

# USING SKIMMING TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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## Abstract

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan apakah ada peningkatan pemahaman membaca siswa yang signifikan menggunakan teknik skimming. Tes kemampuan membaca adalah instrumen untuk pengambilan data. Subjek penelitian ini adalah siswa tingkat kedua SMP Immanuel Bandar Lampung. *Paired sample t-test* diimplementasikan untuk menguji perkembangan kemampuan membaca siswa setelah implementasi teknik skimming. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada peningkatan pencapaian kemampuan membaca siswa yang secara statistik signifikan. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa teknik skimming bisa mempermudah siswa meningkatkan kemampuan membaca mereka.

The objectives of the research were to find out if there was any significant improvement of students' comprehension in reading through skimming technique. The reading comprehension test was the instrument to elicit the data. The subjects of this research were the second grade students of SMP Immanuel Bandar Lampung. Paired sample t-test was implemented to examine the students' reading improvement after the implementation of skimming technique. The result of research showed that there was a statistically significant improvement of students' reading comprehension achievement. This suggests that the skimming technique can facilitate the students to improve their reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** skimming technique, descriptive text, reading comprehension

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is an important skill in teaching and learning English since it is one of basic language skills that students have to master. Comprehension in reading is a matter of making sense of text, and of relating written language to what we have already known and to what we want to know (Smith, 1982: 5—6). Consequently, it is necessary that the students should be encouraged to apply a good and effective technique in reading so that they are able to get the information from the text.

The researcher still commonly finds the students who have low level of reading awareness and give negative attitudes and resistance toward reading. Alvermann & Moore (1991) investigate that students are assigned to read increasingly complex materials, but teachers spend little time showing them how to be strategic. Therefore, it is very important to encourage the students to create a different perspectives on why the reading practice is important for themselves. Based on researcher's experience the students tended to gain a low reading comprehension score. It was commonly caused by their difficulties in finding main idea and discovering particular information, especially in a limited time. Therefore it is necessary to guide the students in applying the proper technique to obtain the information from the text appropriately and quickly.

A well known technique which is recognized as an effective strategy to encourage students' capability in getting information and main idea is skimming. Brown

(2004:213) explains that skimming is the process of rapid coverage of reading matter to determine its gist or main idea. When the readers skim certain page, they take the main ideas from the reading material without reading all the words. In the act of skimming, the readers focus only on the substantial ideas and skip over the insignificant, marginal, and indegligible parts. Unfortunately, during the teaching learning process, the teachers rarely applied skimming technique, due to lack of information and knowledge about this technique. The application of skimming which was not optimally organized made this condition is leading the students to the inability of gaining sufficient reading comprehension.

There are several correlated studies dealing with speed reading technique and reading comprehension. The first previous study was conducted by Muawanah (2011) which entitled 'Improving Students' Reading Comprehension Ability of Recount Text through Scanning and Skimming Technique'. The result of the research indicated that there was a significant improvement of students' reading comprehension ability of recount text after being taught through scanning and skimming technique. The second previous research was conducted by Hutabarat (2012), which intended to find out the effect of applying skimming technique on grade XI students' reading comprehension of SMA Methodist 7 Medan. The result of the study was that the students who were taught by applying skimming technique had better reading comprehension scores and it also helped the students to get the

main idea easily. It was also found that there was significant effect of applying skimming technique on students' reading comprehension, so that the teachers were advised to apply the most suitable reading technique for students. The third previous study deals with teaching reading comprehension of hortatory exposition text using skimming and scanning to the eleventh grade students of SMAN 7 Kediri conducted by Anjarwati (2015). It intended to find out how the implementation of teaching reading comprehension of hortatory exposition text using skimming and scanning was. From the findings of the research, it was concluded that skimming and scanning make the students easier and quicker in comprehending the text.

To summarize, based on the previous studies above, it can be stated that all above mentioned studies reaffirmed the importance of the use of precise reading technique to improve students' reading comprehension, in this case is the skimming technique. However, there were still some issues which have not been investigated, those were the detailed information about what the most improved reading aspect is and how the students' response is after being taught through skimming technique. Therefore, this research was conducted to give contribution and support for the previous research concerning the use of skimming technique in improving students' reading comprehension in descriptive text.

