

**ASSESSMENT OF READING SKILLS USED BY ENGLISH TEACHERS AT THE  
EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 7 DENPASAR**

**Ida Ayu Putu Putri Wijayanti**

**Abstract:** *Reading skills, which is still considered a one of the fundamental skills, has a significant impact on students' capability in understanding English as a second language. This concerns to the expectation on their exams and other crucial tests that they have to take in the future. This study is conducted to find out how English teacher in SMP Negeri 7 Denpasar learn how to improve their reading skills since this public school was known for its dynamic teaching method which led to questions on how the teacher maintained the class's progress whilst the recent-made curriculum was applied. This resonates with the mission of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia which makes reading literacy tops the 6 (six) literacy abilities that must be mastered during their formal learning. Thus, the aims of the study is to find out the method in teaching reading skills and its assessment method in which both of these aspects are linked to how students's reading skill are trained. This study was done by employing qualitative-based method. The reading criteria was generated from self-made observation checklist consisting various way of assessing students reading skills. The results reveal that Text-Based Instruction is primarily used by the teacher to conduct the reading session including five different types of reading assessment (Reading Aloud, True or False, Direct Questioning, Summary and Reading Aloud in Simple Past). In addition, Repetition method is also often encouraged to the students who are lacking in their reading skills. Even so, it is important for the teacher to account one of the main factor that mostly contribute to their improvement depends on how the teacher create well-composed assessment that is ideal to them.*

**Keyword:** *Assessments, Teaching Methods, Reading Skills, Junior High School, English Teacher.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Junior high school students are considered as children whose ages range between thirteen and fifteen. As Brown (2004) stated, students in that age only started transitioning in terms of self-consciousness, while also transitioning in the body and the mind. In this phase, students are expected to understand short texts and essays such as a procedure, descriptive, recount, and narrative texts, as well as write them. Furthermore, students are required to possess the right comprehension skills according to their level of study. Thus, mastering reading skills are considered to be a compulsory to have specifically in junior high school.

It is undeniable that students in junior high schools should be equipped with advanced assessment that is in line with their understanding level in order to, which may require several criteria to undertake this purpose to the point where it might involve an incremental degree of complexity than the elementary level. Yet, based on the prior researches, the lack of reading skills still becomes a common issue for most junior high school students in Indonesia specifically in terms of their reading assessment scores. Therefore, this study is invested in uncovering what are the most relevant assessment methods applied in public school in terms of reading skills.

Assessment is generally determined as the most essential part of instruction as well as the credible instrument to measure students' learning skill in particular subject. As stated by Rixon (1992) that in the course of learning, how students are assessed is determined by their skill's level. The available research on reading teaching methods and assessment practices is considerably changing due to the curriculum policies. Often times, assessments embrace the use of textbook which has always been the go-to method

of instruction traditionally. However, with the emergence of teaching effectiveness assessment techniques, they revealed that most of the students' ability to absorb text contents are not even up to the expectation. This has led many researches to develop and improve existing approaches to learning and to introduce and experiment with new ways of teaching. Thus, this study focuses on further research in exploring the related issues.

SMP Negeri 7 Denpasar is one of the top Public Junior schools in Denpasar, specifically located in Tegal Harum, West Denpasar. This school is accredited A by BAN S/M (Badan Akreditasi Nasional Sekolah Madrasah) or School / Madrasah National Accreditation Board. Prior to the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, SMP Negeri 7 Denpasar had accelerated the 2013 curriculum where the main focus of this curriculum encompasses student's academic skill in general. Here, the English subject is a compulsory subject taught from first grade to third grade. In addition to that, there is a language laboratory and English Club as an extracurricular activity, which facilitates students to access English program more easily. In terms of the school achievement, some of the national awards in English competition has been accomplished by some students from this school.

