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## *A Study of the VIII Grade Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement of Recount Text at SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember*

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this research was to describe the VIII grade students' reading comprehension achievement of a recount text. The research design was descriptive qualitative by using case study. The area determination method of this research was conducted by using purposive method. The subjects were the VIII A students for try out test and for reading comprehension achievement test is VIII D students of SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember in the 2014/2015 academic year. The data of this research were obtained from the students' reading test, documentation and interview. The reading comprehension achievement had showed that there were 9 students (25%) who got "excellent" category that had range of 90-100. There were only 19 students (52.78%) who got "good" category and the range was between 70-89. In addition, there were 6 students (16.66%) who got "fair" category and the range was between 50-69. It was also only 2 students (5.56%) who got "poor" category and the range was between 30-49. The last, there were no students (0%) who got "very poor" category and the range was between <30. based on the research result, it is found that the recount text reading comprehension achievement of the VIII grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember is good.*

**Keywords:** *Descriptive qualitative, Recount text, Reading comprehension achievement.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

English currently has become an international language for communication in the world. There is no doubt that English is a vital linguistic tool for business, academics, politics, science, technology, tourism, and being used by many people of the world. According to Crystal (1997:1), English has become a mother tongue of the first language for dozen nations and around 400 million speakers all of the world. As an international language, English is learnt formally in some countries as a second language and in other countries as a foreign language. Noticing the importance of it, English has been learnt by students as a foreign language in Indonesian schools. Thus, English is regarded as a compulsory subject which is taught in elementary school up to university levels in Indonesia.

The main objective of teaching English as stated in the *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan/KTSP 2006* (2006 Institutional Based Curriculum) for junior high school is developing the ability of communication in the target language (English) in the spoken and written form. The teaching of English at secondary schools has to include the four language skills which the students should learn, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Those skills as well as the language components, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation should be taught integrately (Depdiknas, 2006:18). It is not easy for

students to learn all of those skills and the components, because they learn it as a foreign language.

As stated by Carrell, et.al(1995:1), says that reading is one of the English skills that should be learnt in a second language or foreign language learning by the students besides listening, speaking, and writing, because "for many students reading is the most important of the four language skills in a second language". Grabe (2009:6) says that reading in English provides one of the view avenue for the students to develop their English abilities to the point at which advanced academic curricular goals can be achieved". This statement means that having good reading ability will affect students achievement of his/her study.

From the result of the preliminary study which was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember on August 6<sup>th</sup> 2014 by interviewing the English teacher (Mr. R), it was revealed that the school still applies the 2006 Institutional Based Curriculum for eighth and ninth grade. He said that in teaching reading comprehension, he usually used classical method in the teaching learning process especially in teaching reading. The teaching techniques used are Reading Aloud, Question Answer and Lecturing Technique. According to the English teacher, the eighth grade students' achievement in English belongs to fair and good categories, such as the average of daily reading test of the eight grade was 75.70. The average score showed that

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the eight grade students' reading achievement belong to fair and good categories. When they read some kinds of text, the students always need to consult dictionary to find the meaning of unfamiliar words. Because he has known his students' ability, he often uses English and Indonesian in giving the explanation. In addition, he teaches the reading skill integrating with vocabulary and grammar. Besides, he also teaches pronunciation in reading and speaking in integrated way. The students read some kinds of text, such as descriptive (to describe a particular person or thing), recount (to tell events for the purpose of informing or entertaining), procedure (to describe how something is accomplished through a sequence of actions), and narrative (to amuse, entertain, and to deal with actual or various experience in different ways). The teacher informed that the students have to reach 70 or higher as the English score requirement of the school. The English teacher has given the researcher the students' scores of English obtained from the daily test and the students' reading test score in the 2014/2015 academic year to show the students' reading achievement. From those scores, the eight grade students can reach score more than 70.

Based on the English teacher's explanation, he usually started the lesson by doing set induction. He asked some leading question, sometimes accompanied by picture to lead the students to the topic they were going to study. While he read the text aloud, the students were listening and reading silently. During the reading activities, the students were asked to identify the unfamiliar words and then find the meaning in the dictionary. However, he often explained the meaning of words and the meaning of sentences if they were too difficult for the students. By doing this activity, the students could re-read the text and comprehend the meaning as well. After that the students had to do the exercises related to the text either individually, in pairs or in group depending on the types of the text. As stated by the English teacher, from the four language skills, reading is the most frequently taught compared to the other language skills. Reading skill is taught more frequently because most of the English tests are given in the form of reading test. Therefore, the students should be well prepared to do the English test as the final examination test.

