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# ANALYSIS OF USING SUSTAINED SILENT READING STRATEGY TOWARD STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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## Abstract

*The objective of this study is to examine the efficacy of implementing the Sustained Silent Reading approach as a means to enhance students' proficiency in comprehending descriptive texts within the context of English language learning. The participants of this study were selected from a specific group of pupils in Class X at 1 Public High School Metrokibang who had previously demonstrated a limited comprehension of descriptive literature. The researcher employed qualitative methodologies to examine various subjects, employing a combination of purposive sampling, direct observation, and structured interviews with the designated participants. The interview procedure entails the posing of four inquiries by students, to which students thereafter provide responses in their capacity as informants or subjects. Based on the present investigation, it was determined that pupils encountered challenges in comprehending the English language due to the inadequacy and inefficiency of the employed instructional approaches. The implementation of the collaborative reading technique in the classroom setting may lead to less focus among students, hence hindering their comprehension of English descriptive texts. However, the implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading approach in educational settings has been found to enhance students' comprehension of descriptive literature, hence improving their overall reading comprehension skills. Hence, it was determined by the researcher that the utilisation of this approach has the potential to enhance students' comprehension of descriptive text and foster a heightened level of engagement in the learning process.*

**Keywords:** *sustained silent reading; learning strategy; reading comprehension; descriptive text*

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## Introduction

The educational curriculum in schools focuses on enhancing pupils' proficiency in English language communication, encompassing both verbal and written forms (Zein et al., 2020). According to Contero Urgal (2019), English courses are designed to cultivate knowledge and foster favourable attitudes towards the English language and its associated skills. These three entities are additionally interconnected with the four components of language proficiency within the educational syllabus, namely auditory comprehension, oral communication, textual comprehension, and written expression. These four features have the potential for improvement, either through simultaneous enhancements or by specific modifications. This project aims to

enhance reading skills, with a specific focus on improving the ability to comprehend and analyse descriptive writings in the English language.

The acquisition of reading abilities often occurs through formal education in a school setting. The acquisition of language is a fundamental and crucial aspect of human development, serving as both a means of acquiring knowledge and a tool for effective communication (Dobinson & Dockrell, 2021). The uniqueness of this phenomenon lies in its limited occurrence among those who possess reading skills, as not everyone is able to harness its potential for personal empowerment and cultural integration. Hence, the cultivation of reading proficiency among kids holds inherent importance. The acquisition of proficient reading abilities enables children to effectively assimilate

a greater quantity of knowledge and information. Furthermore, it has been shown that exposure to descriptive writings in the English language can lead to considerable improvements in individuals' English language proficiency (Ismail et al., 2017).

Nevertheless, not all students, particularly those enrolled at 1 Public High School Metrokibang, have achieved the same level of proficiency. Despite the implementation of various measures aimed at enhancing students' capabilities, including punctual commencement of lessons, utilisation of the lecture method, and provision of relevant practise questions and assignments, these endeavours have not yielded significant improvements in students' abilities. Consequently, students' academic performance remains subpar, with grades consistently falling below average. Researchers propose an additional approach to augment students' proficiency in comprehending descriptive texts in the English language, namely through the utilisation of Silent Reading methods.

According to Pilgreen (2000), Sustained Silent Reading is a pedagogical approach that involves the practise of reading silently without any concurrent disruptions, with the objective of fostering independent reading habits among pupils. According to Asmaniarti and Ratmanida (2018), educators have the capacity to enhance their silent reading endurance by demonstrating positive attitudes towards silent reading and offering illustrative examples. Put simply, silent reading refers to the act of reading without vocalising the words, so allowing the reader to comprehend the material without altering its substance. This approach is predicated around the meticulous examination of the text, the cultivation of a serene environment, and the complete focus of pupils, so enhancing their comprehension of the reading material.

Moreover, Sustained Silent Reading encompasses three primary attributes, specifically self-selection, role modelling, and non-accountability. The primary attribute, known as self-selection, pertains to the motivation of students in their selection of diverse books for reading purposes. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), motivation becomes more robust as students' level of curiosity intensifies. Within this academic discipline, students have the opportunity to choose books that are relevant to their personal interests and intellectual inquiries. The liberation of interest and curiosity has been found to enhance students' learning motivation, hence leading to an improvement in the quality of

their learning experiences. Conversely, the aforementioned heightened level of motivation is also intricately linked to the second quality, namely the concept of role modelling.

