



The Use of PowerPoint in Students' Reading Comprehension of Descriptive Text at Grade XI SMK N 6 Padang

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ABSTRACT

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill in English learning, yet students at eleventh-grade SMK N 6 Padang still faced difficulties comprehending descriptive text, particularly in determining the main idea, finding specific information, understanding vocabulary in context, and making inferences. This research aimed to describe students' reading comprehension of descriptive text through PowerPoint media and to identify the most difficult reading aspect for students. A quantitative descriptive method was used, with a population of 65 eleventh-grade students of Fashion Design at SMK N 6 Padang, from which 30 students of class XI Tata Busana 2 were selected as the sample through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a 20-item multiple-choice reading test delivered through PowerPoint-based slides and analyzed using mean scores and percentage categories. The findings showed that students' overall reading comprehension was categorized as High (mean score 80.2). Students performed very highly in determining the main idea (86.7) and finding specific information (86.0), while their performance in making inferences (76.0) and understanding vocabulary in context (74.0) was categorized as high, with vocabulary in context being the most difficult indicator. It is concluded that PowerPoint media effectively supports students' reading comprehension of descriptive text.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension; Descriptive Text; PowerPoint

INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization, mastering English as an international language is an absolute necessity, especially in the context of education. One of the most crucial receptive skills is reading. Reading, in its most fundamental sense, is the ability to understand and interpret information from a text appropriately; however, comprehension abilities are far more complex than this simple definition suggests, as they involve the interaction of the text itself, the reader's background knowledge, and the specific purpose or situation in which the reading takes place (Grabe & Stoller, 2019).

Among the various text types students must comprehend, descriptive text holds a central place in the English curriculum. Descriptive text consists of descriptions of animals, persons, things, and places (Ushchapovska, 2020), requiring readers not only to recognize vocabulary but also to identify the object being described, capture specific attributes, and connect scattered details into a coherent mental picture.

Based on the researcher's preliminary observation at SMK Negeri 6 Padang, several problems related to students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts were identified. First, students had difficulty identifying the main idea of descriptive texts; many tended to read word by word without understanding the overall meaning of the passage. Second, students had difficulty understanding detailed information presented in the text, often overlooking specific characteristics, appearance, or location described. Third, students had limited vocabulary mastery, which made it difficult for them to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words from context. Fourth, students had difficulty making inferences and deriving implicit information, as they were accustomed to searching only for direct, literal answers rather than synthesizing scattered clues to draw logical conclusions.

These problems indicate that the learning media used in the classroom were less varied and less engaging, often relying only on textbooks and printed materials that failed to fully attract students' attention. Therefore, it is necessary to use learning media that can increase students' attention, motivation, and understanding of descriptive texts. One medium that can be used is PowerPoint, since when used thoughtfully, it can enhance teaching by combining graphics and other multimedia elements to clarify students' understanding and support different learning styles (Hashemi, Azizinezhad, & Farokhi, 2012). PowerPoint presentations can also be regarded as a good instructional medium and a key element in facilitating an effective teaching-learning process (Gambari, Yusuf, & Balogun, 2015).

Several previous studies support the relevance of PowerPoint in reading instruction. Zahara and Jupri (2022) found that third-grade elementary school students taught with Microsoft PowerPoint interactive learning media achieved significantly higher reading comprehension scores than those taught with conventional media. Fathurrochman and Rahmawati (2021) reported that the use of Microsoft PowerPoint presentations positively affected students' reading comprehension. Similarly, Zikri, Darmawan, and Wahyudin (2025) found that PowerPoint-based instruction significantly improved junior high school students' reading comprehension, with the post-test mean score exceeding the pre-test mean score. These studies share similarities with the present research in their use of PowerPoint as the main instructional medium to support reading comprehension; however, this research differs in its objective and analytical method, focusing on a quantitative-descriptive analysis of Grade XI students' specific cognitive difficulties in comprehending descriptive text through PowerPoint media, rather than measuring score improvement through an experimental design.

Based on this background, the researcher was interested in analyzing students' reading comprehension of descriptive text through PowerPoint media at Grade XI of SMK N 6 Padang, and in identifying which aspect of reading comprehension was the most difficult for students.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a quantitative method with a descriptive approach. Quantitative research methods can be defined as research methods based on the philosophy of positivism, used to examine specific populations or samples, where data collection involves research instruments and data analysis is quantitative or statistical in nature (Sugiyono, 2019). This research applied a descriptive analysis approach, which is a statistical method used to analyze data by describing or portraying the collected data as it is, without intending to draw generalized conclusions (Sugiyono, 2016). The focus of this research was to describe students' reading comprehension skills following the implementation of PowerPoint media, rather than to test a hypothesis or examine a cause-and-effect relationship between variables.

The population of this research comprised 65 eleventh-grade students of Fashion Design (Tata Busana) at SMK N 6 Padang. By using a purposive sampling technique, 30 students from class XI Tata Busana 2 were selected as the sample.

