise was 55 for reading comprehension of recount text. It is categorized as low score because it was below the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) which is required (65) as the English standard score at the school. Their competence in reading comprehension was still far from the expectation of the curriculum. It was not qualified from the criteria minimum of students' passing grade. In SMP Negeri 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang, the teacher uses Nominal range for the criteria of passing grade to determine whether the students can pass the English subject or not. The criteria minimum of passing grade (KKM) for the English subject in this school is (65).

King and Stanley (1989) state that there are five components that may help the students to read carefully: First is finding factual information. Finding factual information requires readers to scan specific details. The factual information questions generally appear with WH question word. Second is finding the main idea. Finding the Ideas was very important because it not only helps to understand the paragraph, but also helps to remember the content later. Third is the meaning of difficult words. It means that the readers could develop his/her guessing ability to the word which is not familiar with him or her, by relating the close meaning of unfamiliar words to the text. Forth is identifying references. It would be boring to have and repeat some word or phrase in every paragraph of a text. To avoid repetition word, it can be used as references of the word. Reference words are very frequently in terms of pronouns such as; it, she, he, this, etc. Fifth is finding restatement. Restatement is the way to say something again in a different way but still has the same meaning. It is intended to measure readers' ability in analyzing the relationship of ideas within a single sentence.

Based on the backgrounds above, it is clear that reading is essential to be learned by the students. In this case, the researcher wants to find out about the real condition of the student's ability level in comprehending English Text. Based on the reasons above the purpose of this research was to find out how the ability of the students in comprehending recount text. Thus, this research is entitled "A Study On the Ability of the Students in Comprehending Recount Texts". The formulation of this research is to find out how the ability of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang in comprehending recount texts. The specific objective of this research was to find out the ability of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang in comprehending recount texts.

METHODOLOGY

This research used a descriptive research design. According to Gay (2009), descriptive research is a research that determines and describes the way things are; involving collecting numerical data to test hypothesis or answer question about the current subject of the study. It described what exists and may help to uncover new facts or meaning. This type is used to describe the data being studied. Therefore, the aim of this research is to find out how the ability of the students in comprehending recount texts.

The population was 67 second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang. The researcher chose the sample for try out for this research was 22 students (VIII3) and the sample for the research was 22 students (VIII2). In choosing the sample class, the researcher used cluster random sampling technique. To collect the data the researcher used multiple-choice tests. The total number of test items was 40 questions provided with four choices for each question. The test consisted of 8 short recount texts. Each text had 5 questions. The time allocated for doing the test was 60 minutes. The test is constructed by referring to the components of reading comprehension in recount texts, such as main ideas, finding factual information, guessing vocabulary words, references, inferences, generic structure, language features, and social functions. The test was tried out to students from VIII3 as a try out class. The researcher calculated the difficulty level, discrimination index, mean score, standard deviation, and reliability of the result of the try out test. From the calculation, it can be seen that the reliability of the test is

1.13 which means the test is reliable. Then, the real test was given to a sample class. The data were analyzed by calculating the students' score individually and found out the mean score. The students' scores were classified into four ability levels: poor, average, good, excellent (Harris, 1974).

Table 1. Classification of Students' Scores

Test Score	Level of Ability
85.00 – 100	Excellent
69.00 – 84.99	Good
55.00 – 68.99	Mediocre
00.00 – 54.99	Poor

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The specific Objective of this research is to find out the ability of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang in comprehending recount texts. The researcher classified the questions in some components that help students in comprehending recount text. There are finding the main idea, finding factual information, guessing vocabulary words, finding references, finding inferences, finding social function, finding generic structure, and finding language features of the text. The data was collected by using multiple choice tests. Before the researcher distributed the test to the sample class (VIII2), the test tried out to some population that had been chosen as the try out class (VIII3). The validity and reliability was known by doing this test. According to Arikunto (2006) The test is accepted if the difficulty level is between 0.30-0.70 and they will be rejected if the index of the difficulty is below 0.00-0.30 (too difficult) and 0.70-10.0 (too easy). From the try out test, there were 5 items that were rejected. The writer revised them. The test is reliable to give to sample class. The data from the sample class analyzed and categorized into eight components. It is also classified into four levels of mastery.

Table 2. Percentage of Students' Ability in Comprehending Recount Text

No.	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1.	85.00 – 100	2	9	Excellent	
2.	69.00 – 84.99	10	45	Good	71.45
3.	55.00 – 68.99	8	27	Mediocre	
4.	00.00 – 54.99	2	9	Poor	
Total		22	100		

The result shows that 2 students (9%) are in *excellent* level, 10 Students (45%) are in *good* level, 6 students (27%) are in *mediocre* level, and 2 students (9%) are in *poor* level. In short, the mean score of the students in comprehending the texts is 71.45. It can be stated that the reading ability of the second year students of SMPN 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang is in *good* level.

