

**A STUDY ON STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING PICTURES  
ON READING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT 10<sup>th</sup> GRADE  
MA SABILAL MUHTADIN TEMBILAHAN**

**Febriana Anisya Putri<sup>1</sup>, Agus Mustajib<sup>2</sup>, Maizarah<sup>3</sup>  
English Study Program  
Universitas Islam Indragiri – Tembilahan Riau<sup>1,2,3</sup>**

**ABSTRACT**

Reading is one of the four language skills that should be mastered by language learners. Through reading, they enable us to gain the information needed. Moreover, the purpose of this study is to investigate how the students' ability in using pictures on reading descriptive texts. The research design of this research was descriptive quantitative research. The population in this research was 10<sup>th</sup> grade of MA Sabilal Muhtadin Tembilahan, the population was group or cluster as classes. The sampling technique was a purposive sample. The students' mean score was 63, it can be seen 6 students in interval 81-100 with category is very good, or with presentation (15%), 16 students in interval 61-80 with category is good, or with presentation (41%), 13 students in interval 41-60 with category is enough, or with presentation (33%), and 4 students in interval 21-40 with category is poor, or with presentation (10%) and 0 students in interval 00-40 with category is Very poor, or with presentation (0%). In conclusion, the overall students' ability in using the picture was good.

**Keywords:** *reading, descriptive text, pictures*

**INTRODUCTION**

English is one of the languages which is used by many people in many countries. It is also recognized as the main language for communication with other people from different countries and cultures. Due to the importance of English as an international language, many people learn and master at an early age, so that they will not find any difficulties in communicating with others especially those who come from abroad.

Learning English means learning the four skills of English. They are, listening, speaking, reading and writing. From all of those skills, one of the crucial skills which are related to students' learning activities is reading. Reading is one of the important language skills. By reading people may get a lot of information. The more they read, the more information they get. Reading can make people have new knowledge and have creativity. They can also catch the information in a text even the detail information. Also, they can have much more vocabulary because texts supply various words.

Students read for general comprehension. They might read a novel, short story, a newspaper, article, or report of some types to understand the information in the text. Most students may be able to read English texts but it does not mean all of them to understand. A good reader must find the meaning of the text or the purpose of the writer.

Some of the objectives of teaching reading in junior high schools based on School-Based Curriculum (KTSP) are to enable students to get certain information, identify general ideas of certain texts and get main ideas both explicitly and implicitly. A good rule for teachers is that they let the students read when they are ready to do so. Unfortunately, teachers commonly forget to prepare their students with initial information about texts before they are ready to read the texts. There was also no challenging activity in reading. The activities done in reading were commonly reading the text aloud, translating the texts, and answering questions related to the text.

From the classroom observation and interviews with the English teacher and some students, some problems related to the students were found. First, the students had low vocabulary mastery. When they were given a text to read, they did not know the meaning of even simple words.

It made them having difficulty comprehending the text. To handle the problem, they tended to translate every single word in the text. In translating the text, they depended too much on their dictionary. Second, the students were not aware of the use of learning strategies. They did not know how to use efficient comprehension strategies such as using prior knowledge, making predictions, skimming and scanning, or guessing the meaning from the context. Third, the students were not interested in the process of teaching and learning reading. They found that activities in reading were boring. This boredom was seen from the behavior that students showed in the class. They mostly did not pay attention to the teacher's explanation. The students especially those who sat at the back chatted with their friends and made a lot of noise. Fourth, the students were also very passive in the process of teaching and learning. When they were asked to find unfamiliar words, some of them neglected the command and they just chatted with their friends. Only those, who were clever, were active during the lesson.

One of the learning strategies which can be used in the teaching-learning process to improve the students' ability in reading descriptive is using pictures. Pictures have

some benefits such as giving true, concrete, and realistic concept. Furthermore, pictures can attract students' attention so they can make the students more imaginative and creative in writing class. Meanwhile, Heaton says that an excellent device for providing both a purpose and content for writing is the use of pictures. A picture or series of pictures not only provides the text with the basic material for his composition but stimulates his imaginative power. The picture can motivate the students, make the subjects they are dealing with clearer, and illustrate the general idea and forms of an object or action which are particular to a culture. As a media in teaching English, the use of pictures in teaching vocabulary has already been succeeded. Moreover, the writer would like to know how well the use of pictures in learning descriptive writing has been conducted.