The primary instrument used was a Reading Comprehension Test consisting of 20 multiple-choice items based on an English descriptive text about Mount Kerinci, presented through PowerPoint slides. The items were evenly distributed across four reading comprehension indicators, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Blue Print of the Reading Comprehension Test

No	Indicator	Item Number	Number of Items	Percentage
1	Finding Main Idea	1–5	5	25%
2	Finding Specific Information	6–10	5	25%
3	Understanding Vocabulary in Context	11–15	5	25%
4	Making Inferences	16–20	5	25%

Data collection was carried out by preparing the descriptive text material about Mount Kerinci, presenting it to students through PowerPoint slides, and administering the reading comprehension test. The collected data were analyzed using mean scores and percentage categories, based on the following classification: 81–100 (Very High), 61–80 (High), 41–60 (Moderate), 21–40 (Low), and 0–20 (Very Low).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Students' Overall Reading Comprehension

The data analysis revealed that students' overall reading comprehension of descriptive text through PowerPoint media was categorized as High, with a mean score of 80.2 from a total score of 2,408. The classification of scores is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Overall Classification of Students' Reading Comprehension Scores

No	Category	Score Range	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Very High	81–100	15	50%
2	High	61–80	11	37%
3	Moderate	41–60	4	13%
4	Low	21–40	0	0%
5	Very Low	0–20	0	0%

Table 2 shows that 15 out of 30 students (50%) achieved very high reading comprehension, 11 students (37%) achieved high comprehension, and 4 students (13%) achieved moderate comprehension. None of the students fell into the low or very low categories, indicating that PowerPoint media was generally effective in supporting students' comprehension of descriptive text.

Students' Reading Comprehension per Indicator

Students' reading comprehension was further analyzed based on four indicators: main idea, finding specific information, understanding vocabulary in context, and making inferences.

Table 3. Students' Ability in Main Idea Indicator (Mean = 86.67)

No	Category	Score Range	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Very High	81–100	18	60%
2	High	61–80	6	20%
3	Moderate	41–60	4	13%
4	Low	21–40	2	7%
5	Very Low	0–20	0	0%

Table 4. Students' Ability in Finding Specific Information Indicator (Mean = 86.00)

No	Category	Score Range	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Very High	81–100	17	57%
2	High	61–80	7	23%
3	Moderate	41–60	4	13%
4	Low	21–40	2	7%
5	Very Low	0–20	0	0%

Table 5. Students' Ability in Vocabulary in Context Indicator (Mean = 74.00)

No	Category	Score Range	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Very High	81–100	14	47%
2	High	61–80	5	16%
3	Moderate	41–60	3	10%
4	Low	21–40	6	20%
5	Very Low	0–20	2	7%

Table 6. Students' Ability in Making Inferences Indicator (Mean = 76.00)

No	Category	Score Range	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Very High	81–100	10	34%
2	High	61–80	10	34%
3	Moderate	41–60	5	16%
4	Low	21–40	4	13%
5	Very Low	0–20	1	3%

Based on the mean scores across the four indicators, students achieved very high performance in determining the main idea (86.67) and finding specific information (86.00), while their performance in making inferences (76.00) and understanding vocabulary in context (74.00) was categorized as high. Understanding vocabulary in context recorded the lowest mean score, indicating that this was the most difficult aspect of reading comprehension for students. This finding suggests that students still struggled to deduce or infer word meanings contextually without relying on a dictionary or explicit direct translation within the text.

Discussion

The findings showed that the overall reading comprehension of Grade XI students at SMK N 6 Padang was categorized as high, with a mean score of 80.2. This result indicates that the use of PowerPoint media could support students in understanding descriptive texts. The structured presentation of information, combination of text and visual elements, and systematic slide organization helped students focus on important information and construct meaning from the text, in line with Hashemi, Azizinezhad, and Farokhi (2012), who argue that PowerPoint enhances teaching by combining graphics and multimedia elements to clarify students' understanding.

Students performed best in determining the main idea and finding specific information, aspects that are directly and explicitly presented in the text and were likely made clearer through PowerPoint's structured slide layout. In contrast, understanding vocabulary in context remained the most challenging indicator, suggesting that visual and structural support from PowerPoint alone was not sufficient to fully address students' vocabulary limitations. This finding is consistent with Zikri, Darmawan, and Wahyudin (2025), who also found that PowerPoint-based instruction improved students' reading comprehension, while implicit and inferential aspects of comprehension remained comparatively more difficult for students to master. This suggests that teachers should combine PowerPoint media with explicit vocabulary-building strategies to further strengthen students' contextual word-meaning skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the reading comprehension ability of Grade XI students at SMK N 6 Padang in understanding descriptive texts through PowerPoint media was categorized as high, with an overall mean score of 80.2. Among the four reading comprehension indicators, determining the main idea obtained the highest achievement (mean 86.67), while understanding vocabulary in context was the most difficult indicator for students (mean 74.00). These findings indicate that PowerPoint media can effectively support students' reading comprehension of descriptive text by presenting learning materials in a structured and engaging way, although additional strategies are still needed to strengthen students' vocabulary in context. English teachers are recommended to use PowerPoint as an instructional medium in teaching reading comprehension, particularly for descriptive texts, while giving greater attention to vocabulary-building strategies. Future researchers are encouraged to examine the use of PowerPoint media in English learning with different skills, text types, or research participants.

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