Students perceive educators and fellow students who engage in quiet reading as exemplary figures. Through the adoption and execution of this particular strategy, there will be a noticeable rise in the visibility, scrutiny, and emulation of constructive roles by other individuals. This is the space where students encounter influential figures who can provide guidance and enhance the calibre of their educational experience. In contrast, this approach entails that students are not required to produce reports, evaluations, or synopses of their reading encounters. This phenomenon can be referred to as non-accountability. Students will direct their attention towards the material or text they are engaging with, so transforming the act of reading into a personalised endeavour. This approach fosters a sense of tranquilly and ease, as students are relieved from the distractions posed by extraneous tasks that may hinder their concentration during the learning process.

Furthermore, within the framework of this strategic approach, Sustained Silent Reading encompasses factors such as productivity, quality, efficiency, flexibility, excellence, development, and satisfaction. By employing this particular approach, students have the potential to enhance their personal productivity as they are driven to assimilate diverse knowledge and information in accordance with their individual interests and curiosity. The aforementioned factor contributes to the enhancement of the educational outcomes, thus leading to a notable improvement in the evaluation of learning quality by educational institutions. Conversely, this approach offers advantages to educators by virtue of the enhanced efficiency and flexibility it affords, resulting in lower expenditure of time and energy. When engaged in silent reading, kids have the opportunity to independently absorb the material, allowing educators to allocate their time towards other learning objectives. This approach facilitates optimal adaptability within the educational experience. The self-development experienced by students can also be attributed to their happiness with the process of learning. The current perception among students is that they no longer perceive the reading process as burdensome, which has resulted in a decline in their proficiency and comprehension of the assigned texts or lesson materials.

Furthermore, this approach yields advantages for not only students but also educators, teachers, and educational institutions. Educators find this method to be creative since it effectively and efficiently addresses student dynamics. On the contrary, this approach serves as the initial measure for educational institutions to enhance innovation and efficiency in a supportive and productive educational setting. However, given the scope of this study, it is imperative to elucidate additional facets pertaining to the domain of reading comprehension in relation to students.

The aforementioned factor greatly enhances students' comprehension of descriptive texts, as the ability to comprehend written language is contingent upon their capacity to extract and generate meaning (Caldwell, 2008). In practical terms, this skill is associated with a heightened awareness of the grammatical structure, vocabulary usage, colloquialisms, idiomatic expressions, syntactic elements, as well as the semantic and pragmatic implications embedded within the text. The evaluation of the efficacy of this ability is contingent upon various factors, including the calibre of instruction, student engagement, and the methodologies employed. According to Bari et al. (2021), the implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading approach has the potential to enhance students' reading comprehension abilities, hence positively impacting their comprehension of descriptive texts.

Moreover, this study aims to provide an analysis of the efficacy of incorporating the Sustained Silent Reading approach in enhancing students' comprehension of descriptive texts in the English language. This research primarily focuses on the constraints of student outcomes, while acknowledging the potential relevance of increasing benefits for students, instructors, and school institutions. Consequently, the findings will yield more explicit criteria and encompass a wider range of entities.

## Methodology

This research use qualitative research methods to collect data by examining the implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading technique and its influence on students' comprehension of descriptive texts. Within the framework of textual research, the data employed in this study encompasses written and spoken language collected from the subject's verbal communication and observed behaviour. The

current study collected data on the reading skills of students in class X at 1 Public High School Metrokibang. The findings indicate a significant lack of ability among these students to comprehend descriptive texts in the English language.

The researcher utilised the Purposive Sampling methodology to pick research participants in order to determine the subject of the investigation. The utilisation of this methodology is crucial due to its incorporation of a systematic process for selecting samples from a population, guided by preset criteria. The determination was made by the researcher in collaboration with pertinent stakeholders. Additionally, the researchers employed other data, namely the daily assessment results of the students. The data is employed to evaluate the students' level of comprehension before giving questions to them as participants in a research project.

Furthermore, the researcher collected prior data through the use of observational methods and the engagement in interviews with people. Observations are undertaken with the aim of acquiring a more comprehensive comprehension of interrelated elements. The researcher performed an observational study on the school's demographic characteristics, classroom conditions, and academic achievements of the students. Simultaneously, interviews are carried out in order to collect viewpoints, understandings, and interpretations that serve as indicators of students' understanding. The justification for employing this methodology is based on the utilisation of interviews as a mechanism for acquiring full perspectives from participants, often involving a restricted number of individuals. This research approach prioritises students as active participants, with the researcher collecting data by seeking responses or comments from students during the interview stage. Therefore, in this particular area, the researcher utilised a study technique that consisted of the following four inquiries:

**Table 1. Research Design**

No	List of Question
1	Are English lessons tough?
2	How do you teach descriptive text?

