

# AN ANALYSIS OF THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY TO COMPREHEND DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT SMAN 17 PADANG

Nindi Rahma Putri<sup>1</sup>, Drs. Khairul, M.Sc<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Departement English Education, FKIP, Universitas Bung Hatta<sup>2</sup>

Email : [nindirahmaputri16@gmail.com](mailto:nindirahmaputri16@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

*Reading comprehension is an essential skill in learning English as a foreign language. Students are required to understand various types of texts, including descriptive texts, in order to obtain information and knowledge. However, many students still got difficulties in comprehending English texts. Therefore, this research is aimed to analyze the tenth grade students' ability to comprehend descriptive texts at SMAN 17 Padang. This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design. The population consisted of 147 tenth-grade students, and the sample was selected using cluster random sampling, and the selected class as sample was F4 consisting of 33 students. The data were collected using multiple-choice reading comprehension test, and it consists of 22 items related to the generic structure of descriptive texts: identification and description test. Then, they were analyzed using percentage and score classification based on the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM = 79). The findings revealed that the students' ability in comprehending descriptive text was categorized as high. All students (100%) achieved high ability in comprehending both identification and description of descriptive text. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the tenth-grade students at SMAN 17 Padang have a high ability in comprehending descriptive texts. It is suggested that teachers continue to provide reading practice and motivation to maintain and improve students' reading comprehension ability.*

**Keywords :** *reading comprehension, descriptive text, identification, description*

## Introduction

Reading is one of the most important language skills in learning English. Through reading, students can obtain information, develop knowledge, and improve their language proficiency.

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand and interpret the meaning of written texts. It enables students to identify main ideas, recognize supporting details, and understand the message conveyed in a text.

According to Grabe and Stoller (2002), reading serves several purposes such as searching for information, learning from texts, integrating information, and general comprehension. In addition, reading comprehension allows students to access updated information and knowledge relevant to current developments (Kusumadewi & Candra, 2023). In the context of English learning in Indonesian schools, students are required to understand various text types such as narrative, recount, report, and descriptive texts. Descriptive text is one of the important text types taught in senior high school. It aims to describe a particular person, place, object, or phenomenon so that readers can clearly imagine the object being described.

Descriptive texts generally consist of two main generic structures: identification and description. Identification introduces the object being described, while description provides detailed information about the characteristics or qualities of the object. Understanding these components is essential for students to comprehend descriptive texts effectively. Several studies have highlighted the importance of reading strategies such as predicting, skimming, scanning, and summarizing to improve reading comprehension (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). These strategies help students process information efficiently and understand the meaning of the text more effectively. Despite the importance of reading comprehension, some students still experience difficulties in understanding English texts. Therefore, it is important to analyze students' reading comprehension ability, particularly in descriptive texts. Based on this consideration, the researcher conducted a study entitled "An

Analysis of the Tenth Grade Students' Ability to Comprehend Descriptive Text at SMAN 17 Padang." The purpose of this research is to analyze the students' ability in comprehending descriptive texts, particularly in understanding the identification and description components.

### **Method**

This research employed a descriptive quantitative research design to analyze the tenth grade students' ability to comprehend descriptive texts. Descriptive research is used to describe a phenomenon or condition based on factual data obtained from the field. In this study, the researcher aimed to describe the students' reading comprehension ability, particularly in understanding descriptive texts and their generic structures. The quantitative approach was applied because the data collected were in the form of numerical scores obtained from the students' reading comprehension test. These scores were then analyzed statistically to determine the students' level of ability in comprehending descriptive texts.

The population of this research consisted of all tenth grade students of SMAN 17 Padang in the academic year 2025/2026, totaling 147 students. From this population, the researcher selected the sample by using a cluster random sampling technique. Cluster random sampling was chosen because the population was naturally grouped into several classes, and it was more practical to select one class as the research sample. Based on the random selection process, class E4 was chosen as the sample of the study, which consisted of 33 students.