This research is focused on students' reading comprehension in descriptive text. Through this research the researcher wants to find

out if there is any significant improvement and difference between students' comprehension in reading descriptive text before and after being taught through skimming technique, the aspect of reading comprehension that was improved the most after being taught through skimming technique, and how the students' response is after being taught through skimming technique. Therefore, this research was carried out to investigate the use of skimming technique to improve students' reading comprehension in descriptive text at eight grade of SMP Immanuel Bandar Lampung.

## METHODS

The quantitative research based on the experimental class. One group pretest-posttest design was used. The population in this research is the second/eighth grade students of SMP Immanuel Bandar Lampung in the academic year of 2015/2016. The samples of this research were class VIII A and VIII B. The classes were selected by using random sampling technique, by utilizing lottery system. The instrument of this research was the reading comprehension test. The tryout test was organized in class VIII B before pretest, treatment, and posttest were organized. Tryout test was conducted to measure the reliability of pretest and posttest, and to make sure whether the test was good or bad in validity, reliability, level of difficulty, and the discrimination power. In getting the content validity of reading comprehension test, the researcher arranged the materials based on the standard competence in syllabus for second grade of senior high school students, that was students were able to construct

meaning of functional text, while in identifying the construct validity of the test, the specification table of reading aspects was used to determine whether the test represented the materials discussed or not. To measure the coefficient of the reliability of the test items, the researcher used the Pearson Product Moment formula, in which the result showed that the test had a high reliability, that was 0.99. Research data was analyzed from the result of the three activities; those were pretest, posttest and questionnaire. Pretest and posttest items were derived from the selection of tryout test items. The researcher applied the treatment in which the researcher teaches the students descriptive text reading by using skimming technique. After the posttest was organized, the researcher distributes the questionnaire to investigate the students' response towards skimming technique. The questionnaire consists of eight statements that related to the aspects of reading (main idea, supporting details, inference, reference and vocabulary). Its result was scored based on Likert Scale in which the scores range from 1—5.

## RESULTS

The results from the statistical calculation showed the total score of students' pretest score increased from 1643 up to 2083 in the post test, so that the difference of students' score after applying the treatments was 440 points. The mean score increased from 56.7 to 71.8. The result can be seen from the following table.

**Table 1. Difference of Pretest and Posttest Score**

Category	Pretest	Posttest	Gain
<b>Total</b>	1643	2083	440
<b>Mean</b>	56.7	71.8	15.2

The calculation using paired samples t-test of SPSS version 23 was performed to find the improvement. From the calculation it was found that t-ratio was higher than t-table; the result was  $16.652 > 2.042$  and two-tailed significant showed that  $p < 0.05$  ( $p=0.000$ ). It meant the value of t-ratio was higher than t-table ( $16.652 > 2.042$ ) and the significant was lower than 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, it can be stated that  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted. The sig 2-tailed was 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ) which lower than 0.05. It could be stated that there is a significant improvement of students' achievement of reading comprehension after they were being taught through skimming technique in descriptive text.

The students' achievement scores of reading aspects increased from 572 (56.4%) in the pretest to 727 (71.6%) in the posttest, from the maximum value of 1015. The summary can be seen from the following table.

**Table 2. The Summary of The Students' Result in Each Aspect**

Reading Aspects	Pre test	Posttest	Gain	Gain Percentage (%)
Main Idea	171	230	59.0	20.3
Specific Information	168	223	55.0	19.0
Reference	114	135	21.0	10.3
Vocabulary	81	92	11.0	7.6
Inference	38	47	9.0	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>15.3</b>

From the table, it could be seen that the students' scores improved in all aspect of reading, and the aspect of reading comprehension that increased the most was finding the main idea (20.3%).

From the result of the data analysis of questionnaire, it was found that most of students' response was positive. The score of the questionnaire was 831 out of 1160 (71.1%) and the mean score was 103.13. The questionnaire result can be seen from the following table.