3	What is the Sustained Silent Reading Method that the teacher uses in Studying?
4	Are you able to answer questions about descriptive text by using the sustained silent reading method?

We proceeded to assess the reliability of the study by the application of Data Triangulation, wherein the outcomes obtained from the primary subject were juxtaposed with those derived from supplementary subjects in order to ascertain validity. Researchers engage in the process of data reduction in order to derive the core findings that encapsulate the broader outcomes. Therefore, the outcomes of this study can be ascertained by following the aforementioned procedures.

## Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings derived from the data acquired through observations and interviews performed with students at 1 Public High School Metrokibang, as reported by researchers. Furthermore, these findings are also pertinent to the comprehension of English descriptive texts among students when employing the Sustained Silent Reading approach. The findings are presented in written form, consistent with the utilisation of qualitative methodologies in this study. Based on the data gathered from participants or respondents in the study cohort:

### 1. Are English Lessons Tough?

There were four students who responded to this question and became informants who represented the entire response. These responses are quoted based on direct student narratives. The answer can be seen as follows:

“Yes, it's difficult, Miss, especially if we are asked to understand the text.” (Student with initials As)

“It's difficult, Miss, I have always been biased towards English, especially in reading and understanding texts.” (Student with initials CN)

“It's difficult, Miss, it's like mathematics. In mathematics, the formulas are hard to remember, whereas in English, the meaning is hard to understand.” (Student with initials MN)

“For English lessons, if I say it's difficult, sis, especially if there's text like that, I understand what it means, but I don't know how to answer questions using English.” (Student with initials JS).

Based on the aforementioned four comments, it can be inferred that students enrolled in class X at 1 Public High School Metrokibang have expressed their perception that the subject of English poses challenges. Many students encounter challenges in comprehending literature written in a particular language, which then affects their performance in other cognitive domains. The initial two participants expressed that their comprehension of the English language was intricate. The individual expressed that they encountered challenges in comprehending the English content they had perused. This predisposes individuals to possess a subjective inclination that perceives the acquisition of English language as a challenging endeavour. Furthermore, another student went so far as to draw a comparison between the level of difficulty in the subject matter and that of Mathematics, which is known for its intricate formulas. One notable distinction lies in the challenge faced by pupils in comprehending the intended significance of the textual material they encounter. In contrast, the fourth student expressed familiarity with the content of the material, although encountered challenges in formulating appropriate comments or solutions to inquiries pertaining to the text. Hence, it was verified that English is a multifaceted discipline. The level of difficulty mostly pertains to the comprehension of the textual content being read.

Conversely, the inadequate assimilation of English materials or texts among pupils can also be attributed to the instructional approach and classroom context. The reading-aloud approach is commonly employed by educators, when pupils are instructed to take turns reading the material aloud. In the present approach, students exhibit a susceptibility to many distractions that impede their ability to maintain focus and concentration due to the frequently unfavourable learning environment prevalent in classrooms. Typically, kids exhibit a lack of attentiveness towards the reading activities of their peers when it is their turn to read, often becoming preoccupied with other distractions such as engaging in recreational games. This phenomenon also results in a diminished level of attentiveness towards the subject matter and a reduced capacity to effectively comprehend and internalise the textual content. Put differently, this circumstance also implies a lack of adequate concentration on assimilating the educational content provided during lectures.

## 2. How Do Teachers Teach in Class?

There were four students who became informants in responding to questions in this section. They respond to questions related to the strategies or methods used by teachers in teaching in class. Their responses represent an assessment of the shortcomings of commonly used strategies. They also described the situation in the learning process. Overall, the responses of the four students can be seen as follows:

"So far, we have been teaching descriptive texts, where we are told to read them together, so it's noisy, Miss. Some people read it speeding, some people do it slowly." (Student Initials RS)

"The teacher told to read-aloud, Miss. So, we read it like a race. So, it's not clear to read. Classes are also not conducive because of the noise." (Student Initials RA)

"We were told to take turns reading Miss. Sometimes it's busy. So some focus, there are those who play games and don't listen." (Student Initials CN)

"Read it together with Miss, sometimes taking turns reading each paragraph. Students who don't read just listen." (Student Initials MA)

Based on the replies provided by the four students, it can be inferred that teachers commonly employ the practise of collective oral reading as a pedagogical approach in English language instruction. The efficacy of this approach is diminished due to variations in students' vocal characteristics, including pitch and speed, as reported by the initial student. The disparity in sound frequency has an adverse impact on the learning environment, leading to a lack of optimal concentration among students in comprehending the subject or text. The second student also drew a comparison between the reading process and a race to determine reading speed. In addition to this, the utilisation of this strategy results in diminished focus of pupils towards their peers who are allotted reading opportunities, as they become preoccupied with their own activities or engage in playful behaviour.

