

**THE STUDENTS' COMPETENCE IN UNDERSTANDING  
NARRATIVE READING TEXT  
AT SMAN 1 SOE KABUPATEN TIMUR TENGAH SELATAN (TTS)  
NUSA TENGGARA TIMUR**

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**ABSTRACT**

This research aimed at describing the competence of students in understanding narrative reading text at SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT. This research used descriptive research method. The population of this research is first class of SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT in academic year 2014/2015. The total number of population is 142 students in four classes. The researcher used random sampling technique. There were 20 students as sample of the research. The writer took 5 students from each class. It used reading test as instrument. The result of the research shows that Based on the students' score in reading narrative text, most of them have low competence in answering the question of narrative text. It is proved by mean students' means score in poor classification, namely 49.3. Based on student' answers in the text, it can be seen that there are some students' difficulties in reading narrative text, such as they can't comprehend the part and contents of narrative.

**INTRODUCTION**

In Indonesia English has dominated language education. The presence of English as a compulsory subject in many Asian countries has brought great advantages to education because it provides the students with access to global information and knowledge of Science and Technology. Use of English has become very popular in many schools.

Listening, speaking, writing and reading are the parts of English skills where they are considered as an integrated system because they support each other. Listening, one of the means of language communication, is used most widely in people's daily lives. Speaking is often connected with listening. This relationship is connected with the communicative activities between two people. Reading is an important way of gaining information in language learning and it is a basic skill for a language learner. And reading is one way of providing variety in classroom procedures.

Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols for the intension of constructing or deriving meaning (reading comprehension). It is means of language acquisition,

communication, sharing information and ideas. Reading is a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which is culturally and socially situated. The reading process requires continuous practice, development, and refinement, and if the people read, they used text because they can not read without text.

Text is a discourse or composition on which a note or commentary is written. In every text there is one main idea. Main idea is the important information that tells more about the overall idea of a paragraph or section of a text. This main idea will give the main point of the message in text, its a central point the author tries to make. The reader can not understand the content of the text if the text itself does not have a real information.

Teaching reading text is one of the first, and most important task when teaching English for elementary level. Reading text gives much information for the reader so the reader has to know what the information from the text well. Particularly for junior high school, students usually like material taught with real- world situation because this material will be very interesting for them.

One way that can be used in teaching reading text is using picture. It is very important to be apply as media in language teaching. It can make students are easy to predicting well the material. This media can help teacher to fulfill the instruction aims, because it is easy to apply. It means it makes students are interested in learning, because they can understand and memorize the material especially in predicting information from the text.

When the researcher doing practical teaching in SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT, he finds out that the students are still incorrect in predicting information from reading text. It influences the level of default of identifying information from reading text.

Referring to the previous explanation the researcher is interested in conducting a research entitled "The Students' Competence in Understanding Narrative Reading Text at SMP Negeri 2 Palopo".

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates the research question as follow :  
How is the students' competence in Understanding Narrative Reading Text at SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT?

Related to the research question above, the objectives of this research is : “To find out the students’ competence in Understanding Narrative Reading Text at SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT . The result of this research is expected to be useful information for :

1. The teachers

Description of student competence in Understanding Narrative Reading Text can encourage the teacher to teach the students how to find it.

2. The students the students can use the result of this research as feedback and response.

3. The future researchers

The result gives information for the future researchers to conduct further research in reading text.

This research is restricted on the students’ competence in predicting information from narrative text at SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT.

Reading is one of the most important skill in learning language besides listening, speaking and writing. Some definitions of reading proposed by some experts are provided below :

Harmer (1991) states that reading is an exercise dominated by the eyes and the brain. The eyes receive message and the brain then has to work out significance of those message. According to Miller (1975) reading is the identification and recognition of printed of written symbol, which serve as stimuli for the recall of meaning built up through past experience.

Grellet in Narma (2004) defines reading is constant process of guessing, because what one brings to the text is often more important that what one finds in it. According to Nurhama (2009) states that reading means one-way process, consisting simply of the recording of symbols from one person to another through the medium of writing or printing.

Suirmayani (2011) says that reading exercise dominated by the eyes and the brain. The eyes receive the massage and the brain has taken out the significance of these message. Mustamin (2008) states that reading is the ability to understand or no comprehend that are operating in the reader.

Sulaiman (2009) states that reading is an active attempt on the part of readers to understand writer message. The reader interact with a tries to reconstruct what the writer wish to communicate. According to Brown (1984) that reading comprehension is understanding, evaluating of information and ideas, gained through interaction between author and reader.

Nutall (1982) state that reading comprehension is not is not just reading with a loud voice but reading also to establish and understand the meaning of words, sentence, and paragraph in the relationship among the ideas.

