

## A STUDY ON STUDENTS' READING ABILITY IN READING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT: A CASE STUDY AT MTS NWDI TERARA

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**ABSTRACT;** *This research is a study on students' reading ability in reading descriptive texts: a case study at MTS NWDI Terara. The research was conducted using a case study approach. The participants were 8th-grade students, consisting of 16 students (5 males and 11 females) selected through purposive sampling. The research method employed was a case study with a qualitative approach, where data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with teachers, and reading ability tests. The results show that students' ability to read descriptive texts varied, with some students being able to comprehend detailed information, while others faced difficulties in understanding vocabulary and sentence structure. Several factors influencing students' reading ability were identified, including learning motivation, teaching methods used by the teacher, and the students' level of English comprehension. The study suggests that more interactive teaching methods and additional guidance should be provided to students who struggle with reading descriptive texts. These findings are expected to provide valuable insights for educators to improve students' reading abilities in schools.*

**Keywords:** *Reading Ability, Descriptive Text, Case Study, Students, MTS NWDI Terara, Teaching Methods*

## INTRODUCTION

Language skills are communication skills that help you convey your ideas with clarity and precision. Language skills include listening (S. Sharma & Mishra, 2023), speaking, reading, and writing. Not only do you learn to speak well but also listen attentively. Reading is also so important skill to be mastered. Writing clearly with brevity is another skill that's considered crucial in a professional setting.

English is now widely spoken as a first language or as an official language in many nations, having originated in England (Graddol et al., 2020). It includes a wide range of written and spoken English-language works, such as plays, novels, poetry, and other literary genres.

English is also an academic subject that focuses on the grammar, literature, and usage of the language. Reading is, thus, one of the important skills that is needed by the students from elementary school through university levels (Ardhian et al., 2020). By reading the students are able to get a lot of information based on what they have already read. Reading is stated as an active process, the readers form a preliminary expectation about materials, and then select the fewest, most productive clues necessary to confirm or reject that expectation (MacKay & Meiss, 2020).

The study found that most students faced challenges in constructing appropriate sentences to describe given images or objects due to difficulties understanding descriptive words. Furthermore, the lack of motivation from teachers and competition among classmates led to stagnant growth in the development of descriptive writing skills. By understanding these factors, it is possible to suggest effective solutions to improve the descriptive language skills of students at MTs NWDI Terara, such as providing more engaging learning materials and supporting students' intrinsic motivation to improve their written abilities. Working towards improving students' descriptive writing skills has important implications for enhancing their communicative effectiveness and success in school and beyond.

Reading is defined as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language (Dechant, 2013). Reading comprehension means making sense of what readers read and connecting the ideas in the text to what they already know. In addition, Reading is defined as comprehension as the essence of reading because if we do not understand the message, we are not reading.

Based on the researcher's observation during doing practice teaching, it is reported that *the students of MTs NWDI Terara* have many problems and difficulties of reading comprehension while they're learning, for instance: the current level of reading ability. The student's comprehending generic structure of reading descriptive text and the student's ability in comprehending language features of reading descriptive text.

## **METHOD**

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative method. The purpose of using this study was to determine the problems and the level of students' understanding in reading descriptive texts. This study then conducted interviews and observations with students to determine how

much students understood the structure and linguistic elements in descriptive texts. The focus of the discussion in this study is how teachers teach students in developing students' reading skills in descriptive texts at school and when outside the school environment.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The results of the interview reveal that students generally feel comfortable when reading descriptive texts, though some find it challenging depending on the teacher's explanation. (Respondent), *"I feel enjoy when reading descriptive text. Sometimes I find it easy based on the teacher's explanation,"* indicating that teacher guidance plays a key role in their comprehension. Many students enjoy reading descriptive texts and do so frequently in class. They prepare by listening to the teacher's instructions and typically associate descriptive texts with descriptions of people. However, they face difficulties due to their limited vocabulary, which makes some parts of the text hard to comprehend.