In applying the prediction strategy in the descriptive text had used the media of pictures. The picture is used to help to present information to the class. So, the picture is very important to use in the descriptive text by applying a prediction strategy to make the students easier in predicting the picture correctly and the students can be attentive, energetic, understanding of the text well.

In this study, the researcher tried teaching using the picture on reading the descriptive text. The purpose of this research was to know how the significant impact of using pictures on the students' ability in reading the descriptive text. Therefore the researcher interested in taking this topic to answer the question of how the students' ability in using the picture on reading the descriptive text at 10<sup>th</sup> Grade of MA Sabilah Muhtadin Tembilihan.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Aims of Reading**

A person may read for some purposes. Purpose helps to understand more what is being read. If he is reading for pleasure or reading for pure recreation and enjoyment, he may read either quickly or slowly based on the way he likes or feels. But if reads for studying or setting information such as news, science or the same line, which are part of his study or assignment he does it very slowly and carefully.

According to Anderson (2008: 65), there are seven aims of reading, reading for details and fact, reading for main ideas, reading for sequence or

organization, reading for inference, reading for classifying, reading for evaluating and reading for comparing of the contest.

- a. Reading for details and fact is reading to know what is done by the subject of the story
- b. Reading for main ideas is reading to get the problem statement
- c. Reading for a sequence of the organization is reading to know each part of the story
- d. Reading for inference is reading to know what is the writer meant by its story
- e. Reading for classifying is reading to find unusual things
- f. Reading for evaluating is reading to know the value of the story
- g. Reading for comparing or contest is reading to compare the way of life of the story with the way of life of the reader.

### **Reading Strategy**

Teaching Reading in a foreign language is hard working. The teacher main task is to help the students to increase an adequate linguistic background based on their needs, interest, and levels of understanding before they attempt any reading activities. In teaching reading, there are many methods to improve reading skills, like previewing, predicting, guessing from context, paraphrasing, etc. Many strategies can be practically applied in the reading classroom (Brown, 1988:366). There are the list strategies of reading:

1. Skimming the text for the main idea

Skimming consists of quickly running one's eyes across a whole text for its gist. Skimming gives the reader the advantages of being able to predict the purpose of the passage, the main topic and possibly some of the developing or supporting ideas.

2. Scanning the text for specific information

Scanning is searching for some information on the text. Scanning exercises may ask students to look for names, times or places, to find a definition of a key concept, or to list certain information. Here also there are some ways to do scanning, Soedarso (2006:86) there are:

- a. Decide what information will the reader look for and think about the form of that information. For example, if the reader wants to know about when the event happens, they should look for the date
  - b. Then, decide where they look for the information
  - c. Stop if they have found the information
3. Predicting when you aren't certain

Prediction is a major in reading. Before students read, they often look at the blurb. It may contain a summary, a photograph, and a headline. It affects us to predict what we are going to read. Guessing or predicting what in the pictures can make the students infer the general information in the text. The students are more likely to read through the pictures because they can see the object directly. The ability to make a correct prediction will greatly increase readers' reading speed and enhance their comprehension.

### **Picture**

According to Arthur and William, the picture helps people to comprehend and remember the text. When the texts were presented alone or with pictures the order in which the steps described in the text, the subject tended to mentally represent the text. We argue that these results disconfirm motivational, repetition, and some dual-code explanations of the facilitative effect of the picture. The results are consistent with a version of mental models of what the text is about.

To make the picture more understandable, the writer will explain it in detail. Some experts give some definitions about the picture. The picture is a visual representation (of an object or scene or person or abstraction) produced on a surface.

Marianne and Sharon (1973: 164) said that pictures are kinds of visual instruction materials that might be used more effectively to develop and sustain motivation in producing positive attitudes toward English and to teach or reinforce language skills. Pictures can also be used in various configurations to enhance learning and practice

Moreover, Heaton said that picture is an excellent device for providing both a purpose and content for writing. It does not only provide the taste with the basic material for this composition but stimulates his imaginative power.

**Pictures as media students' reading skill**

Teachers can make the pictures as the representation of the places, objects, and people. By giving the pictures, students can predict and infer not only from what they hear and read but also from what they see. Pictures also contribute to make an interesting lesson, to improve student's motivation, to give a sense of the context of the language, and to give a specific reference point or stimulus. The following are many advantages of pictures:

1. Pictures are interesting

Using pictures is one good way to increase students' creativity. According to El-Araby, pictures are interesting because it makes the class livelier and contribute a great deal to make learning more enjoyable.