Kustaryo (1998) states that reading comprehension is understand what has been read. It is an active thinking process depends not only comprehension skill but also the students experience and prior knowledge comprehension involves understanding the vocabulary, seeing the relationship among words and concepts, making judgment and evaluating.

Thompson et.al (1992) expresses a similar view stated that reading is complex organization of pattern of higher mental process that can and should embrace all types of thinking, evaluating, judging, imaging, reasoning and problem-solving.

To conclude, the researcher defines that reading is the ability to understand or no comprehend the written languages by reading it to acquire the ideas. Reading comprehesion is a complex process in which the reader uses the mental content to obtain the meaning from written material.

Text is the main body of a printed or written work as distinct from commentary, notes, illustration. Some definitions of text proposed by some experts are provided below:

Montgomery (2008) states that text is a discourse or composition on which a note or commentary is written; the original word of an author, in distension from a paraphrase, annotation or commentary.

According to the Oxford dictionary (1995), text is the main written or printed part of a book or page. While, Jacob (2003) writes that text is the main body of a printed or written work as distinct from items such as notes or illustration of a short passage. It also describes the process involved in the formation of working of in object or phenomenon. Meanwhile, in Free Dictionary (1990), states that text is the main body of a printed or written work as distinct from commentary, notes, illustration.

To conclude, the researcher defines text as some of sentences in paragraph. And in paragraph itself, there is an important point that talked about, it is said as main idea.

There are various kinds of text based on specific classification. According to Ekohadi (2008), there are five genres (kinds of text) for SMP students:

1. Descriptive text is used to describe special someone, something or place.
2. Recount text is used to retell past events.
3. Narrative text is used to entertain readers which has problem and solution.
4. Procedure text is used to tell how make/ operate something.
5. Report text to inform place, people or something in general.

Beside that according to Minati (2009), for SMA students there are some kinds of text, they are:

a. Narrative

To amuse/entertain the readers and to tell a story.

b. Recount

To retell that happened in the past and to tell a series of past event.

c. Descriptive

To describe a particular person, place or thing in detail.

d. Report

To presents information about something.

e. Explanation

To explanation the processes involved in the formation or working of natural or socio-cultural phenomena.

f. Procedure

To help readers how to do or make something completely.

g. Discussion

To present information and opinions about issues in more one side of an issue.

Besse (2007), states that there are four kinds of text as follows:

- a. Descriptive Text is descriptions of landscapes or persons are often to be found in narrative such as novels or short stories.
- b. Narrative text is narration is the telling of a story the succession of events is given in chronological order.

- c. Expository text, it aims at explanation i.e. the cognitive analysis and subsequent syntheses of complex facts.
- d. Argumentative text is the evaluation and the subsequent subjective judgements in answer to a problem. It refer to the reasons advanced for or against a matter.

Sulaiman in his thesis (2009) states that there are 6 kinds of text as follows :

- a. Narrative

Narrative is the telling of a story the succession of event is given in chronological order social function; to amuse, entertain, and to deal with actual or various experience in different ways.

- b. Report

Reports classify or describe something example: a combine harvester. Repots begin with a general statement which introduces a topic. In the description, facts (parts, qualities, habits, and behaviours of the subject) may be described, social function: to describe general classification.

- c. Recount

The reader tells recount what happened. They retell a past event example: a visit to a farm. Recounts begin by telling the reader who was involved, what happened, where this event took place and when it happened. Social function: to retell past events for the purpose of informing or entertaining.

- d. Descriptive

Descriptive text explain or describe how or why things, person, place, or animal happen example: how acid soil affects farm productivity. Descriptive texts begins by identifying the phenomenon (thing) that will be explained. Then there is an explanation sequence which explains how things work.

- e. Procedure

It has social function to describe how to do or to make something through a sequence of action or steps.

- f. Explanation

Explanation text is written to explain how or way something happens. Typically such text consists of description of phenomenon and exclusionary sequence. Explanation begins by identifying the phenomenon and explanatory sequence. Explanation begins by identifying the phenomenon (thing) that will be explained.

Tobiga (2009), language feature of narrative :

- a. Using process verbs.
- b. Using temporal conjunction.
- c. Using simple past.

Narrative should be requiring some elements, Rosnawati (2011) points out that have a good prose narrative story must meet the following standard namely :

- a. A narrative must mean something like; a point, purpose, and the reason for being.
- b. It must a meaningful structure and order.
- c. It must include carefully selected detail, that support the effect or meaning intended (it must leave out extraneous details) the selected details must a vivid appeal of the readers that he actually experiencing the events described.

Indah (2009) says if there are 3 feature of narrative text, they are :

- a. Social function: to amuse, entertain, and to deal with actual or various experiences in different ways.
- b. Schematic structure: orientation, complication, and resolution.
- c. Linguistic features: focus on specific participants, use of past tense, use of temporal circumstances, and use of material (action) processes.

