

# **A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMAN 5 PEKANBARU IN COMPREHENDING EXPOSITORY TEXTS**

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## **Abstract**

*Reading is one of the language skills which are important for foreign language learners to be developed. Capability in comprehending reading texts is the priority for many foreign language learners. The purpose of this research is to know how good is the ability of the second year students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru in comprehending text, especially expository texts. The subjects were 34 students from XI.2 science class at SMAN 5 Pekanbaru. The researcher used the reading test as an instrument in collecting the data. The aspects which were evaluated were; finding main idea, finding detail information, identifying reference, making inference, identifying language feature and identifying generic structure. The researcher gets the conclusion that the percentage of students' ability in comprehending expository texts is in mediocre level with score 59.35. The results showed that the most difficult aspect of reading for students is finding main idea, where the average score was 54.7. Then, the students' highest score was in the aspect of making inference, with the average score of 64.7.*

*Keyword: descriptive research, Study on the ability, reading.*

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is an activity with purpose. Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The purpose of reading is to connect the ideas on the page to what you have already know and comprehension is one of the most important skill that we can help children develop, says Smith (1999). We use knowledge, skills, and strategies to determine the meaning. Although reading means different things to different people and skills vary with every individual, reading is skills that can be improved.

Burnes and Page (1985) give a definition of comprehension that it is related to the purpose of the reader and the context of which the reader was functioning. They add that the understanding of a text read by the group of readers is dedicated by variety of factors that include affective consideration such as interest, motivation, concept carried by the text. Concept carried by the text means that a definition of comprehension might stress the importance vocabulary knowledge. It is also might include an understanding of the text structure which help to signal meaning for the reader. In conclusion, reading comprehension is a reading-thinking activity and such relies of its success upon its level of intelligence of the reader.

Reading is an activity with purpose. Each purpose or reason for reading requires a different reading approach. As Rivers and Temperly (1978) suggested that there are seven purposes for reading:

- a. To obtain information for some purpose or because we are curious about some people.
- b. To obtain some instructions on how to perform some tasks for our work or daily life.
- c. To act in a play, play games, do a puzzle.
- d. To keep in touch with friends by correspondence or business letters.
- e. To know when or where something will take place or what is available.
- f. To know what is happening or what happened.
- g. To enjoyment or excitement.

Genre based teaching is implied in KTSP 2006. There are eight kinds of text (genres) as quoted from Agustine, Yuliani, Purwati, 2008, and Sudarti and grace, 2006. They are narrative text, descriptive text, report text, procedure text, spoof, anecdote and expository text.

Expository text is a type of writing text that is used to explain, describe, give information, or inform (**David Perez**, 2010). The purpose of expository text is to persuade the reader or listener to accept a position on an issue, or to urge the reader or listener to act in a particular way on an issue.

Furthermore, some aspects involve in comprehending expository text that should be concerned by the writer, there are finding main idea, finding detail information, identifying reference, making inference, identifying language feature and identifying generic structure. From the explanation above, the writer is interested to carry out the research entitled “A study on the ability of the second year students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru in comprehending expository texts.”

## METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive research. Gay (1990:10) states that descriptive research involves collecting data to test hypothesis or to answer the questions concerning the status of the study. The research was designed to analyze the ability of the second year students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru in comprehending Expository text. The research data was collected from test. The specific objective of this research was to find out the ability of the second year students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru in comprehending expository text. In this case, the writer used cluster sample. According to (Gay and Peter Airisian:1990), cluster sample is randomly selects group. So that, the writer choose the class that has been selected become sample of this research by using lottery.

In getting the data, the researcher used reading test as an instrument in order to know students' ability in comprehending expository text. The research instrument used in collecting the data for this research was in form of written test. They were asked to answer the questions of reading comprehension test of expository texts. The test consisted of 30 multiple choices questions from 5 different expository texts. The time was given for 45 minutes.

In scoring the students ability in comprehending expository text, the researcher used the scoring which found in Wayan and Sumartana (1986:76) as follow:

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{Correct answer}}{\text{Number of items}} 100$$

In order to know the level of ability of the students' speaking ability can be classified as follows:

<b>Test Score</b>	<b>Level of Ability</b>
81-100	Excellent
61-80	Good
41-60	Mediocre
21-40	Poor
0-20	Very Poor

Harris (1986)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are 35 students who took the reading test. The students' score has been analyzed by calculating the data. After calculating the real scores of the students, the researcher computed the students' scores to know the percentages of the students who get *excellent*, *good*, *mediocre*, *poor*, and *very poor* level in speaking. The result of it can be seen as in the following table:

**Table 1**

**The Percentage of the Students' Ability in Comprehending Expository Texts**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Mean</b>
81-100	Excellent	-	0%	59.35
61-80	Good	11	32.3%	
41-60	Mediocre	21	61.7%	
21-40	Poor	2	5%	
0-20	Very Poor	-	0%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Mediocre</b>

From table above, 21 (61,7%) students are in mediocre level. It means they have average ability in comprehending expository text. There are 11 (32,3%) students in good level, and there are 2 (5%) students in poor level. From the students' score, the researcher found that the total mean score of students in comprehending expository text is at mediocre level, 59.35.

