



## THE ABILITY OF CLASS X STUDENTS IN UNDERSTANDING EXPOSITION TEXT AT SMA 1 NEGERI KERUMUTAN

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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the ability of tenth-grade students in understanding exposition texts at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan. The research is important because students' comprehension of exposition texts remains a challenge, particularly in identifying text structure and linguistic features, despite the emphasis on text-based learning in the Merdeka Curriculum. This study employed a quantitative descriptive method with a field research approach. The population and sample consisted of 36 tenth-grade students selected through a total sampling technique. Data were collected using a written test designed to measure students' understanding of exposition text structures, including thesis, argumentation, reiteration, and linguistic features. The data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative analysis through score classification, percentages, and mean scores. The findings showed that the students achieved an average score of 83.3, indicating a relatively strong level of comprehension. Students performed best in identifying thesis statements (86.1), while difficulties were still found in identifying reiteration sections (79.8) and interpreting certain linguistic features. These findings highlight the need for more interactive and analytical learning strategies to improve students' comprehension of exposition texts, particularly in deeper text analysis activities.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language plays an important role in education as a medium for communication, critical thinking, and knowledge development. In Indonesian language learning, reading comprehension is one of the essential skills that students must master because it supports their ability to understand, analyze, and respond to information critically. One type of text that requires analytical comprehension is exposition text, which aims to present ideas, arguments, and factual information logically and systematically. Through exposition texts, students are expected not only to identify information but also to evaluate arguments and understand how ideas are constructed within a text.

In the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, text-based learning has become a major focus in Indonesian language instruction. Students are required to understand various text genres, including exposition texts, which contain structural elements such as thesis, argumentation, and reiteration, as well as specific linguistic features. Mastery of these aspects is important because exposition texts are widely used in academic materials, scientific articles, and public information media. Therefore, students' ability to comprehend exposition texts is closely related to the development of literacy and critical thinking skills.

However, many students still experience difficulties in understanding exposition texts. Several studies have shown that students often struggle to identify text structures, distinguish supporting arguments from conclusions, and interpret linguistic features used in exposition texts. These problems are influenced by factors such as limited vocabulary mastery, low reading interest, and less varied teaching strategies in classroom learning. As a result, students tend to focus only on reading the text superficially without conducting deeper analysis of the information presented.

Previous studies have discussed students' ability in exposition text learning from different perspectives. Prasetyawati (2016) found that students' ability in writing exposition paragraphs was categorized as good, while Riyanto (2016) reported that students still faced difficulties in understanding text structures and linguistic features. Similarly, Gustriani et al. (2023) emphasized the relationship between critical reading skills and students' ability to understand exposition texts. These studies indicate that exposition text comprehension remains an important issue in language learning. However, most previous studies focused on writing ability or general reading comprehension, while limited attention has been given to students' detailed understanding of exposition text structures and linguistic features in specific local educational contexts.

Based on preliminary observations conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan, students showed enthusiasm during Indonesian language learning, yet several students still experienced difficulties in identifying thesis statements, differentiating argumentation from reiteration, and understanding linguistic features within exposition texts. This condition demonstrates that students' comprehension ability has not been fully developed, particularly in analytical reading activities. In addition, research related to exposition text comprehension in rural or regional school contexts such as SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan is still limited, even though local learning conditions may influence students' literacy achievement differently from urban schools.

Therefore, this study is important to provide a contextual description of students' ability in understanding exposition texts at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan. The findings of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research can enrich studies on reading comprehension and exposition text learning in Indonesian language education. Practically, the results are expected to help teachers design more interactive and analytical learning strategies to improve students' comprehension of exposition texts, particularly in identifying text structures and linguistic features effectively.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher conducted a study entitled "The Ability of Tenth-Grade Students in Understanding Exposition Texts at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan."

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research employed a quantitative descriptive method with a field research approach. The quantitative descriptive design was used to describe students' ability in understanding exposition texts based on the data obtained from the research instrument. This method was considered appropriate because the study focused on measuring and describing students' comprehension levels rather than testing hypotheses or examining causal relationships. The field research approach was conducted directly at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan to obtain factual and contextual data regarding students' comprehension of exposition texts.