Table 3. Percentage of the Students Ability in Finding Main Idea

No.	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1.	85.00 – 100	6	27	Excellent	
2.	69.00 – 84.99	7	31	Good	72.72
3.	55.00 – 68.99	5	22	Mediocre	
4.	00.00 – 54.99	4	18	Poor	
Total		22	100		

For finding main idea, 6 students (27%) are in *excellent* level, there are 7 students (31%) in *good* level, 5 students (22%) are in *mediocre* level, and 4 students (15%) are in *poor* level. It was found that the students' mean score in finding the main idea is 72.72. It can be concluded that the ability of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang is in *good* level.

Table 4. Percentage of the Students Ability in Finding Factual Information

No.	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1.	85.00 – 100	3	13	Excellent	
2.	69.00 – 84.99	9	40	Good	71.81
3.	55.00 – 68.99	7	31	Mediocre	
4.	00.00 – 54.99	3	13	Poor	
Total		22	100		

The table shows the students' ability in finding factual information, 3 students (13%) are in *excellent* level, there are 9 students (40%) in *good* level, 7 students (31%) are in *mediocre* level, and 3 students (13%) are in *poor* level. The result shows that the students' mean Score in finding factual information is 71.81. It means that the ability of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang in finding factual information is in *good* level.

Table 5. Percentage of the Students Ability in Guessing Vocabulary Words

No.	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1.	85.00 – 100	7	31	Excellent	
2.	69.00 – 84.99	6	27	Good	72.72
3.	55.00 – 68.99	3	13	Mediocre	
4.	00.00 – 54.99	6	27	Poor	
Total		22	100		

For guessing vocabulary words, there are 7 students (31%) in *excellent* level, 6 students (27%) are in *good* level, there are 3 students (13%) in *mediocre* level, and 6 students (27%) are in *poor* level. This result shows that the students' mean Score in guessing vocabulary words is 72.72. It can be concluded that the students' ability in guessing vocabulary words is in *good* level.

Table 6. Percentage of the Students Ability in Finding References

No.	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1.	85.00 – 100	6	27	Excellent	
2.	69.00 – 84.99	6	27	Good	74.54
3.	55.00 – 68.99	8	36	Mediocre	
4.	00.00 – 54.99	2	9	Poor	
Total		22	100		

The table shows the students' ability in finding references, 6 students (27%) are in *excellent* level, there are 6 students (27%) in *good* level, 8 students (36%) are in *mediocre* level, and there are 2 students (9%) in *poor* level. It was found that the students' mean Score in finding references is 74.54. It can be concluded that the students' ability in finding references is in *good* level.

Table 7. Percentage of the Students' Ability in Finding inferences

No.	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1.	85.00 – 100	2	9	Excellent	
2.	69.00 – 84.99	6	27	Good	
3.	55.00 – 68.99	11	50	Mediocre	65.45
4.	00.00 – 54.99	3	13	Poor	
Total		22	100		

For finding inferences, there are 2 students (9%) in *excellent* level, there are 6 students (27%) in *good* level, 11 students (50%) are in *mediocre* level, and 3 students (13%) are in *poor* level. It was found that the students' means score in finding inferences is 65.45. It can be concluded that the students' ability in finding inferences is in *mediocre* level. Then the students' who are in mediocre and *poor* level need to improve their score by reading more text from other resources to understand what they are read.

Table 8. Percentage of the Students' Ability in Finding social Function

No.	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1.	85.00 – 100	8	36	Excellent	
2.	69.00 – 84.99	7	31	Good	75.45
3.	55.00 – 68.99	3	13	Mediocre	
4.	00.00 – 54.99	4	18	Poor	
Total		22	100		

The table shows the students' ability in finding social function, 8 students (36%) are in *excellent* level, there are 7 students (31%) in *good* level, 3 students (13%) are in *mediocre* level, and 4 students (18%) are in *poor* level. It was found that the students' mean score in finding social functions is 75.45. It means that the students' ability in finding social function is *good*.

Table 9. Percentage of The Students' Ability in Finding Generic Structure

No.	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1.	85.00 – 100	4	18	Excellent	
2.	69.00 – 84.99	10	45	Good	75.45
3.	55.00 – 68.99	7	31	Mediocre	
4.	00.00 – 54.99	1	4	Poor	
Total		22	100		

The table shows the students' ability in finding generic structure, 4 students (18%) are in *excellent* level, there are 10 Students (45%) in *good* level, there are 7 students (31%) in *mediocre* level, and 1 student (4%) is ini *poor* level. It was found the students' mean score in finding generic structure is 75.45. It means that the students' ability in finding generic structure is in *good* level.

Table 10. Percentage of the Students' Ability in Finding Language Features

No.	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage(%)	Ability	Mean Score
1.	85.00 – 100	3	13	Excellent	
2.	69.00 – 84.99	6	27	Good	
3.	55.00 – 68.99	10	45	Mediocre	67.27
4.	00.00 – 54.99	3	13	Poor	
Total		22	100		

The table shows the students' ability in finding language features, 3 students (13%) are in *excellent* level, there are 6 Students (27%) in *good* level, there are 10 students (45%) in *mediocre* level, and 3 students (13%) is ini *poor* level. It was found that the students' mean score in finding generic structure is 67.27. It means that the students' ability in finding generic structure is in *mediocre* level.

