

**THE IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING DESCRIPTIVE  
TEXT COMPREHENSION ABILITY THROUGH  
CONTEXT CLUES STRATEGY OF VII GRADE STUDENTS' AT  
SMP NEGERI 1 SIDAMANIK**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This experimental study aimed to find out the improving of Context Clues Strategy on Reading Descriptive Text Comprehension. This research was used one group pre-test and post-test design. The reason for conducted this research because students' tend to used dictionary when they read English text in order to find the meaning of difficult word. However, they may not use dictionary or some stuff then can help them to understand English text in joining examination. This condition makes students' difficult to comprehend the English text because they faced different context. So, students should know about reading strategy to increase the reading comprehension without using dictionary or another instrument. One of the appropriate reading strategies to increase the students' reading comprehension descriptive text ability is context clues. The sample of this research was the seven grade students' especially class VII/D at SMP NEGERI 1 SIDAMANIK. The participants were 34 students. The step of research procedure are conducting pre-test, treatment, post-test and data analysis. The data analysis by using table categories. The data analysis showed there is significant improving of using Context Clues Strategy on reading descriptive text comprehension. The finding also proved that in the pre-test students mean score was only 39.11 and post-test score was improved to 71.11 and standard deviation of pre-test score was only 6.78 and post-test score was 12.08.*

*Keywords : Context Clues, Reading Comprehension, Descriptive Text.*

**I. INTRODUCTION**

English has been taught as a foreign language and it becomes one of the essential lessons that are taught at school or educational institutions in Indonesia. It has been taught in elementary schools, junior high schools, senior high schools, and vocational high school. The teaching and learning of English is aimed at the mastery of the language components: (spelling, pronunciation, and structure) and language skills : (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). The English teaching emphasizes the four language skills taught while the language components are taught support the language skills.

Many students in school and in the courses have difficulties in reading, but they will try to comprehend the text in English, this is problem faced by students because they cannot understand the text well but they do not know how to the answer of the question which the answer referring on reading on the lines, because of that must comprehend the text, every reading book in English such as scientific books ( newspaper, bulletins, magazines, novels etc) are good to read by the students but to comprehend about one topic on the books is difficult for the students.

A better strategy to be used, to overdue this problem by Context Clues, the words and sentences surrounding a particular word, to help the student guess the meaning of difficult word. The guessing made is usually accurate enough to understand. Problem of the research is : How to improve of reading descriptive text comprehension through Context Clues Strategy on reading ability for the seven grade at SMP NEGERI 1 SIDAMANIK ?

**II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Reading is one of the important English skills for students to learn because reading can provide some information for them. The interaction between the writer and the reader is

made possible via text. It is through the text that the writer encodes his message, and it is also through the text that the reader gets the meaning of the message by decoding it reading is the process of interpreting the symbols of the written words.

The researcher intentionally presents opinions of some authors or writers as follow:Linge (2000) states that reading comprehension is the ability to think words together into sentences and to understand the idea that the author is trying to convey in those sentences. Therefore, reading comprehension is an ongoing process of evolving thinking. When readers read, they carry on a conversation with the text. They respond with happiness, amazement, wonder, etc. they make connection, ask questions and draw inferences for better understanding and learning from what they read.

According to reading specialists (Macaro, 2003), reading is not actually a skill but a process consists of many different skills. During the past decades reading comprehension strategies are on the increase. These strategies are defined as cognitive and metacognitive actions that a learner uses when trying to go through a text. (Clark & Graves, 2005) said that:Promoting independent reading comprehension skill for students with diverse abilities is a major concern of teachers.

Larson (1984:56) says that descriptive text is the text that lists the characteristics of something. Axelrod (1985:366) says that descriptive essay is a type of writing that draws picture with words describing not only something physical and concrete but also feeling of thought. McWhorter (1986:133) says that descriptive articles and essay present ideas by providing details about characteristics of people, place, and things.

In this research, the researcher focuses on the application of a teaching strategy for mastering the words to improve the students' reading comprehension. The strategy in teaching reading comprehension is context clues. Using Context clues will help students in understanding of difficult or unfamiliar words. It means the students will easy in comprehend the various English text.

The meaning of an unfamiliar word often can be guessed by analyzing the sentences around it. This is because authors often provide clues in text that enable reader to understand the meaning of an unfamiliar word without having looked up the dictionary. Cooper said: "When readers use the familiar words around and an unknown word in a sentence, paragraph, or longer text to figure out either the pronunciation or meaning of the unknown word, they are using context clues."

Hancock (1987: 2) states that using context clues in word recognition means figuring out the meaning of a word based on clues in the surrounding context. These clues could be found in the sentence with the word, in the sentences before, or in the sentences following the word.