Arafah (2010) says: narrative writing appears in and is not limited to novels, short stories, biographies, autobiographies, historical accounts, essay, poems, and plays.

Treest in Putrasyam (2008) defined feature of narrative text into:

- a. Use active verbs.
- b. Use past tense.
- c. Use conjunction.

Tariaudriany in Indah (2009), defined feature of narrative text into:

- a. Using processes verbs.
- b. Using temporal conjunction.
- c. Using simple past tense.

Hornby in Indah (2009), defined feature of narrative text into :

- a. Noun groups to describe characters.
- b. Settings time word.
- c. Action verbs.
- d. Using simple past tense.

Based on the definition above, the researcher concludes that the features of narrative text are :

- a. Event the past.
- b. Introduction.
- c. Conflict.
- d. Resolution.

## **METHOD**

This research used descriptive method. The purpose of this method was to find out the students' competence in understanding narrative text. This research was done on February 2015. Location of this research was at SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT. The population of this research is first class of SMP Negeri 2 Palopo in academic year 2014/2015. The total number of population is 142 students in four classes. The researcher used random sampling technique. There were 20 students as sample of the research. The writer took 5 students from each class. The instrument of this research was reading test. In this test, the students are expected to give correct answer based on reading text. The questions are literal comprehension questions which need students competence to predict information details of the text. There are two texts of narrative. The researcher came to the class of the first year students of SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT two times, on the third week of February. In 90 minutes of the meeting, the researcher give the narrative text to read and answer the test of the text.

The data in this research is collected through several steps as follows:

- a. At the first, the researcher explained about narrative text to the students and how to do the test.
- b. The researcher distributed the reading text of narrative to the students.
- c. The researcher gave 90 minutes to the students to do the test.
- d. The researcher collected the students' reading test.

The result of the collected test was analyzed descriptively through percentage technique:



- a. Scoring the students test result by using the following formula:

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{Score the student got}}{\text{maximal score}} \times 100$$

- b. Classifying the students' score into the following criteria:

- A. 96 - 100 is classified as Excellent
- B. 86 - 95 is classified as Very good
- C. 76 - 85 is classified as Good
- D. 66 - 75 is classified as Average
- E. 56 - 65 is classified as Fair
- F. 46 - 55 is classified as Poor
- G. 0 - 45 is classified as Very poor

(Depdikbud: 2005)

- c. Tabulating the result/score into percentage by applying the following formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = Rate percentage

F= Frequency of respondents

N= Total sample

(Sudjana,1996:320)

- d. Calculating the mean score of students' test result. The researcher used the following formula:

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

Where:

X = Mean score

$\sum x$  = total row score

N = total number of sample

(Gay,2005:14)

In this part the researcher presents about finding or the result of data analysis namely reading test and questionnaire. In reading test, the researcher used essay forms consist of 15

questions. The next table shows about the students' result of reading test, in order to see the students' competence in narrative text.

a. Students' score in reading test

Table 1: students' score in reading test.

No	Number															Students'	Students'
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Raw score	score
1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	8	53
2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	7	47
3	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	7	47
4	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	8	53
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	6	40
6	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	7	47
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	6	40
8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	4	27
9	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	8	53
10	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	9	60
11	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	8	53
12	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	8	53
13	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	9	60
14	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	9	60
15	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	7	47
16	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	6	40
17	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	8	53
18	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	9	60
19	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	9	60
20	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	5	33

Based on the data above, the students' score reading test is variance, the highest score is 9 and the lowest score is 3. It indicates that the students still lack of understanding on narrative text. They got unsatisfied score in the reading text given.

b. Classification of students' score in reading narrative text

Table 4. Students' score classification in reading narrative text

No.	Classification	Score	Post-test	
			Frequency	Percentage
1	Excellent	96 – 100	0	0%
2	Very Good	86 – 95	0	0%
3	Good	76 – 85	0	0%
4	Average	66 – 75	0	0%
5	Fair	56 – 65	5	25%
6	Poor	46 – 55	10	50%
7	Very Poor	0 – 45	5	25%
Total			20	100 %

The table above shows the students' score classification in post-test. The data above describe that in posttest there was no student classified as excellent, very good, good and average. There were 5 students (25%) achieved fair classification and most of the students namely: 10 students (50%) achieved poor classification. Then, there were 5 students (25%) got very poor. It means that the students' vocabulary ability was very low in reading narrative text.