After getting the score of the students, the writer classified the students' scores based on each component of reading as shown in the following table and figure:

Table 2

The Students' Score for Each Aspect of Reading Comprehension

Scale of the Ability	Components of Reading Comprehension											
	Finding Main Idea		Finding Factual Information		Identifying References		Making Inferences		Generic Structure		Language Feature (Vocabulary, structure, Tenses)	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
81 – 100	1	2.9	2	5.8	4	11.7	1	2.9	6	17.6	3	8.8
61 – 80	7	20.5	10	29.4	7	20.5	14	41.1	2	5.8	8	23.5
41 – 60	12	35.2	11	32.3	13	38.2	12	35.2	12	35.2	12	35.2
21 – 40	10	29.4	7	20.5	7	20.5	6	17.6	8	23.5	6	17.6
0 – 20	4	11.7	4	11.7	3	8.8	1	2.9	6	17.6	5	14.7
Mean Score	54.7		59.4		61		64.7		56.4		58.8	

Figure 1

The Students' Score for Each Aspect of Reading Comprehension

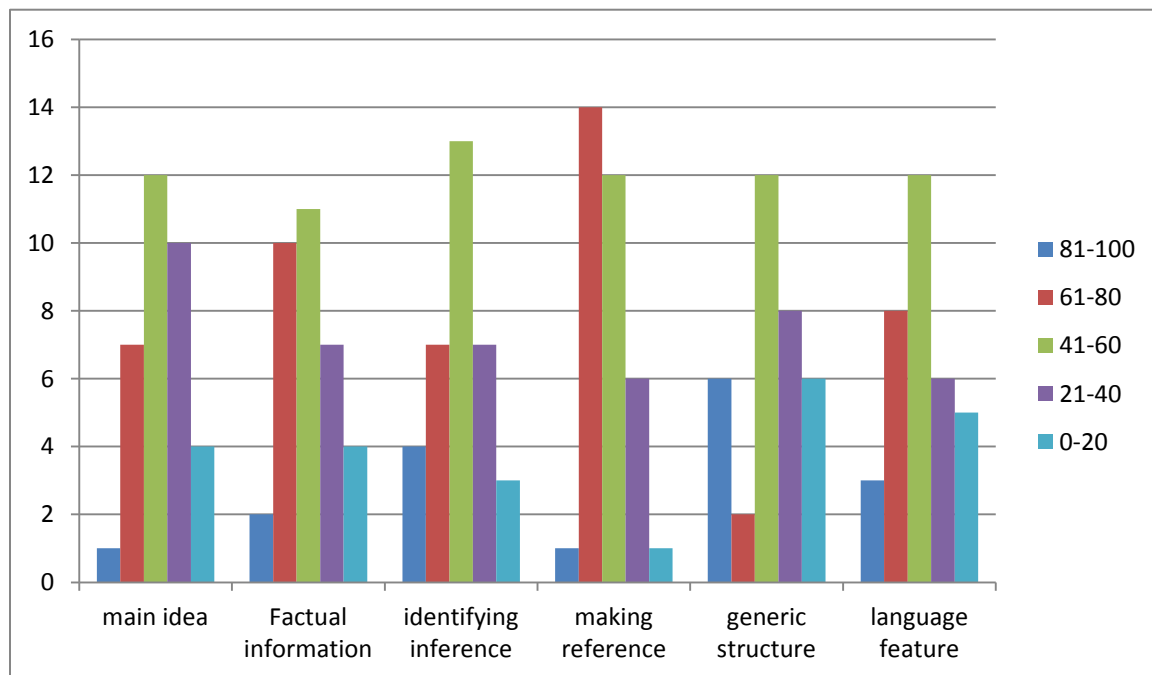


Table 2 and figure 1 show that the students get lower score in finding main idea, which the mean score is 54.7. In contrast, the students get higher score in Identifying reference, which the mean score is 61, and making reference which the mean score is 64.7.

From all the data, it can be inferred that the students' ability in comprehending expository texts by the second year students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru falls into mediocre level. Most of the students faced a significant problem in reading comprehension mainly in finding main idea.

## CONCLUSION

The writer made this research is to know the students' ability in comprehending expository text. Based on the data analysis, the researcher gets the conclusion that the ability of the second year students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru in comprehending expository text is in mediocre level (59.35). Then, the average score of each component; finding main idea is 54.7, finding factual information is 59.4, identifying reference is 61, Making reference is 64.7, generic structure is 56.4 and language feature is 58.8.

The aspect of reading that is the most difficult for the students is finding main idea, which the average score is 54.7. The highest score of the reading aspect is making inference which is 64.7 score. Based on the percentage of students' ability in comprehending expository text, it shows that none of the students is in excellent level, 11 (32.3%) students are in good level, 21 (61.7%) students are in *mediocre* level, and 2 (5%) are in *poor* level, and at last, there is none of the student who got *very poor* level.

## SUGGESTION

Based on the research finding, the ability of the second year students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru is mediocre. Most of students are not reaching the excellent level yet. In this time, the writer suggests the students should pay more attention about how to comprehend expository text well. The students should be active to speak their ideas in the class. The students themselves should have a good motivation to improve their reading comprehension.

The teacher should give more information about how to do the reading test well and encourage them to do more practice in reading comprehension, especially in comprehending expository text. The teacher should give and introduce a kind of reading material related to expository texts which can be taken from various sources.

Finally, the writer expects for all the participants, the conclusions and suggestion in this research will be useful for the reader, especially teacher and students of the second year students of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru in reading.

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