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan, Pelalawan Regency, during the 2025/2026 academic year. The population of this study consisted of all tenth-grade students totaling 36 students. Since the population size was relatively small, the researcher applied a total sampling technique in which all population members were included as the research sample. This technique was selected to obtain comprehensive data and minimize sampling bias.

The main instrument used in this research was a written comprehension test. The test was designed to measure students' understanding of exposition texts, particularly in identifying exposition text structures and linguistic features. The assessment indicators included: (1) identifying thesis statements, (2) analyzing argumentation, (3) identifying reiteration sections, and (4) analyzing linguistic features such as conjunctions, persuasive expressions, technical terms, and factual statements. The test consisted of multiple-choice and short-answer questions adjusted to the students' level of comprehension and the learning objectives in the Merdeka Curriculum.

To ensure the quality of the instrument, the written test was developed based on exposition text learning indicators in the Indonesian language curriculum and was consulted with Indonesian language teachers and academic supervisors for content validity. The validation process aimed to ensure that the test items were relevant to the research objectives and capable of measuring students' comprehension accurately. In addition, item analysis was conducted through a preliminary review to evaluate the clarity, relevance, and difficulty level of the questions before the test was administered to students.

The reliability of the instrument was strengthened by using consistent scoring criteria and clear assessment indicators. Each correct answer was scored based on predetermined answer keys and rubrics to minimize subjectivity in scoring. The scoring rubric focused on students' accuracy in identifying text structures and interpreting linguistic features within exposition texts.

Data collection techniques in this study included tests and documentation. The written test was administered directly to the students to obtain quantitative data regarding their exposition text comprehension ability. Documentation was used to support the research process, including students' attendance lists, answer sheets, and classroom activity records during the implementation of the study.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative analysis. Students' scores were calculated and classified into five categories adapted from commonly used educational assessment standards in Indonesian schools. The categories are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Score Classification Criteria

Score Interval	Category
90-100	Very Good
80-89	Good
70-79	Fair
60-69	Poor
<60	Very Poor

The researcher calculated the mean of student's achievement using the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma X}{N}$$

Where:

$\bar{X}$  = Mean score

$\Sigma X$  = Total score of all students

$N$  = Number of students

The percentage of students' achievement was calculated using the following formula:

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

Where:

P = Percentage

F = Frequency

N = Total number of students

After the data were analyzed, the researcher interpreted the findings exposition texts. The results were then presented in the form of tables, percentages, and descriptive explanations to provide a clearer interpretation of the research findings.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Results

The research was conducted on 36 tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan. The data were obtained through a written test designed to measure students' ability in understanding exposition texts based on text structures and linguistic features. The assessed aspects included thesis identification, argumentation analysis, reiteration identification, and linguistic feature analysis.

The results of students' scores were classified into five achievement categories: very good, good, fair, poor, and very poor. The classification of students' achievement is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Students' Ability in Understanding Exposition Texts

No	Score Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	90-100	Very Good	10	27.8%
2	80-89	Good	14	38.9%
3	70-79	Fair	8	22.2%
4	60-69	Poor	3	8.3%
5	<60	Very Poor	1	2.8%
<b>Total</b>			36	100%

Based on Table 2 most students were categorized in the good level. Fourteen students (38.9%) obtained scores between 80–89, while ten students (27.8%) achieved very good scores between 90-100. Furthermore, eight students (22.2%) were categorized as fair, three students (8.3%) were categorized as poor, and one student (2.8%) was categorized as very poor. The overall average score was 83.3, indicating that student's comprehension of exposition text was relatively strong. Student's achievement in each assessed aspect is presented in table 3.

**Table 3.** Students' Achievement in Each Aspect

No	Assessed Aspect	Average Score	Category
1	Thesis Identification	86.1	Good
2	Argumentation Analysis	82.5	Good
3	Reiteration Identification	79.8	Fair
4	Linguistic Features Analysis	84.7	Good
5	Overall Average	83.3	Good

The table shows that the highest average score was obtained in the thesis identification 86.1, while the lowest average score was found in the reiteration identification

(79.8). This finding indicates that students generally understood the main ideas presented at the beginning of exposition text but still experienced difficulties in identifying concluding or reaffirming statements.