In terms of the structure of descriptive texts, students recognize the initial part of the text as an introduction to the subject, often relating it to familiar topics, such as describing a person they admire. When asked how they identify detailed descriptions, students explained that they often connect these parts with daily activities. (Respondent), *"I understand about the description part, because the description is an introduction about something,"* highlighting that understanding the introductory descriptions is key to grasping the overall content of the text.

Regarding language features, most students mentioned that they pay attention to the descriptive words used in the text. (Respondent), *"My opinion, language features are important to understand the text,"* underlining how crucial these elements are in grasping the meaning of descriptive passages. Although they occasionally encounter words they do not understand, students try to comprehend them based on the context or seek clarification. This shows that while their vocabulary may be limited, they employ strategies to improve their understanding of the text

### **Discussion**

The discussion on students' reading ability in descriptive texts at MTs NWDI Terara reveals both strengths and challenges in the learning process. Based on observations, the classroom environment is generally supportive, with well-maintained facilities and an

organized structure. However, student engagement varies, with some showing less attentiveness, possibly due to external distractions or a lack of interest in the subject matter. The teaching process itself is clear, and most students grasp the teacher's explanation of descriptive texts. Nevertheless, some struggle with understanding the concept, especially when it comes to identifying specific traits and the organization of the text. The reading proficiency of students also varies, with some able to comprehend descriptive texts easily, while others struggle due to complex vocabulary and sentence structures.

In the interviews, students expressed a mix of experiences when reading descriptive texts. The students shared that they enjoy reading descriptive texts, especially when guided by the teacher's explanation. However, limited vocabulary remains a significant obstacle for many students, making it harder for them to understand certain parts of the text. Students also noted the importance of the structure of descriptive texts. The students also, emphasized that understanding the description part, which serves as an introduction, is key to grasping the overall meaning of the text. This highlights that while students understand the basics of descriptive text structure, they still face difficulties with vocabulary and detailed comprehension.

Language features also play a crucial role in students' understanding of descriptive texts (Johnson, L. (2020)). The students emphasized the importance of paying attention to descriptive words, acknowledging that language features are essential for fully grasping the content. Despite the occasional challenges with unfamiliar words, students tend to rely on context clues and the teacher's guidance to improve their comprehension. The combination of limited vocabulary and a lack of reading strategies, such as summarizing and skimming, poses additional challenges for students. However, with proper support in building vocabulary and encouraging more interactive reading techniques, students' reading abilities in descriptive texts can improve significantly.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study on students' reading ability in reading descriptive texts at MTs NWDI Terara indicates that while some students demonstrate a basic understanding of descriptive texts, many encounter significant challenges that hinder their comprehension. One of the primary issues identified is the students' limited vocabulary. Many students struggle with descriptive words,

particularly adjectives that are key to understanding descriptive texts. This limited vocabulary makes it difficult for them to fully grasp the meaning of the text, especially when faced with complex or unfamiliar words.

In addition to vocabulary issues, students also experience difficulties with complex sentence structures. Longer and more intricate sentences tend to confuse students, making it harder for them to understand the overall message of the text. While some students can follow the teacher's explanation and comprehend the content, others struggle, particularly without the teacher's support. This variation in reading ability highlights the need for further assistance to help students overcome their difficulties with sentence structure and text comprehension.

Another important finding from the study is the lack of effective reading strategies among students. Most students read in a linear manner without employing strategies like skimming, scanning, or summarizing key information. As a result, they often miss important details or fail to understand the main ideas of the text. Students who employ more efficient reading strategies tend to perform better in understanding descriptive texts, suggesting that the use of such techniques could significantly improve overall reading proficiency.

Moreover, student engagement and interest in the material were observed to have a direct impact on their reading abilities. Students who were more interested in the topic of the text were better able to understand and engage with the content, while those who lacked interest tended to be passive and less involved in the learning process. This variation in enthusiasm further contributed to differences in reading performance, as motivated students were more likely to ask questions and participate actively in class discussions.

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