Due to the unfavourable circumstances, kids who had not yet been given the opportunity to read were preoccupied with their own activities and engaging in recreational pursuits. The failure to acknowledge the reading process undertaken by fellow pupils results in an inability to accurately comprehend the textual material.

Furthermore, as articulated by the fourth student, this procedure was implemented by facilitating a rotational reading approach, wherein students took turns or read paragraph by paragraph while their peers engaged in active listening. Nevertheless, the auditory perception procedure encountered obstacles due to the adverse circumstances. Students are often more attentive to the voices of their peers, which tend to be more prominent, rather than focusing on the actual subject or information being presented by their fellow students. Therefore, the instructional strategies commonly employed by educators demonstrate limited efficacy in facilitating students' comprehension and retention of lesson content during classroom instruction.

## 3. What is the Sustained Silent Reading Method that the teacher uses in Studying?

There were four students who became informants in responding to questions regarding their knowledge of the Sustained Silent Reading strategy used in the learning process. They respond using their basic understanding of the learning strategy. Their responses also illustrate how this strategy is not yet fully familiar in classroom teaching practice. Overall, the four responses can be seen as follows:

"I was confused, Miss. What does that method mean? Apparently, I understood after Miss told me. I think this method is very helpful in learning. So, we know the descriptive text more focused and calm." (Student US Initials)

"In my opinion, the sustained silent reading method is appropriate, Miss, especially for learning to read texts. We are more focused, calmer to read and understand it." (Student Initials CN)

"The sustained silent reading learning that is used helps us, for example, so we focus more on studying. Reading the text also becomes more focused compared to reading busy. With this method, I can understand the content of the existing descriptive text reading. If we are reading loudly or the class is noisy, we won't focus, let alone answer questions. "The SSR method that Miss uses makes learning even more active." (Student Initials MN)

"The learning has become calmer, Miss. I read the descriptive text, and it becomes more focused, so we know better what the content of the text is." (Student Initials JS)

Based on the aforementioned four responses, it is evident that the Sustained Silent Reading technique has superior efficacy and efficiency. Despite initial confusion among certain students regarding the implementation of this particular method, ultimately, they acknowledge its efficacy in facilitating their learning process. An educational approach that prioritises tranquil, individualised reading encounters and the establishment of an environment favourable to learning also facilitates the enhancement of students' comprehension of the material or substance presented in the book. As indicated by the initial student, they possess a heightened ability to comprehend descriptive material with increased levels of attentiveness and attention. The tranquility that ensued was further corroborated by the second student, who expressed that the serene atmosphere facilitated a smooth progression of the educational experience. The present scenario diverges from the simultaneous reading technique due to potentially more favourable classroom conditions, resulting in pupils encountering difficulties in comprehending the text's content and responding to the provided questions. The enhancement of question-answering proficiency is intricately linked to the augmentation of comprehension about the textual material, hence enabling students to ascertain the significance of each text they peruse.

The initial phase for pupils in delving into English learning using text-based approaches is marked by this heightened level of comprehension. This aspect is also associated with their aptitude for reading, specifically in terms of comprehension. The aforementioned skill encompasses the capacity to discern the linguistic components that contribute to semantic significance, and this capacity is honed through the act of building individual words and sentences within the given text. Given an environment that is suitable and a high level of concentration, kids will find it more attainable to acquire this skill. Therefore, the utilisation of the Sustained Silent Reading approach exhibits a correlation with the development of pupils' reading comprehension skills. This rise will also have an impact on students' inclination towards reading, since the act of reading becomes an individualised endeavour that fosters personal growth and development. Hence, in a more expansive context, this approach aligns with governmental initiatives aimed at fostering student engagement in reading and

enhancing literacy skills. By cultivating this inclination, children can develop positive reading behaviours for their own benefit, as well as for the individuals in their vicinity and the broader context in which they exist. Therefore, this approach offers advantages in terms of its efficiency and efficacy in enhancing comprehension of English descriptive writings.