Although the English teacher has already known about his students' reading achievement but he has never analyzed the students' reading achievement based on the reading comprehension components, namely word comprehension, sentence comprehension, paragraph comprehension, and text comprehension. The teacher admitted he wanted to know about the students' achievement in each component of reading because he usually gave the score based on the whole scoring method. That is why he let the researcher to conduct the descriptive research to elaborate the phenomenon.

Based on the explanations and the rationale above, the researcher was interested in conducting the descriptive qualitative research to find out whether the students'

reading comprehension achievement of recount text was good or not. Considering the description above, it was necessary to conduct a research entitled "A Study of the VIII Grade Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement of Recount Text at SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari Jember in the 2014/2015 academic year".

## RESEARCH METHOD

The research design applied in this research was descriptive qualitative by using case study. Research design is a structured plan for carrying out a research. Based on McMillan's (1992:4) definition, qualitative research is a research focuses on describing a phenomenon occurred in the real situation. This research was not intended to prove a hypothesis, but to describe the grade VIII students reading comprehension achievement tested by recount text comprehending word, paragraph, and text. The procedure in this research was conducted in some steps of activities. They are determining research topic, determining research area purposively, conducting interview by interviewing the English teacher of grade VIII of SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari Jember to obtained first-hand information concerning the teaching of English particularly reading, determining the research respondents by using cluster random sampling method by doing lottery, constructing the research instruments. The research instruments will used are reading comprehension test and documentation guide, administering reading comprehension test to the respondents, analyzing the result of comprehension test based on the indicators, discussing the research result, drawing the conclusion of the result to answer the research problem, and reporting the result of the research.

The area of this research is determined by using purposive method (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006:101). It means that this research was conducted because of a certain reason. This research was conducted in SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari Jember because of the following considerations: 1) The English teacher has taught recount text, including a personal recount text using reading aloud technique in the first semester in the 2014/2015 academic year; 2) the grade VIII students have learnt about a recount text; 3) the English teacher wanted to know the students' ability in reading comprehension based on the indicators of reading; 4) there is no research on the topic done in SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari Jember; 5) the school Headmaster and the English teacher gave permission to the reseacher to conduct this research in this school.

The population of the research is all of the VIII grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari Jember in the 2014/2015 academic year. The participants of this research were chosen purposively (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006:101). According to McMillan (1992:69) respondents or participants are individuals who participate in a research of people from whom the data are collected. There are seven classes of grade VIII in the school, each class consists of 34 until 36 students. Two English teachers are responsible to

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teach English in grade VIII. One teacher (Mr. R) teaches VIII A up to VIII E class, another teacher (Mrs. P) teaches class VIII F and VIII G class. The class VIII D was used as the research participants was chosen among the existing classes of grade VIII based on the English scores obtained from the English teacher. Because the mean scores of all the grade VIII are in the same category, one class was chosen by cluster random sampling method by doing lottery. In this research, the chosen class was class VIII A for try out test as the participants of the research.

There were two kinds of data in this research. They were primary data and supporting data. The primary data were collected from the result of try out test and reading comprehension test. While the supporting data were collected from interview and documentation. Furthermore, the interview was done to get all of the information in the school. Besides, the documentation was used to get the names of the subjects and their previous reading scores.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

This research design applied in this research was descriptive qualitative by using case study. From the research result we know that the percentage of the recount text reading comprehension achievement in general was 75.22% which categorized as "fair". It means that overall, the eighth grade students' recount text reading comprehension was in fair or average category. The highest percentage of four indicators was word comprehension with the percentage 80.20% which belonged to "excellent" category. Then, it was followed by the percentage of the sentence comprehension, 79.76% which belonged to "good" category. The percentage of paragraph comprehension was 68.05 % and it was belong to "fair" category. It means that the eighth grade students' reading comprehension achievement in comprehending paragraph meaning was in fair or average level. The last was the percentage of the text comprehension, 65.97% which belonged to "fair" category.

## DISCUSSION

From the data analysis result of the reading comprehension achievement in category, it was found that there were only 2 students who got "poor" category. The number of the respondents who got poor category was the students' number three and eight. It means that there were 5.56 % students who got "poor" category. Excellent, good, and fair category had more frequency than the frequency of "poor" category in class VIII D. The frequency of "excellent" category was 9 students or 25% and 19 students got "good" category or 52.78%. There were only 6 students who got "fair" category or 10% and there was no students got "very poor" category (0%) in reading comprehension achievement. In other words, the students' reading comprehension achievement of recount text at SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember was good.