Taking these issues into account, this study's main goal is to perform a comprehensive description of the two aforementioned problems and provide updated information through an in-depth analysis. In addition, this research publication is expected to track the evolution of research interests and topics in English teaching methods in reading realms over time through the of implementation of the new curriculum called "Merdeka Belajar" which embark the of transition method within the school system. Therefore, this study is laid out in the theory a book entitled "Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching" written by Richards and Rodgers (2017) and the theory entitled "Language Assessment Principles and Classroom Practices" by Brown (2004).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study is qualitative research because it focused on teaching applications including teaching method and assessment. According to Creswell (2012), there are four main methods to gather required data in qualitative research. First, observation, is a process where the researcher is required to take a note of the entire activities related to the main topic being studied. Second, interview where the researcher retrieves the data through face-to face interview with the participant. Third, documents which enable the researchers to gather all necessary documents used by the participant in the study. This part provides information about how this study was conducted by applying a qualitative approach starting from the data source, collecting the data, analyzing the data, and presenting the analysis.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Analysis of Teaching Method**

The observation was taking place in the 8.5 class on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 11.20 pm. The prompt discussion was delivered by asking students regarding their holiday's activities. This attempt was done to engage students' attention and actively participate during the class session. The responses were varied from each student and they seemed intrigued to convey their thoughts and a glimpse of their stories to the class. There were at least six students gave their response to the teachers' question. Afterwards, the teacher began to immerse the students with the main discussion topic by

asking them to open the book page and later read it for a few minutes individually.

The textbook was a narrative text with scientific theme cited from one the article on national geographic as the source of the text. In this case, reading using silent and aloud were fostered to enable their learning progress in comprehending the context either individually or collaboratively before going into the main discussion with the teacher. Brainstorming was majorly incorporated at the beginning of the class which was aimed to reinforced their critical thinking as well as their confident in speaking out their thoughts on the issue being discussed. In the text, there are four short paragraphs containing primarily discussed and portrayed a story of scientist investigation on plastic hazards which was found inside of a sea turtle. Moreover, there were some points where some of the students had to ask the teacher to explain vocabularies that found it unfamiliar. The aims of giving them times to read themselves first before discussing it altogether were to primarily to prevent temporary word memorization. This could be done only if they were curious on something and thrived to be familiar with the meaning behind it. As a note, the teacher allowed them to use any source they had such as google translate or directly asked the teacher to solve the problems they were facing while reading.

During the core activity, Text-Based Instruction method was primarily utilized by the teacher in the class involving activities where the teacher started off the topic by pointing out one of the student's names to read the directed passage. Since there were only few short passages contained in the text, only six students were called to read their parts in turns. During whilst-reading session, the teacher identified each individual ability in terms of pronunciation wise as well as their comprehension level in understanding what they had read by redemonstrating the possible difficult terms found in the passage which later was followed by the whole students to repeat it one more time. Lastly, during post-reading session, the teacher gave additional information to the students and how they could reflect them on daily basis. On several occasion, several questions related to the text were asked by the teacher and students were given a chance to raise their hand to convey the answer loudly and clearly.

The post-reading session were done after all students had finished reading their parts. In this session, the teacher gave several additional information which entailed the moral lesson of the text. Exercises were later presented as an exercise to find out one verb consisted in the text and converted it into the past form. As opposed to writing it down on their notes, they were instructed to write it down on the white board in sequence. Throughout this direct exercise, repetition method was again emphasized by asking them what was the meaning of the word they had written on the board.

There were some challenges faced by the students who were lacking of reading skill and understanding of some English vocabularies which led them to feel uneasy when the teacher tried to test them individually. Moreover, at the end of the core discussion, the teacher randomly picked several students to draw a conclusion of the text. There were four students were being called to de their conclusion in short. The teacher also opened for any additional opinion, disagreement, or perhaps elaboration to their friends' statements as the lesson already reached the goals.

### **The Analysis of Reading Assessment**

The analysis of the reading assement corroborated the results of the teaching method analysis. The finding was obtained from observation data speciifcally during reading assessment session which was based on the materials provided in the textbook.

The material was regarding a recount text talking about environment. In this discussion there were several methods in which the teacher utilized to sharpen students' reading skills in particular.