Pennock (1979:36) states that context clues are essentially, a hint about the pronunciation and/or meaning of an unfamiliar word. The hint, or clue, is perceived by examining the preceding and following words and sentences. By studying these surrounding words and their relationships to the unknown word, a reader may be able to gain additional insight.

Zainil (2008: 5) states: " understanding context clues" function to recognize the clues and understanding the meaning of unfamiliar words, they can be grouped into: definition clues, example clues, cause and effect clues, contrast clues, restatement clues, and modifier clues.

### **III. Research Methodology**

The data of this research is in the form of Quantitative Research. SuharsimiArikunto (2013: 27) describes quantitative research as the name implies, many are required to use numbers, starting from data collection, interpretation of the data, and the appearance of the results. In this study the researcher used a pure descriptive method or survey and verification.

The time and place of the research teaching writing using context clues strategy for seven grade students of junior high school at SMP NEGERI 1 SIDAMANIK 2019/2020. According to Arikunto (2013: 173) the population is the whole of the subject research. So what is meant by population is individuals who have properties the same even though the percentage of similarity is small, or in other words all individuals who will be the object of research. In population at 10 class and the total of students is 337. Arikunto (2013: 174) argues that the sample is partially or representative of the population studied. For the sample of the research, the writer will take two classes in order to get the data. The total number of the sample will be 70 students. The sample of this research are class VII-D and VII-E. The instrument of collecting the data was quantitative data. It was multiple choices test consists of 20 items. In collecting data, present researcher takes data from pretest and posttest. Pretest is administered to the subject before applying Context Clues Strategy in teaching reading of descriptive text. Meanwhile posttest is administered after applying Context Clues Strategy in teaching reading of descriptive text. Pretest and posttest contain the same test items.

They are just different in time allocation. These pretest and posttest are taken by try-out test which consist of 20 multiple choice items. Therefore, these tests must valid and reliable. Then, the present researcher uses these items as the pre-test and post-test which includes three steps. Those are pre-test, treatment, and post-test. The pre-test and post-test and after that looking for the total score. According to Suharsimi Arikunto (2006:245), to analyze the data, the research will use analyzing of the five categories : “very good”, “good”, “enough”, “low”, “very low”. Data analysis uses quantitative descriptive techniques utilizing results. The table of scoring the five categories :

#### **IV. RESEARCH DESIGN**

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According to Arikunto (2013: 173) the population is the whole of the subject research. So what is meant by population is individuals who have properties the same even though the percentage of similarity is small, or in other words all individuals who will be the object of research.

The sample is a portion of the population that has characteristics which is the same as the population. This study uses probability sampling techniques, namely techniques sampling that provides equal opportunities for each element (member) of the population to be chosen as a sample member.

According to Suharsimi Arikunto 2010:109 the sample is a portion or representative of the population to be studied. Sampling for research if the subject fewer than 100 people should all be taken, if the subject large or more than 100 people can be taken 10-15% or 20-25% more. The number of students in class VII is 341 students. Class VII students are divided into 10 classes. Of this population taken 10% the population so that the number of samples is 10% from 341 students is 34 students.

#### **V. DATA COLLECTION**

In collecting data, present researcher takes data from pre-test and post-test. Pretest is administered to the subject before applying Context Clues Strategy in teaching reading of descriptive text. Meanwhile posttest is administered after applying Context Clues Strategy in teaching reading of descriptive text. Pre-test and post-test contain the same test items. They

are just different in time allocation. Then, the present researcher uses these items as the pre-test and post-test which includes three steps. Those are pre-test, treatment, and post-test.

#### 1. Pre-test

The researcher gave a pre-test to the students. The pre-test is administered before the present researcher using Context Clues Strategy in reading comprehension of descriptive text. It was conducted to know how far the students score in reading. This test is given in order to know how far the students ability in reading comprehension. The data of pre-test were obtained by giving 20 items in form of multiple choices.

#### 2. Post-test

Post-test is administered after applying treatment. The post-test items are same with pre-test items. Pre-test and post-test also have some application when they are conducted in a classroom. The data of post-test were obtained by giving 20 items in form of multiple choices. The purpose of this post-test is to know the students' reading comprehension of descriptive text after using Context Clues Strategy.

### VI. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

According to (Arikunto, 2013: 134) the research instrument is a tool for researchers to collect data. The quality of the instrument will be determine the quality of the data collected, so it's appropriate if the relationship between the instrument and this data is expressed in the phrase : garbage tool garbage result.

The understanding of variables or relationships between variables is the most important capital for the compiler of the instrument to be able to describe it into sub-variables, indicators, descriptors, and items in the questionnaire, as well as observation guidelines. The data of pre-test and post-test were obtained by giving 20 items in form of multiple choices. The text contains reading descriptive text comprehension.

### VII. DATA ANALYSIS FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses about the result of the research, which consist of data analysis, the level of students' ability, research finding and discussion. As has been mentioned previously, there were sets of raw score showing the subject's progress in Reading Descriptive Text Comprehension Ability after they were taught by using Context Clues.

