THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY TO READ A DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT SMAN 13 PADANG IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023

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ABSTRACT

This research was designed to describe the eleventh grade students' ability in reading a descriptive at SMAN 13 Padang in the academic year 2022/2023. Stratified cluster random sampling was used and the data was collected through a reading test. The results revealed that 45% of students had low ability to read a descriptive text, with 38% having very high ability, 10% having high ability, 19% having moderate ability, and 33% having low ability. English teachers are suggested to review material about descriptive text and provide more exercises for students to practice their reading. Further research is suggested to find out the causes of students' low reading ability in descriptive text.

Keyword: *Reading Ability, Descriptive Text.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one skill that is very important in learning English. It is one of the skills that students should learn because it is beneficial to them during their studies. It enables them to acquire a lot of knowledge about the language and to understand different subject areas [1].

Reading is a way for students to acquire information through texts [2]. By reading, students can improve their vocabulary and grammar. Then, reading can help students increase their ability to listen and speak. And also, by reading they can get every message in the text. Likewise, reading is bringing meaning to and getting meaning from printed or written material [3]. 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. Reading is an important way to improve students' ability [1]. It helps the students to learn to think in English, enlarge English vocabulary, and improve their reading. It is also 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.

There are four main types of texts, namely expository, descriptive, narrative, and persuasive [4].

Descriptive text is about the description of something or someone that consists of characteristics, something special, quality and quantity of something, what a person, place, or thing looks like.

Based on the researcher's experience while doing practice teaching at SMAN 13 Padang, the students still had five reading skills problems, especially in comprehending the text. First, students' reading comprehension was still low. Second, the students had difficulty understanding the text. Third, they had a hard time understanding the generic structure of descriptive text, finding the meaning of the sentence, or just understanding the content of the text. Fourth, the students need a lot of time to understand the text. Fifth, they do not use the opportunity to read English texts either at home or while learning English. Basically, all students can read, but only some students can understand what they have read,

especially English texts, so the students assume that English is a very difficult and confusing subject because the meanings and letters are different. As a result, they are not fluent in reading English texts, resulting in a lack of understanding.

METHOD

The research belongs to descriptive research, and it is designed to describe the current situations or status of the research subject. This research belongs to descriptive research. The population of this research was the eleventh grade students at SMAN 13 Padang, consisting of 418 students, and they were distributed into eight classes. The sample was the students at XI MIPA 4 class consisting of 30 students and the students at XI IPS 2 class consisting of 28 students. The researcher used stratified cluster random sampling technique to choose the sample and the total sample was 58 students.

Before testing the sample for this study, the researcher tried out the test to 28 students in XI MIPA 6 class at SMAN 13 Padang. The researcher gave a multiple-choice test consisting of 30 questions that describe places. Five items were about the identification and twenty-five items were about the description part of a descriptive text. By giving the try out, the researcher tried to find out item difficulty and item discrimination indices.

In this research, the researcher designed an instrument with questions that had item difficulty or item facility of 0.3–0.7 and, item discrimination index above 0.2. It was included the categories of satisfactory, good, and excellent. The researcher also calculated the reliability index of the test and found that the reliability index was 0.96. Then, the test was valid in terms of the content because it covered the materials the students had learnt.

To collect the data, the researcher explained the instructions for the test and administered it to the students in 40 minutes.The researcher assigned the score 1 for correct answer and 0 for incorrect answer. Next, the researcher counted the total score gained by each student.

In analyzing the data, the researcher follows several steps. First, the researcher presented the raw scores on a table. Second, the researcher counted the converted score for each student. Third, researcher classified student's ability based on the rule used at SMAN 13 Padang. Fourth, the researcher calculated the number of students who got very high, high, moderate, and low ability. Fifth, the researcher calculated the percentage of the students who got very high, high, moderate, and low ability. Sixth, the researcher described the results of data analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on analysis result, the first finding is the students' ability to read a descriptive text that describes places. The researcher found that the lowest score of the students was 33 and the highest score was 90. It was found that 45% of the students had low ability to read a descriptive text that describes places. It was proved by the fact that 12 (21%) students had very high ability, 8 (14%) students had high ability, 12 (20%) students had moderate ability, and 26 (45%) had low ability to read a descriptive text that describes places. In order to be clear, see Chart 1 below:
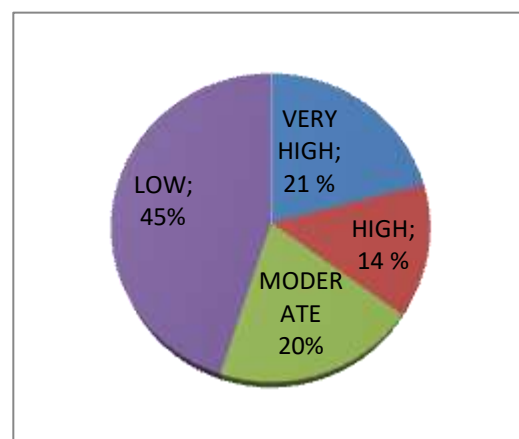
Chart 1. Students' Ability to Read a Descriptive Text that Describes Places.