No	Types of Assessment	Items
1	Perceptive Tasks	Reading Aloud True or False
2	Interactive Tasks	Direct / Oral Questions
3	Extensive Tasks	Making Summary
4	Teacher-made tests	Reading Aloud : Past Simple

According to the data, reading aloud, true or false, oral questioning, making the moral lesson and reading words by its past simple form were preferred by the teacher in order to assess students' reading skills. The following explanations were described below:

1. Perceptive tasks were initially employed by conducting reading aloud sessions by taking turns. Each student was instructed to read the selected text per sentence loudly and clearly. This session was operated sequentially in order to investigate individual's skills in terms of pronunciation and vocabulary understanding. The following assessment involved true and false tasks which were provided within the reading text. Students were tasked to work collaboratively to determine whether a statement aligned with the information contained by putting the alphabet "T" if it is correct or "F" for incorrect statements.
2. Interactive tasks were incorporated through the use of oral questioning in which the teacher randomly selected their names to ask requisite questions regarding the topic discussion and asked other students to elaborate the answers provided the students failed to reach expected answers in the target language.
3. Extensive tasks were operated by asking the students to directly convey the summary of the text including the moral lesson and how they could incorporate it to their real-life setting. Additionally, there were several students who answered the questions, however only two students managed to answer it correctly in the target language.
4. Teacher-made tasks were employed after the reading session which was presented by asking each student to convert a base verb contained in the text into the simple past form and read it properly.

## CONCLUSION

One of the main foundations of reading skills is the ability of recognizing and identifying the meaning of the word when it is structured into a sentence within the passage which may not be easy for students who had not yet achieved their minimum reading skills level in their prior grades. Thus, this study explored how reading assessments practices through analysing how the teacher utilized its teaching method in advance. Firstly, the result of teaching method analysis showed that Text-Based instruction method was mainly preferred during the reading session in order to focus

more on how they could read the words accurately. This method was explicitly designed by teaching them the structures and grammatical features of the written texts. This type of method was used by the teacher in recount text by additionally taking account linguistic features such as past tense.

The last, the result of reading assessment revealed that the applied assessments were Reading Aloud, True or False, Oral Questioning, Summary and Practise Reading in Past Simple. These assessments were done to train their problem solving in which only can be obtained by working collaboratively. The teacher's role was to monitor and guide the students who were lacking in grasping the meaning within the context area. Moreover, the use repetition during their learning session was deemed exceedingly prominent by the teacher when it comes to building their reading skills since expanding their vocabularies understanding enable their skills to improve significantly.

### REFERENCES

- Abidondifu, A.C., 2021. *Category Shift of Noun Phrase Found in The Translation of Romeo and Juliet Novel (Undergraduate Thesis)*. Denpasar: Mahasaraswati University.
- Alwi, et al., 2000. *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
- Catford, J.C., 1965. *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. London: Oxford University.
- Creswell, J. W., 2012. *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*, 4th ed. Boston: Pearson.
- Darso, D., 2018. *Category Shifts In Translation: A Case Study On The Translation of English Complex Noun Phrases Into Indonesian*. *Lingua Scientia*, Vol. 25, No.1, June, p11-19.
- Divaswari, G.A., 2018. *The Translation of Noun Phrases in Terence Blacker's Storybook entitled In Stitches with Ms Wiz into Tertawa Dengan Ms Wiz. (Undergraduate Thesis)*. Denpasar: Udayana University.
- Katamba, Francis. 1993. *Morphology*. The Macmillan press: London.
- KBBI Online, Language Development and Fostering Agency, viewed 10 July 2023. <https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id>
- Kroeger, P., 2005. *Analyzing Grammar: An Introduction*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Kumar, R. 2011. *Research Methodology: A Step-by-step for Beginners (3rd Edition)*. New Dehli: SAGE Publications India.
- Larson, M.L., 1998. *Meaning Based Translation*, 2nd ed. Maryland: University Press of America.
- Machali, Rochayah., 2000. *Pedoman Bagi Penerjemah*. Jakarta: Ex Grasindo.
- Maria, G.O., 2021. *Analysis of Translation Shift In A Novel (English-Indonesian Translation)*. *Dialektika*. Vol. 7, No. 2, Desember, p72-93.
- Newmark, Peter., 1988. *Textbook of Translation*. New York: Prentice-Hall International