The instrument used to collect the data was a reading comprehension test in the form of multiple-choice questions. The test was designed to measure the students' ability in comprehending descriptive texts, particularly the generic structure consisting of identification and description. Before administering the real test, the researcher prepared 30 items for the try-out test in order to evaluate the quality of the test items. The try-out was conducted to determine the validity, reliability, difficulty level, and discrimination index of the items. After conducting the item analysis, some items were revised and one item was discarded, resulting in 22 items that were considered appropriate for the real test. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, the researcher applied the split-half method. This technique divides the test items into two groups, such as odd and even items, and then calculates the correlation between the two sets of scores using the Pearson Product Moment formula. The reliability coefficient was then calculated using the Spearman-Brown formula to determine the reliability of the whole test. The result of the reliability analysis showed that the correlation coefficient was 0.76, which was categorized as high reliability. This result indicates that the test was reliable and appropriate to be used as an instrument for collecting the data in this research.

The data collection procedure began with administering the reading comprehension test to the students in the selected sample class. The students were asked to read descriptive texts and answer multiple-choice questions related to the identification and description components of the texts. After the students completed the test, the researcher collected

their answer sheets and calculated the scores based on the number of correct answers. The data obtained from the test were analyzed quantitatively. The researcher converted the students' raw scores into percentage scores in order to determine their level of reading comprehension ability. The students' scores were then classified based on the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) set by the school, which was 79. The analysis was conducted to determine the percentage of students who achieved high or low levels of ability in comprehending descriptive texts, as well as in understanding the identification and description components of the texts.

### **Findings and Discussions**

The results of this study were obtained from the reading comprehension test administered to the tenth grade students of SMAN 17 Padang. The test aimed to measure students' ability in comprehending descriptive texts, particularly in understanding the generic structure consisting of identification and description. After collecting and analyzing the students' answer sheets, the researcher calculated the scores based on the number of correct responses and converted them into percentage scores. The results indicated that the students demonstrated a generally high level of reading comprehension ability. The highest score achieved by the students was 100, while the lowest score was 0. However, based on the classification of students' ability according to the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM = 79), all students in the sample were categorized as having high ability in comprehending descriptive texts. This result shows that the students were able to understand the overall meaning of descriptive

texts and identify important information presented in the reading passages.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that students showed strong ability in comprehending the identification component of descriptive texts. Identification refers to the part of the text that introduces or identifies the object being described, such as a person, place, or object. The data analysis indicated that all 33 students in the sample successfully answered most of the questions related to the identification section of the texts. As a result, 100% of the students were categorized as having high ability in understanding the identification component. This suggests that the students were able to recognize the main topic or the object described in the text and identify key introductory information effectively. Their ability to understand the identification part of descriptive texts indicates that they have developed adequate skills in recognizing the main ideas and contextual information presented in English reading materials.

In addition to the identification component, the findings also showed that students performed well in comprehending the description component of descriptive texts. The description part provides detailed information about the characteristics, features, or qualities of the object being described. The analysis of students' answers revealed that all students were able to understand detailed information presented in the descriptive texts, including physical appearance, characteristics, and other specific attributes. The results showed that 100% of the students were also categorized as having high ability in comprehending the

description component. This indicates that the students were capable of identifying supporting details and interpreting descriptive information within the texts. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the tenth grade students of SMAN 17 Padang possess a high level of ability in comprehending descriptive texts, both in identifying the main object of the text and understanding detailed descriptions provided

in the reading passages.

Tabel 1. Research Findings

No	Aspect	The Number of Students		Abili ty
		Number	Percentage	
1.	The Students' Ability to Comprehend Descriptive Text	33	100%	High
		0	0%	Low
2.	The Students' Ability to Comprehend Identification	33	100%	High
		0	0%	Low
3.	The Students' Ability to Comprehend Description	33	100%	High
		0	0%	Low

### 1. The Students' Ability to Comprehend Descriptive Text

Based on the findings, the students' ability to comprehend descriptive text was high (100%). It means that the students understand

descriptive text well. In other words, the students easy to finds about describe people, places, and object in descriptive text. This finding is consistent with the statement of Anderson and Anderson (2003), who explain that descriptive text is intended to describe people, places, and objects clearly and in detail so that readers can easily imagine what is being described. Thus, the students' high level of achievement shows that they are capable of understanding the purpose and detailed information presented in descriptive texts.