It is in line with the previous study that was conducted by Asriani in 2018 who analyzed the second-grade students' ability in reading descriptive text and discovered that language features, simple present tense, and vocabulary at MTS-TI Batu Belah was low. She found that 1 (3.84%) students had excellent ability, 2 (7.69%) students had good ability, 5 (19.23%) students had fairly good, 3 (11,54%) students had weak ability, and 15 (57.70%) students had low ability. The research finding emphasizes that students had problems on the reading of the descriptive text.
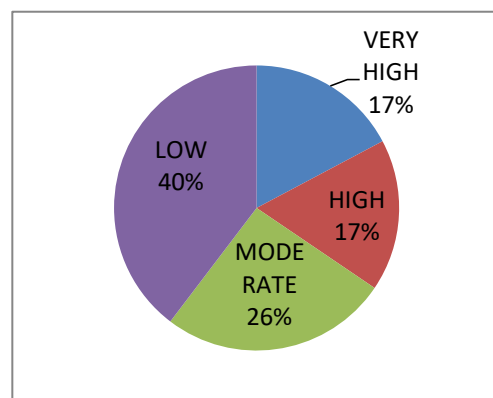
The second fnding is students' ability to read the identification of a descriptive text that describes places. The highest converted score got by a student was 100 and the lowest converted score was 0. After the researcher analyzed the students' answer, the researcher found that 22 (38%) students had very high ability, 6 (10%) students had high ability, 11 (19%) students had moderate ability, and 19 (33%) students had low ability. Based on this finding, the researcher found that the students' ability to read the identification of descriptive text that describes places was very high. It means that the students were able to read the identification items in the descriptive text. In order to be clear, see Chart 2 below:
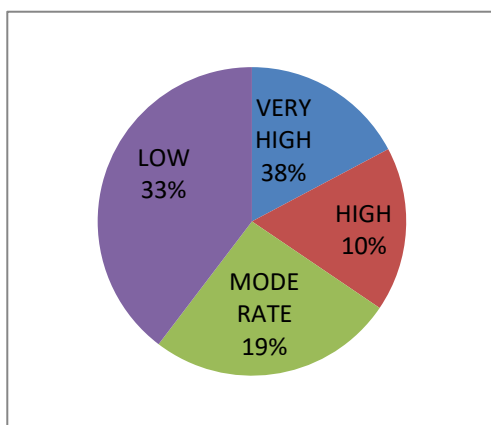
Chart 2. Percentage of the Students' Ability to Read the Identification of Descriptive Text that Describes Places.

It is in line with a previous study that was conducted by Andari (2013) entitled, "A Descriptive Study on Teaching Reading Descriptive Text to the First Year Students of SMK Negeri Pringkuku Pacitan in the Academic Year 2012/2013". Based on her research, she found the percentage to read the identification items in the descriptive text was high ability.

The third finding is that the students' ability to read the description of descriptive text that describes places was low. The very high converted score was 92, and the lowest one was 28. The researcher recognized that many students were not able to find the detailed information of the descriptive text. This finding is proven by the fact that 10 (17%) students had very high ability, 10 (17%) students had high ability, 15 (26%) students had moderate ability, and 23 (40%) students had low ability To be clearer, see Chart 3 below:

Chart 3. Percentage of the Students' Ability to Read the Description of Descriptive Text that Describes Places.

It is in line with the previous study that was conducted by Nur'aini (2019) who analyzed the eleventh grade of senior high school eleven Muaro Jambi. She found that 36 (70.6%) students had low ability, 20 (15.2%) students had very high ability, 15 (10.7 %) students had high ability and 10 (3.5%) students had

moderate ability. It can be conclude that the students had low ability in answering the question of descriptive text because they lacked of knowledge, they did not pay attention to the teacher during the learning process, and they also lacked of vocabulary, the complexity of the text, anxienty during reading comprehension, and interest or motivation of the students.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher recognized that many students were not able to find the detail information of the descriptive text.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion on the research findings, the students in the eleventh grade at SMAN 13 Padang had a low ability to read descriptive texts that describe places. It is proved by the data that 45% of students had low ability. Specially, the students' ability to read the identification part of a descriptive text was very high because the majority of students could answer the items about the identification part of a descriptive text. Morever, the students' ability to read the description part of a descriptive text was low because the majority of students could not answer the items about the description part of a descriptive text.

Related to the study result, the researcher would like to give several suggestions to English teacher, students and futher researchers. The English teachers are suggested to review material about descriptive text and provide more exercises for the students to practice their reading of descriptive texts. The students are suggested to join the reading class seriously and pay attention to the teacher's explanations about descriptive texts. It is also suggested that further researchers find out the causes of students' low ability to read a descriptive text.

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