**Table 3. Distribution Score of Questionnaire Result**

No.	Questionnaire Statements	Score
1	Skimming technique increased my interest in learning English.	109
2	Skimming technique facilitated me to find the main idea in the text.	102
3	Skimming technique facilitated me to predict the content of the text (Inferring the text).	89
4	Skimming technique helped me to save the time in reading and understanding the text.	117
5	Skimming technique facilitated me to specify the reference.	93
6	After skimming technique was being applied, it was easier to answer the questions.	108
7	Skimming technique facilitated me to find the specific information from the text.	113
8	Skimming technique facilitated me to understand the difficult words.	94
<b>Total Score</b>		<b>825</b>

## DISCUSSION

After conducting the research, the researcher arrived at some findings concerning the use of skimming technique and descriptive text as reading material on the treatments. From the results of the data analysis, it is found that the total score of students' pretest score increases from 1643 up to 2083 in the post test. The difference of students' score after applying the treatments is 440 points. The mean score in the pretest is 56.7 increases to 71.8 in the posttest. Hence, there is an improvement of the students' score about 15.20. The value of t-ratio is higher than t-table ( $16.652 > 2.05183$ ) and the significant value is lower than 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). It could be inferred that the result was statistically significant. The calculation above indicates that there is a significant improvement of students' reading comprehension of descriptive text after being taught through skimming technique at eight grade of SMP Immanuel Bandar Lampung.

Based on the researcher's investigation, before the students were introduced to apply the proper skimming technique, they used to waste their time to understand certain texts in the reading comprehension test. The researcher encouraged the students to apply the skimming technique as a breakthrough, since one of the most effective methods to cope with that problem was by getting a general overview of the text before beginning to read it in detail. Skimming is a technique that helps students to get a sense of its overall logical progression and make decisions about where to place the readers' focus when they have a

limited time in reading (Freedman, 2012). With skimming, the readers read only what is important to their purpose. Skimming helps the readers to locate the information and general ideas of the text quickly while making sure they use their time wisely. Based on the result of data analysis, it was proven that skimming helped the students to realize the purpose of their reading activity.

Based on the statistical result of the pretest and posttest, it was concluded that most of the students answered the items of finding main idea correctly. One of the main objectives of skimming is to identify the main idea in the text. Skimming which means to read quickly and aimed to look for main ideas in a text makes the readers more efficient at learning material and completing research. By applying skimming properly, the readers could get the essence from reading material without reading all the words. When they could apply skimming technique appropriately, they would be able to decide whether the reading material is useful and need to be read carefully.

Based on the results of questionnaire it can be concluded that skimming technique was helpful for the students, especially in accomplishing the reading comprehension test that they often find in school examination. In this research, the researcher could investigate that the students had a high interest to study descriptive text through skimming. Baron (2015) stated that if educators and parents want to raise the next generation of readers, they need to get serious about the strategies. In this case,

applying the skimming technique properly is considered as one of the effective strategies to raise up the students' interest in reading.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the result of the data analysis and discussion in chapter IV, the researcher draws some conclusions. The test result shows that the mean score of posttest was higher than pretest. Therefore there is a difference of students' reading achievement in which the gain score is 15.20. It is also found that the value of t-ratio is higher than t-table ( $16.652 > 2.05183$ ), and the significant value is lower than 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). It means that there is a significant difference and improvement on students' reading achievement in descriptive text before and after being taught through skimming technique.

The next aspect that was investigated through this research was the aspect of reading comprehension in descriptive text that was most improved after being taught through skimming technique. From the result, it was found that identifying main idea was the aspect that was most improved. In the pretest, total score of finding main idea items was 171, while on the posttest, the score increased to 230 (gain score: 59; 20.3%).

The result of questionnaire shows that the most of students' response after being taught through skimming technique to improve students' reading comprehension in descriptive text was positive. It can be concluded that skimming technique was helpful for the students, since most of the students

agreed that skimming can increase their interest in learning English, facilitate them to find the main idea in the text, save the time in reading and understanding the text, make them easier to answer the questions, and facilitate them to find the specific information from the text.

The researcher puts forward some suggestions concerning several things that further research should implement. The first suggestion is that further researchers should try to analyze the use of skimming technique to improve students' reading comprehension in other text genres since this research focuses only on the use of skimming technique to improve students' reading comprehension in descriptive text. Skimming is a good technique when a reader wants to know if a text covers the information he/she needs, especially if the material is non-fiction. Then, further researchers should also conduct similar research at different levels of students, since the technique is appropriate for any level of students. Finally further researchers should conduct similar research in a smaller group of data collecting subject, since it was difficult to monitor the every single subject if the number of students is too large. This research involved a class consisting 29 students in treating and collecting the data, so that the researcher was unable to make sure whether every student applied the skimming technique correctly or not. The smaller group of the data subject will ease the supervision of skimming application.

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