#### c. The Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of the Students' Pretest and Posttest

After calculating the result of the students' pretest, the mean score and standard deviation of both groups are presented in the next table:

Table 5. The mean score and standard deviation of the students in the reading test

Type of Test	Mean Score	Standard deviation
Reading test	49.3	9.54

Table 5 shows the mean score of the students in reading test was 49,3. It is classified as *poor*. Standard deviation of reading test was 9.54. It means that the competence of students in reading

narrative text was not satisfied yet. It is indicated that students' competence in narrative text still low. It is supported by mean score of the students in is in the poor classification namely 49.3.

#### **4.1 Discussion**

The students' result from the test showed that most of students in reading narrative is still have low competence, it is showed by the test' result in mean score is 49.3, it is in poor classification. Based on the students' score, the highest is 90 and the lowest is 30. None of the student got in excellent classification, only 1 student got in good classification. There were 9 students' scores in good classification. Most of students' scores in fairly good (30%) and fair (26.6%) classifications. It can be concluded that the teacher should give more knowledge about reading narrative text to the students and not only knowledge but also students' interest and motivation should be increased by the teacher, so the students' competence can be improved. Many ways to improve students' competence, interest and motivation, such as the teacher should use the appropriate method and strategy to the students in learning process.

Based on the findings about the students' answers in reading text. It is indicated that there were students still faced difficulties in answering questions in reading narrative test. It is indicated that they found difficulties in comprehend the narrative text, such as they can't identified the plot, purpose and reason for narrative text and also the students can't comprehend the beginning and ending of narrative text.

Some factors that can contribute to the learning and teaching of English especially at SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT. One of them is the low motivation of students in learning. The Students seems do not realize the importance of learning English. They consider English as additional subject which is not needed in their future. Motivation is a force of doing something in someone's action. This is about why somebody does it and what are aims of doing the action. Motivation has close relationships with the aims and ambition of doing something. If someone has a high desire to reach his or her aims means that the more motivation that he or she has.

Motivation of students have very significant influences in learning process. If someone doesn't have motivation, he or she will not study hard. This condition is caused by the reality that he or she doesn't get stimulus to support him/her in studying.

There are two kinds of motivation in learning, they are intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Both of those motivation can be measured by using observation and using questionnaire. In addition, in order to be able to find out the motivation of students, someone can make an interview directly to the target.

Furthermore, based on the preliminary observation that the researcher did at SMAN 1 Soe Kabupaten Timur Tengah Selatan (TTS) NTT, it is found that the students have low spirit in studying English. It is an indicator that they have less motivation. One of the factors that contribute to this situation is that they do not realize about the importance of English for their future. Most of them do not realize yet about the importance of English.

Another factor that contributes to the learning reading mastery is the teaching and learning process. The teacher still lack of experience with the teaching of reading text comprehensively. The teacher still use the conventional way in teaching. In fact, there are so many method that can be used in teaching reading. That is why they need to improve their method and techniques in teaching English.

The other factor that contributes to the students' difficulties is the lack of facilities, then, it will be correlated with the environment of the learning process. The facilities of library still very poor. The students and teacher still have low access to the good literature. In addition, there is no internet access for teacher and students, this makes the language learning process becomes not really maximum, include the teaching of reading comprehension.

.The mastery of reading has a big relationship with the development of vocabulary. Then it is known when someone wants to be able in reading should know more vocabulary. Goodman and Mohr (1991:12) state that vocabulary is a basic part of reading comprehension. It means that we are going to have trouble to understand the text if we don't know most words in the text. This reality has big contribution to the result of this current result, the students have low ability in reading as the description of their lack of vocabulary in English.

Based on the findings above, it is proven that reading is one of the skills that need more concentration. It is in line with Goodman (1991) who stated that what Reading is exercise dominated by the eyes and the brain. The eyes receive the message and the brain has to book out the significance of these messages.

In addition, reading is complex skill, that is to say that it involves a whole series of lesser skills. And they say that reading is essentially an intellectual skill the paper by way of the formal elements of language let us say the word as sound, with the meaning which those words symbolize.

This research show that the students still have low motivation in learning therefore it influences their ability in reading skill. Furthermore, this reality indicates that the teacher should give more attention to their students especially in reading skills and Based on the explanation above it can be concluded that there are some factors that influence students can't identify narrative text, such as they still get difficulties in comprehend the part of narrative text itself

Overall, the students at SMPN 8Palopo still need to improve their ability in mastering reading narrative text.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the students' score in reading narrative text, most of them have low competence in answering the question of narrative text. It is proved by mean students' means score in poor classification, namely 49.3. Based on student' answers in the text, it can be seen that there are some students' difficulties in reading narrative text, such as they can't comprehend the part and contents of narrative.

The teacher should choose the appropriate method and strategy in teaching English, especially reading narrative text, so the students can comprehend the part and content of narrative text. In learning process, the teacher should create interesting learning and make interactive classroom atmosphere so the students can be relax and feel comfort in learning process.

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