Firstly, the results of reading comprehension achievement might be related to the previous score. The previous score based on daily test result in class VIII D showed that was about 36 students did the reading test good enough. There were nine students which included to the "excellent" category in reading comprehension achievement among 27 students. There were 9 students' whose reading scores were higher than those of the others.

For one example is student who was very enthusiastic during the reading activities from the result of the observation. Based on the teacher's interview, she did the reading in teaching learning process very good. She also took much chance to answer the teacher's question. During the teaching learning activities, she also helped her friends beside her very enthusiastically. Those reasons make her to show the great performance in reading comprehension achievement.

Another example is the student's number thirty-one who got the highest score in class VIII D. She also did teaching learning process very well. She paid full attention on the lesson very enthusiastically and carefully. She also was not hesitate to ask the English teacher if she had a problem in understanding the teacher's instruction. In addition, she shared the information with her friends and also helped them to solve the problem. It means that she did the reading activities very responsibly.

On the other side, there were two students who got "poor" category in reading comprehension achievement. They were the students' number three and number eight. Based on the teacher's interview, there were four students did not active in teaching learning process. Those two students reading comprehension achievement were included to "poor" category among four students. During the observation, it was shown that those of the students looked passive in teaching learning process. It might be caused of the lack of students' cooperation in their activities. In this case, the English teacher tried to encourage the passive students to be cooperative with the teaching learning process. However some of the students who were not active in discussing the text in the class, they still paid less attention on the lesson during the teacher's explanation.

Those four students of VIII D students also did not give response when the teacher gave the questions. It seemed that they were afraid of making mistakes. The English teacher encouraged them to be brave for making mistakes. It means that it was better than they were doing nothing. Mr. R also tried to give more questions to them in order that they would be more active. Those questions could also practise them to be brave in answering teacher's questions. However some of the students who did not give response when the teacher gave questions, they still follow the teacher's instruction to do the exercise.

Secondly, no student who got score between 0-30 or none of them belonged to "very poor" category. It means that the reading comprehension achievement of VIII D was

included to "excellent" category, "good" category, "fair" category and "poor" category.

The English teacher also took previous reading score of each class. The previous reading score of each class was taken from the daily test given by the English teacher. The highest students score of VIII D was 96. It was achieved by two students' of VIII D. In the contrary, the lowest students score of VIII D was 50. It was achieved by two students' of VIII D.

According to statistical computation, the mean score of VIII D students reading comprehension test score was 75.47. It was higher than the standard minimum score of SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember while the standard minimum score of SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember is 70. In this case, the teacher should give more attention to him students to reach score >70 for paragraph and text comprehending in reading.

In other words, it was showed that most of the eighth grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember had the ability in reading comprehension after taking the reading recount test because most of the students had achieved good scores in reading comprehension.

From the explanations above, it is clear that recount text can give some positive contributions in developing students reading comprehension achievement. It is very useful for the students to be attentive in doing reading activity. Based on the eighth grade English teacher of SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember, recount text is one of simple texts that can also ease the teacher to implement in the teaching learning process.

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the research results, data analysis, and discussion, it can be concluded that the eighth grade students' reading comprehension achievement of recount text at SMP Negeri 1 Pakusari, Jember was in (94.44%) excellent category. In the teaching learning process, the English teacher used recount text in classroom for teaching reading activity. The interview with the English teacher to collect the data of students' participation in recount text was able to show the students' active and students' potentiality on reading comprehension. There were showed that mostly of the eighth grade students were active and enthusiastic.

The reading comprehension achievement had showed that there were 9 students (25%) who got "excellent" category that had range of 90-100. There were only 19 students (52.78%) who got "good" category and the range was between 70-89. In addition, there were 6 students (16.66%) who got "fair" category and the range was between 50-69. It was also only 2 students (5.56%) who got "poor" category and the range was between 30-49. The last, there were no students (0%) who got "very" poor category and the range was between <30.

It is necessary to propose suggestion based on the description of the research conclusion. The result of this research are hopefully useful for the English teacher as information to know his students' reading comprehension achievement in reading recount text based on the reading components. By knowing the students' ability based on the reading components, it is hoped he will be able to help his students to overcome the low achievement in a certain components of reading. By doing a reflection on the result of the research, the teacher may decide for reflection purpose regarding reading comprehension achievement whether or not it is necessary, for example, to improve or to maintain the existing implementation a particular technique.

The research result are hopefully useful to be used as a reference for future researchers to conduct further research in similar topic but conducted in different research design to different level of students. For example they might apply classroom action research to solve the problem of teaching reading comprehension, or they might conduct an experimental study to know the effect of reading recount text on students' reading comprehension ability or achievement by focusing more on comprehending the components of reading, such as paragraph and text comprehending.

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