Table 11. The Classification Students' Mean Score in each Component

No.	The Component Of Reading	Mean Score	Level of Ability
1.	Finding Main idea	72.72	Good
2.	Finding Factual Information	71.81	Good
3.	Guessing Vocabulary Words	72.72	Good
4.	Finding References	74.54	Good
5.	Finding Inferences	65.45	Mediocre
6.	Finding Social Function	75.45	Good
7.	Identifying Generic Structure	75.45	Good
8.	Identifying Language features	67.27	Mediocre
	Mean Score of the whole Test	71.92	Good

The table shows that from 8 components of reading, the mean score of finding main idea (72.72) is classified into *good*, the mean score of finding factual information (71.81) is classified into *good*, the mean score of guessing vocabulary words (72.72) is classified into *good*, the mean score of finding references (74.54) is classified into *good*, the mean score of finding inferences (65.45) is classified into *mediocre*, the mean score of finding social function (75.45) is classified into *good*, the mean score of identifying generic structure (75.45) is classified into *good*, and the mean score of identifying language features (67.27) classified into *mediocre* level. From the table above it can be inferred that the students' ability in comprehending recount text of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang is in *good* level.

Discussion

This research was conducted to find out the ability of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang in comprehending recount texts. As it has been discussed in the previous chapter, the researcher conducted a try out test at VIII3 class to make sure the instrument was valid or invalid. After that, the researcher took one class as a sample at VIII2 class. After calculating and analyzing the data, the researcher found out that the students' ability of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang in comprehending recount texts is in *good* level. Because the mean score of the students which are 71.9.

Based on the score of each component of comprehending recount texts, most of the students' scores are *good* level. There are six components are in *good* levels. It means that students are able to understand every component that exists, even though there are two components the students got mediocre level, they got difficult to answer it. The mean score of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang in comprehending recount texts is 71.9. Based on the Minimum Standard Criteria (KKM) which is 65 in this case some students can't gain it, some of students are still below Minimum Standard Criteria (KKM). So, the students should learn more about reading comprehension especially in Recount text. Besides, the teacher should give longer time to the students to make sure they will be getting more understanding about recount text.

The data shows that the lowest aspect in comprehending recount text is in making inferences with the mean score is 65.45 and finding language features of the text with the mean score is 67.27. It can be concluded that some students still faced the difficulty to understanding the text in making inferences and confused to identifying language features. Meanwhile, the easiest aspects of comprehending recount text is finding social function and finding generic structure of the text with the mean score 75.45.

Considering the problems,the students who achieved the lowest score in making inferences and identifying language features of the text was caused by students' lack of vocabulary; as a result, the students only read the text without knowing the meaning of individual words they read. Their limitation of knowledge makes them confused in making inferences because they cannot understand the text well. The students only read the text but they cannot understand how to identify the language features of recount text. That is why the students' prior knowledge is essential in comprehending a reading text because it helped the students' to identify each component of the text. Therefore, the students need to concentrate and pay more attention in reading activities in order to get better understanding.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The objective of this research is to find out the ability of the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang in comprehending recount texts. Based on the scores of the students in comprehending each component of recount texts, there are six components in *good* level and two components in *mediocre* level. This study showed

that the ability of the second year students of SMPN 1 Kuantan hilir Seberang in comprehending recount texts for each aspect/components is in *good* level. But there are two components they still have low scores, for this component they get difficult to answer it. In detail, the students' ability for the six components can be concluded that students' ability is in *good* level; there are finding main idea, finding factual information, guessing vocabulary words, finding references, finding social function and finding generic structure of recount text. Meanwhile, there are two components in *mediocre* level; it is finding the inference and language feature.

The highest mean score is in finding social function and finding generic structure with the mean score 75.4. Then, the mean score in finding the main idea with the mean score is 72.7. The mean score in finding factual information of recount text is 71.8. The mean score in guessing vocabulary words 72.7. The mean score in finding reference is 74.5. All six components are included in the *good* level. For two components that are in *mediocre* level, it is finding inference with the mean score 65.4. and language features with the mean score is 67.2. Thus, as followed the research question in chapter I; how is the ability of the second year students of the SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang in comprehending recount texts? Thus, their abilities are at a *good* level, with the mean score is 71.9.

Recommendations

The researcher would like to give three recommendations that hopefully would be useful for the second year students of SMP N 1 Kuantan Hilir Seberang, the teachers, and the next researchers. First, English teachers are recommended to pay attention to students' needs and difficulties when the students are reading comprehension on recount text to make the students understand the text well and give more exercises about recount text because students still find it difficult to answer. Teachers can focus on the lowest scores that students have got, especially in finding language features to increase the students' ability level. Second, students are recommended to read more resources on the internet about recount text to understand the components of recount text, because that will help them in making conclusions in the texts. They also need to concentrate in reading activities and pay more attention to the teacher's explanation in order to get better understanding in recount text, especially in finding the inferences to increase their ability level. Third, The next researchers are recommended to carry out a research with different locations and different samples. Then, other researchers can utilize about recount texts in other language skills such as Speaking, Listening, and Writing.

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