2. Pictures are economical

Pictures are economical. It means that pictures are easy to collect. Teachers can take it from magazines, newspapers, photos, the internet, or even draw it by themselves. Wright states that for most teachers, pictures are cheap and readily available sources.

3. Pictures are effective

According to Kreidler, pictures are one recognized way of representing a real situation that would be impossible to create in any other way. Yet, teachers should have many considerations to select the pictures. The pictures that can be used as teaching media should be:

a. Appeal: it means that the content of the pictures should be capture interest and imagination for the students.

b. Relevance: it means that pictures that will be used as media should be relevant to the purpose of the lesson

c. Recognition: it means that the significant features of the pictures should be within the students' knowledge and culture understanding.

d. Clarity: it means that the pictures must clear since the crowded pictures make the students confused and distract, students should be able to see the relevant detail.

### **Descriptive Text**

Based on the English Curriculum for Junior High School, descriptive text is defined as a text which describes a thing, someone, or place, in detail. The descriptive text tries to describe what something is like Hyland (1989:73). Moreover, a person, a place, a thing, even an idea, can be made clear through the description.

The description is one of the types of writing where the writer describes something which commonly a person or a place. It focuses on the description of characteristics, peculiarity, quality, and quantity by using adjective Hyland informs that the purpose of a descriptive picture is to give us an account of imagined or factual events and phenomenon to clear the picture on reader's mind. Through the concrete pictures of something, the writer wants to describe the readers to find the description more meaningful (Pradiyono, 2006:165).

According to Anderson (1998:26) that descriptive or description describes a particular person, place, or thing. Its purpose is to tell about the subject by describing its features without including personal opinions.

Besides, the word *descriptions* from two words: *Scriber*, meaning —to writel and *de*, meaning —downl or —aboutl. There is a hint in the describing you will follow the outline of an object visually and then write it down or —drawl it in word.

Related to Anderson statement about the definition of description, Karim and Rachmadie point out that description is a verbal picture of a person, place, or object. Thus, a descriptive essay is the one describes a person, place, or object. Another expert, Plooger proposed that a descriptive is used to add details about something physical: a person, place, or thing. This method uses sensory language, that is, words that appeal to the five senses, such as sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. From some definition above, the experts have the same concepts or similar concept about descriptive itself, they said that a descriptive is to describe something like a person, place, or object.

There are some features in a descriptive that we must give serious attention, they are the feature in construction a description. A typical description has an opening paragraph introduces the subject of the description, followed by a series of paragraph each describing one feature of the subject. There can also be a final concluding section that signals the end of the description or on another hand, there are identification and description in a descriptive text. The identification of the descriptive text is usually a

main idea of the paragraph or called as a general statement, and the description of the descriptive text is about the explanation of the general statement or main idea or supporting details to the general statement.

Another feature is a grammatical feature of a description. Factual descriptions usually include the following grammatical features: (a) verbs in the present tense, (b) adjective to describe the features of the subject, and (c) topic sentences to begin paragraph and organize the various aspect of the description Anderson (1998:26).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Descriptive quantitative research was the research design in this research. Loes (2011:27) defined that Descriptive research is usually concerned with describing a population concerning important variables. Aggarwal (2008) in Salaria (2012: 1) stated that descriptive research is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for description and interpretation. Descriptive research seeks to provide an accurate description of observations of a phenomenon. Moreover, Sky (2008: 5) stated that Descriptive research is conducted to describe phenomena as they exist. It is used to identify and obtain information on the characteristics of a particular problem or issue. The purpose of descriptive research is to describe accurately situations or events, such as the characteristics of a population, a social condition, ora particular topic.

The subject of this study was the students of the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade of MA Sabilal Muhtadin Tembilihan. 39 students were selected as samples. Furthermore, the Test was used as the instrument in collecting the data, which consisted of 30 questions. Then the researcher used descriptive statistical analysis to analyze the gained data.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Try out test results**

Before the researcher gave the real test to the respondents, she should try out the questions to determine the validity of the questions. It was gained by using the standard facility value that is ranged from 0.00 – 1.00. If the questions are ranged from < 0.70 it means that the questions are easy; meanwhile, if the questions are ranged from > 0.30 it



means that the questions are hard. The ideal questions are placed in the interval  $>0.30$  to  $<0.70$  which are categorized as medium questions (Heaton, 1995:179).