## **Discussion**

The findings indicate that the ability of tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan in understanding exposition texts was generally at a good level, as reflected in the overall average score of 83.3. Most students were able to identify thesis statements and supporting arguments correctly, suggesting that students had adequate understanding of the general structure of exposition texts. This result supports the view of Kosasih (2013), who states that exposition texts are organized systematically to present opinions and supporting arguments logically, making the thesis section relatively easier for students to identify because it is commonly placed at the beginning of the text.

The highest achievement was found in thesis identification. This may occur because thesis statements usually contain the central topic or main opinion of the text, which is explicitly stated and easier to recognize by students during reading activities. In classroom learning, students are also more frequently trained to determine main ideas and topic sentences, which contributes to their ability to identify thesis sections effectively.

In contrast, students obtained the lowest score in reiteration identification. This finding indicates that students still had difficulty distinguishing reiteration from supporting arguments or conclusions. Reiteration often requires deeper comprehension because students must understand how the writer restates opinions and strengthens arguments indirectly. According to Tampubolon (2008), reading comprehension involves not only recognizing explicit information but also interpreting implied meanings and relationships between ideas within a text. Therefore, identifying reiteration demands higher analytical reading skills compared to identifying thesis statements.

The findings are consistent with Riyanto (2016), who reported that students frequently experience difficulties in understanding exposition text structures and linguistic elements. Similarly, Gustriani et al. (2023) emphasized that students' critical reading ability significantly influences their understanding of exposition texts, particularly in analyzing arguments and conclusions. However, this study provides a more specific contextual description of students' comprehension in a regional school setting at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan, where limitations in reading practice and analytical learning activities may influence students' performance differently.

In addition, students showed relatively good performance in linguistic feature analysis, although some students still struggled to interpret technical terms, conjunctions, and persuasive expressions. This condition suggests that students may recognize language features at a surface level but still need guidance in understanding their functions within the text context. Limited vocabulary mastery and insufficient exposure to analytical reading activities may contribute to this difficulty.

The findings of this study also have important pedagogical implications. Since reiteration identification became the weakest aspect, teachers should implement more

interactive and analytical teaching strategies to improve students' deeper comprehension skills. Strategies such as collaborative text analysis, guided reading activities, group discussions, and explicit instruction on exposition text structures can help students distinguish between thesis, argumentation, and reiteration more effectively. Intensive reading exercises that focus on identifying relationships between ideas within texts may also strengthen students' critical reading abilities.

Overall, the results demonstrate that exposition text comprehension among students at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan has developed relatively well, but analytical understanding of text structures still requires improvement. Therefore, strengthening critical reading instruction and providing more contextual text analysis activities are essential to support students' literacy development in Indonesian language learning.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the ability of tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Kerumutan in understanding exposition texts was relatively strong, as indicated by the overall average score of 83.3. Students generally demonstrated good comprehension in identifying thesis statements, argumentation, and linguistic features of exposition texts. However, students still experienced difficulties in identifying reiteration sections and interpreting certain linguistic elements, indicating that deeper analytical reading skills still need improvement.

The findings of this study contribute to Indonesian language education, particularly in understanding students' comprehension of exposition texts within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum. This study highlights that students' difficulties are not limited to recognizing explicit information but also involve analyzing relationships between ideas and understanding implicit meanings within texts. Therefore, exposition text learning should emphasize not only reading activities but also analytical and critical reading practices.

Practically, the findings suggest that teachers should implement more interactive and student-centered learning strategies, such as collaborative text analysis, guided discussions, and intensive reading exercises, to improve students' ability to analyze exposition text structures more effectively. These strategies are expected to strengthen students' critical literacy skills and support better comprehension of exposition texts.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. The research was conducted only at one school with a relatively small sample size consisting of 36 students, so the findings cannot be generalized broadly to other educational contexts. In addition, this study used a descriptive quantitative design, which focused on describing students' comprehension ability without examining the effectiveness of specific instructional interventions. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples from different schools or regions to obtain broader findings regarding exposition text comprehension. Further research may also apply experimental or intervention-based methods to investigate the effectiveness of particular teaching strategies in improving students' analytical reading skills and understanding of exposition texts.

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