#### **4. Are you able to answer questions about descriptive text by using the sustained silent reading method?**

There were four responses from students who became informants in answering questions regarding their ability to answer questions after the learning process of practicing the Sustained Silent Reading strategy. This response reflects students who get other positive impacts from using this strategy. These responses were given in various sentences but with similar answer tendencies. Overall, the responses can be seen as follows:

“In order to answer the question, I can do it, Miss. With the method that Miss uses, I understand better what Miss is saying in understanding the descriptive text.” (Student Initials RS)

“To answer the descriptive text question, I can, Miss, what Miss said about the descriptive text is easier to understand. Because the classroom atmosphere is calm and conducive, it makes it easier for us to study.” (Student Initials CN)

“For this method, we can be more focused, especially before Miss explained that if there are questions about Ideas, Vocabulary and others, we can answer calmly because the class atmosphere is quiet.” (Student Initials RA)

“I can answer existing questions more focused and calmly, and know what is meant by the question.” (Student Initials MA)

Based on the four replies provided by the students, it can be inferred that they perceived a positive impact from the implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading technique. The initial group of students reported an improvement in their comprehension of the descriptive material. Additionally, this facilitates the students' ability to respond to inquiries posed by the instructor. The heightened level of awareness is substantiated by the classroom environment being more tranquil and congenial, hence facilitating the instructional and educational processes for students. Moreover, pupils additionally acquire



an enhanced comprehension of the text as they are able to discern many components, such as the central theme, lexical items, inferences, and specific details.

The aforementioned identification procedure is associated with the enhancement of students' reading comprehension skills. Individuals have the ability to carefully examine the material in a sequential manner, comprehend its content, search for its intended significance, and discern the fundamental essence encapsulated within the text. The implementation of this enhancement is unsurprisingly associated with pupils attaining comprehension in language usage, as well as the identification of the central theme and other textual particulars. Consequently, drawing upon their comprehensive comprehension, individuals are able to promptly respond to inquiries or prompts posed by instructors.

Based on the analysis of these four claims, it was observed by the researcher that the implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading method resulted in an increased level of student engagement and concentration in the learning process. The rationale for incorporating continuous silent reading in this study stems from the observation that its implementation fosters increased student engagement and participation in the reading experience. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) refers to the practise of engaging in silent reading without any concurrent disruptive activities. This approach enhances their knowledge of the reading skills required for interpreting descriptive texts. The utilisation of this particular method has been observed to yield a substantial enhancement in both productivity and the level of comprehension attained by individuals when engaging with textual material. The findings diverge from those obtained when employing the reading together technique. When comparing the two, it can be observed that pupils derive more advantages in terms of their reading proficiency, which in turn has a significant impact on their comprehension of English literature.

Furthermore, persistent quiet reading facilitates autonomous engagement in reading activities, eliminating the need for teacher assistance. Furthermore, this approach exerts a positive impact on the educational journey and the personal growth of pupils. According to Siah and Kwok (2010), this approach facilitates students' development of personal autonomy in reading, enabling them to establish a strong connection between themselves and the book they engage with. Through the activation of the reading

process, students are able to enhance their comprehension of the learning content, engage in critical reflection on their reading outcomes, and cultivate a heightened level of passion for the overall learning endeavour.

## Conclusion

Based on the extant research, it can be inferred that the implementation of the Sustained Silent Reading approach enhances students' comprehension of descriptive texts within the context of English language acquisition. This comprehension is associated with the reading abilities of pupils, which exhibit notable improvement throughout the instructional activities conducted inside the classroom setting. As their comprehension deepens, their proficiency in interpreting English texts improves. Moreover, this facilitates their ability to effectively address inquiries posed by instructors throughout regular assessments as well as at the conclusion of the academic term. Additionally, this approach fosters active and passionate student engagement in the learning process, as it creates a more favourable classroom atmosphere and promotes enhanced student concentration.

Based on the aforementioned result, it is recommended that educational institutions facilitate the cultivation of pedagogical approaches by teachers that effectively address the diverse learning needs and preferences of students. The dynamics among students are influenced by their individual interests, character traits, and prevailing trends, all of which must be effectively managed alongside educational advancements. Educators want to contemplate certain tactics that can facilitate students in enhancing their productivity, quality, and depth of comprehension. This approach can be complemented by the integration of various educational resources in conjunction with strategic innovation that aligns with the objectives. The process of formulating a strategy cannot be haphazard, since it must also be directed towards enhancing the calibre and attributes of pupils. In this particular scenario, educators may opt to incorporate the Sustained Silent Reading approach as a viable instructional tool to augment students' comprehension of descriptive texts within the context of English language acquisition.

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