There were 30 questions of this tryout test. The data results of index difficulty level showed that 5 questions were rejected; question numbers 3,9,17,19, and 23. Thus the researcher used 25 valid questions to be the real test.

**The students’ ability in using pictures on reading descriptive text**

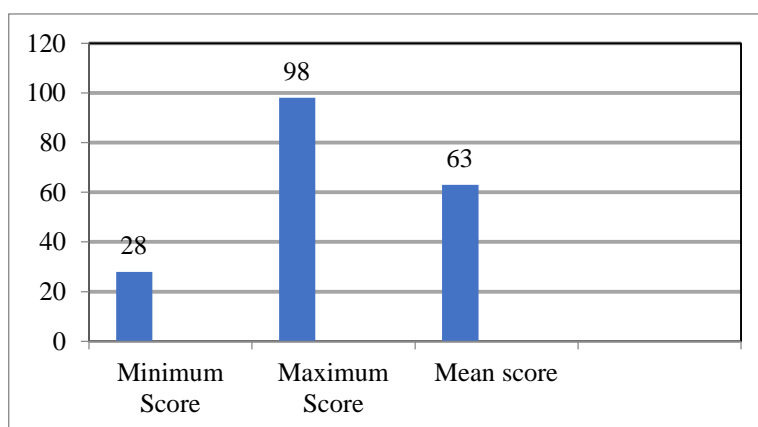
After getting the results of the test, the researcher got the questions that were valid and asked the samples to answer it. 25 questions were created in multiple-choice forms. Then the researcher calculated the students' scores and classified them based on their score in doing the test. The following was the results:

**Table 1 The students’ ability in reading descriptive text**

No.	Interval Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	81 – 100	Very Good	6	15.4
2	61 – 80	Good	16	41.1
3	41 – 60	Enough	13	33.3
4	21 – 40	Poor	4	10.2
5	00 – 20	Very Poor	0	0
Total			39	100

Based on the table above, it could be seen that there were six students (15.4%) who got in interval 81 – 100. It was categorized as a very good level. Then sixteen students (41.1%) were placed in the interval 61 – 80 that was categorized as a good level. Next, thirteen students (33.3%) obtained enough level because they were in interval score 41 – 60. Only four students (10.2%) gained a poor level since it was in the interval score of 21 – 40. Last, no student was in the very poor category.

**Graph. The summary of students’ ability in reading descriptive text**



The table above describes that the lowest score of the students' ability was 28 which was classified as a poor level. Meanwhile, the highest score was 96 that was categorized as a very good level. Both the results were contrary enough. Moreover, it implies that some students gained in the low level, and then some of them succeeded in the very good level. In other words, their ability was not balanced. To see more interpretation, it could be seen from the overall mean score that was 63. It was classified at a good level because the score was placed in the interval 61 – 80. However, the students' ability needed to be increased to gain better results.

## **CONCLUSION**

Some kinds of text learned by the students, Descriptive text is one of them. Descriptive text is the text that tells the reader about Describing something. The students in Senior High School learn about Descriptive text in the First grade and they will learn it again in the Second grade of Senior High School. In this research, students' ability in using the picture on reading the descriptive text at X grade of MA Sabilal Muhtadin Tembilihan was the main purpose to be measure. The researcher divided the level of the students' reading Ability into five categories, namely very good, good, enough, poor, and very poor.

The students' ability in using the picture on reading the descriptive text at X grade of MA Sabilal Muhtadin Tembilihan was the population in this research, this research, the populations were group or cluster as classes. The writer just chooses a purposive sample. Furthermore, the writer took a class as the sample is X.Iand The test items (questions) was made based on these indicators, consist of identifying the purpose of simple descriptive text, identify the structure of the text in the text, find adjectives and nouns in the text and Finding the information in the text

After the students answer the Tests from the researcher, the researcher found that the students' ability in using the picture on reading the descriptive text at X grade of MA SabilalMuhtadinTembilahanas Good. The students' mean score was 6,3, it can be seen 6 students in interval 81 -100with category is very good, or with presentation (15%), 16 students in interval 61 -80 with category is good, or with presentation (41%), 13 students in interval 41 - 60 with category is enough, or with presentation (33%), and 4

students in interval 21 – 40 with category is poor, or with presentation (10%) and 0 students in interval 0 – 40 with category is Very poor, or with presentation (0%).

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