To get mean score of pre-test, the researcher use the formula score as the following :

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{X} &= \frac{\sum X}{N} \\ &= \frac{1330}{34} \\ &= 39.11 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the table above the mean score in pre-test obtained by the seven grade students was 39.11. This mean figure clearly showed that preexisting reading descriptive text comprehension were low. It can be seen that the activity of teaching-learning process of English lesson was still need to be improved.

To get the Standard Deviation of pre-test, the researcher use the formula scores as the following :

$$\begin{aligned} SD &= \sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{n} - \frac{\sum x}{n}^2} \\ SD &= \sqrt{\frac{\sum 54700}{34} - \frac{\sum 1330}{34}^2} \\ SD &= \sqrt{54700 - 1529} \\ SD &= \sqrt{53171} \end{aligned}$$

$$SD = \frac{230.588}{34}$$

$$SD = 6.78$$

As the criteria of result in answering the test, the researcher used the evaluation criteria according by Arikunto (2007:339).

To get mean score of post-test, the researcher use the formula score as the following :

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

$$= \frac{2420}{34}$$

$$= 71.17$$

The result of post-test obtained by the subject study showed the mean figure of 71.17. This phenomenon certainly showed as improvement of students comprehend through Context Clues Strategy.

To get the Standard Deviation of post-test, the researcher use the formula scores as the following :

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{n} - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{n}}$$

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum 174000}{34} - \frac{(\sum 2420)^2}{34}}$$

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{174000 - 5065}{34}}$$

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{168935}{34}}$$

$$SD = \frac{411.017}{34}$$

$$SD = 12.08$$

As the criteria of result in answering the test, the researcher used the evaluation criteria according by Arikunto (2007:339).

## VIII. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data analysis, the researcher found some points that important to know they are :

1. The analysis of the data has shown that the seven grade at SMP NEGERI 1 SIDAMANIK is category increased, which before using Context Clues Strategy low but after using Context Clues Strategy result are good.
2. Context Clues Strategy is a very good techniques for students' and teacher to improve motivation especially in learning reading comprehension ability.
3. Teaching reading descriptive text comprehension by using Context Clues Strategy is very affective to teacher and also for students'.
4. Teaching reading descriptive text comprehension by using Context Clues Strategy made students' more understand about meaning the word, more spirit, and build relation between students'.

Based on using Context Clues Strategy on reading descriptive text comprehension ability gives good influence for the students' and it can be helped them in relation work and taught their friend. The instrument that has been used to collect the data was multiple-

choice. The researcher finds out that students' ability in reading descriptive text comprehension was improved. It shows on comparison of students' pre-test and post-test. The mean of the pre-test score obtained by the subjects under the study in reading descriptive text 39,11. This mean figure clearly showed that the prior knowledge in writing descriptive text ability by using Context Clues Strategy of the students were low. The result of the data analysis of the post-test showed the increasing mean figures of 71,17 . The mean figure of the post-test scores obtained of the students were higher than the mean figure of pre-test score. The mean figure of the post-test scores obtained of the students were higher than the mean figure of pre-test score. This increasing score showed that there was the improvement of students' reading descriptive text comprehension when they were taught by Context Clues.

The result of the post-test score obtained by the students turned out to show progressing mean scores of 71,11. There was difference mean figure of 32 between pre-test and post-test. This significant difference mean figure suggested that context clues had been progressively improved the students' achievement in reading descriptive text.

## IX. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the data analysis in chapter IV, finally the researcher gives a conclusion of the research about using reading descriptive comprehension ability through Context Clues Strategy of VII grade students at SMP NEGERI 1 SIDAMANIK as follows :

1. The mean pre-test of students' reading descriptive text comprehension of was 39,11.
2. The mean post-test of students' reading descriptive text comprehension of was 71,11
3. Standard deviation of pre-test score was 6.78 and post-test score was 12.08 of VII grade students at SMP NEGERI 1 SIDAMANIK.
4. An increase in the improving students' reading descriptive text comprehension ability through Context Clues Strategy of VII grade students at SMP NEGERI 1 SIDAMANIK. It proved by pre-test and post-test score standard deviation different 5,3.
5. Alternative Hypothesis is accepted in the students' reading ability.

Accordance with research conclusions above, some suggestions were dedicated, as following :

1. Every English teacher could use Context Clues Strategy in teaching students' reading descriptive text because it had been prove that it gave significant contribution in improving students' competence in reading descriptive text.
2. Each teacher should choose appropriate method firstly before teaching students' reading descriptive text.
3. Teacher should run the teaching-learning in form on students' – center so that students' can be active in learning reading descriptive text in the classroom.
4. Teacher should always motivate students' to be brave starting reading descriptive text.
5. Students should exercise reading descriptive text continuously to be better writer.

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