### 2. The Students' Ability to Comprehend Identification

Based on the findings, the students' ability to comprehend identification was high (100%). It means that the students are able to recognize the subject or phenomenon being described in the text. This ability reflects their skill in identifying the main idea of a text, which is an essential reading skill. As stated by Grabe and Stoller (2002), reading skills are transferable across genres. Therefore, the students' ability to comprehend identification in descriptive text may also support their understanding of other types of texts.

### 3. The Students' Ability to Comprehend Description

Based on the findings, the students' ability to comprehend the description part was high (100%). It means that the students understand the detailed information presented in descriptive texts well. They are able to identify characteristics, physical appearance, and qualities described in the text without significant difficulty. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Elmiwati, Elfiza, and Kusumawardhani (2025), which showed that the use of a structured approach combining meaningful context clues and guided reading practice significantly improved the students' comprehension of descriptive texts. Similarly, the students in this research demonstrated strong ability in interpreting detailed descriptions accurately and confidently.

### Conclusions and Suggestions

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that the tenth grade students of SMAN 17 Padang have a high level of ability in comprehending descriptive texts. The results of the reading comprehension test showed that all students in the sample were categorized as having high ability according to the Minimum Mastery Criterion applied in the school. The analysis also revealed that students were able to understand both components of descriptive text effectively, namely identification and description. In the identification component, students demonstrated the ability to recognize the main topic or object described in the text, while in the description component they were able to identify detailed information about the characteristics and features of the object being described. These findings indicate that the students possess adequate reading comprehension skills in understanding descriptive texts. Therefore, it is important for teachers to continue providing meaningful reading activities and appropriate strategies to maintain and further develop students' reading comprehension ability. In addition, students are encouraged to practice reading regularly and apply effective reading

strategies in order to strengthen their comprehension skills and support their overall English language learning.

### REFERENCES

- Anderson, M., & Anderson, K. (2003). *Text types in English 3*. South Yarra, Australia: Macmillan Education Australia
- Anderson, N. J. (2020). *L2 reading comprehension and instruction: Strategies for improving reading skills*. Routledge.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Irvine, C. K., & Walker, D. (2019). *Introduction to research in education* (10th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Duke, N. K., & Cartwright, K. B. (2021). The science of reading progress and challenges. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56(S1), S25–S44.
- Elmiwati, E., Elfiza, R., & Kusumawardhani, I. (2025). Applying guided reading strategies to improve students' reading comprehension of descriptive text. *JISPENDIORA*, 4(2), 179–191.
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2002). *Teaching and researching reading*. Harlow, England: Longman.
- Guthrie, J. T., Klauda, S. L., & Ho, A. N. (2020). Modeling the relationships among reading instruction, motivation, engagement, and achievement for adolescents. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 55(1), 9–26.
- Koda, K. (2020). *Insights into second language reading: A cross-linguistic approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- McNamara, D. S., & Magliano, J. P. (2021). Toward a comprehensive model of comprehension. *Educational Psychologist*, 56(3), 153–166.

- Nation, I. S. P. (2019). *Teaching ESL/EFL reading and writing* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Pressley, M., & Afflerbach, P. (2020). *Verbal protocols of reading: The nature of constructively responsive reading*. Routledge.
- Rasinski, T., Paige, D., & Young, C. (2019). Reading fluency: The neglected reading goal. *The Reading Teacher*, 72(3), 345–355.
- Snow, C. E., & Matthews, T. J. (2020). Reading and language in the early grades. *Future of Children*, 30(1), 57–74.
- Tarigan, H. G. (2021). *Membaca sebagai suatu keterampilan berbahasa*. Angkasa.
- Woolley, G. (2020). *Developing reading comprehension: Combining visual and verbal cognitive processes*. Springer.
- Zhang, L. J., & Zhang, D. (2020). Metacognitive instruction for reading comprehension in EFL contexts. *Language Teaching Research*, 24(4), 465–483.