



The Impelementation of Genre-Based Approach to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension of Descriptive Text

Indah Octaviani¹, Yohanes Gatot Sutapa Yuliana², Yanti Sri Rezeki³

^{1,2,3}(English Language Education Study Program, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tanjungpura University Pontianak)

Email: ¹indahoctaviani2210@gmail.com, ²yohanes.gatot.sutapa.y@fkip.untan.ac.id, ³yantifkip2018@gmail.com

Korespondensi penulis: yohanes.gatot.sutapa.y@fkip.untan.ac.id,*

Abstract. *The basis for this research was the student's difficulties with reading comprehension. The aim of this research was to investigate the effect of using a Genre-based approach on student's ability to comprehend descriptive text better. This research was carried out at SMPN 4 Sungai Raya on the eighth-grade students in class D in the academic year 2017/2018. The results of this research showed that, following the application of the Genre-based approach, students' reading comprehension of descriptive text improved. In addition, the approach's application enhanced the students' positive responses to the learning activities, which in turn improved students' learning interest toward reading. To summarize, the research findings proved that the implementation of a Genre-based approach improves the student's reading comprehension of descriptive text in the eighth-grade students of SMPN 4 Sungai Raya Kabupaten Kubu Raya in the academic year 2017/2018.*

Keywords: *Descriptive Text, Genre-Based Approach, Reading Comprehension*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini dilakukan berdasarkan kesulitan siswa dalam memahami teks bacaan. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pengaruh penggunaan pendekatan berbasis Genre terhadap kemampuan siswa dalam memahami teks deskripsi dengan baik. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di SMPN 4 Sungai Raya pada siswa kelas delapan D di tahun ajaran 2017/2018. Hasil dari penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat peningkatan pada pemahaman membaca siswa pada teks deskriptif setelah pendekatan berbasis Genre diterapkan. Selain itu, penerapan pendekatan ini juga meningkatkan respon positif siswa terhadap kegiatan pembelajaran, yang mana meningkatkan ketertarikan siswa dalam membaca. Singkatnya, hasil penelitian membuktikan bahwa penerapan dari pendekatan berbasis Genre meningkatkan pemahaman membaca teks deskriptif pada siswa kelas delapan SMPN 4 Sungai Raya Kabupaten Kubu Raya di tahun ajaran 2017/2018.

Kata kunci: Pemahaman Membaca, Pendekatan berbasis Genre, Teks Deskriptif

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a vital skill for foreign language learners. Then from learning to read students can read for information, for pleasure, for their career and their other purposes. Reading helps the mind to develop through comprehension of written language. Readers can learn new things by reading. Understanding or comprehending what is written in a text is the goal of reading. First of all (Gunning, 2010) claimed that students build meaning through the constructive process of comprehension, drawing from their prior knowledge. Next, (Serravallo, 2010) stated that reading comprehension is the process of thinking through, absorbing, and deriving meaning from a text. Reading something without understanding what the writer is actually

saying is pointless. It is like someone only takes a look at the letters or symbols in the book and then finishes. It can not be called reading if someone just reads and does not get anything. Therefore reading was taught in school.

There were many types of text which were taught in junior high school based on the syllabus. The eighth-grade students were expected to learn many genre types, including recount, descriptive, and narrative with the curriculum developed by the school. Considering what the researcher saw when observing the eighth students of SMPN 4 Sungai Raya, especially class VIII D, many students struggled with understanding descriptive texts as they were reading them. They failed to understand the meaning of words in the context of descriptive texts, as well as to identify the main idea, supporting details, references, and inferences. These issues would be taken into consideration in suggesting a reading teaching strategy with the aim of enhancing students' comprehension of descriptive text.

While searching for a suitable method to solve the students' difficulty in understanding a descriptive text, the researcher discovered some earlier research had been conducted by other researchers. (Adelnia & Salehi, 2016) studied the differences between a traditional and Genre-based approach to reading instruction. The result then showed that teaching reading to EFL students through a Genre-based approach could enhance their performance in reading lessons. It also demonstrated that there is a significant difference in reading comprehension performance of students taught using a genre-based approach against those taught using a traditional approach. Another research done by (Sadeghi, Hassani, & Hemmati, 2013) showed that the improvement of ESP learners' reading comprehension was significantly helped by education centered on a genre. The last similar research from (Fitrawati, 2009) indicated that reading techniques based on the Genre-based approach may make it easier for the learners to comprehend the material. The reason for this was that the reading that came from the Genre-based approach gave the students access to a variety of reading exercises that helped them improve their vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Based on the previous research above, indicates that a Genre-based approach is a suitable way to overcome students' difficulties in understanding descriptive texts.

A methodology used in the teaching and learning process that has a close relationship with text is the Genre-based approach. This approach is utilized to carry out the classroom activity in the process of teaching and learning based on genre. (Richards, 2006, p. 36), "Genre-Based Approach, also known as a text-based instruction, sees communicative competence as involving the mastery of different types of texts." The understanding of the chosen textual

genre is emphasized in both teaching and learning when using the Genre-based approach. Building the context, modeling and deconstructing the text, joint construction of the text, independent construction of the text, and linking to related text are five steps of the Genre-based approach, according to Feez and Joyce as cited in (Richards, 2006, p. 39). Thus in this research, the researcher conducted classroom action research on the eighth-grade students of SMPN 4 Sungai Raya Kabupaten Kubu Raya in the academic year 2017/2018. Unlike previous studies, this research relied on how well students understood descriptive texts about animals.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher carried out classroom action research in the implementation of a Genre-based approach to students' reading comprehension of descriptive text. Classroom action research is used to improve teaching and learning activities as well as to solve the problems faced by the students. This action research therefore involved a few processes including plan, action, observation, and reflection.

A. Plan

The researcher and the teacher arranged a lesson plan about descriptive text by applying a Genre-based approach, provided the text, prepared the media and selected classroom activities. They then chose the research date and set up the tool to be used for data collection.

B. Action

This step involved implementing the lesson plan into the classroom's teaching and learning process. The researcher participated as a partner, observing the teaching and learning process while the English teacher taught. The teacher delivered the lesson of descriptive text using a Genre-based approach with the following stages:

- 1) Building the context; the teacher asked the students to mention some animal they know. Then she gave a zoo brochure and asked some questions to attract students' attention to try describing some animals they have known.
- 2) Modeling and deconstructing the text; a descriptive text about an animal was presented by the teacher. Then she gave the students instructions on how to find the topic, generic structure, and language features.
- 3) Joint construction of the text; after guiding the class through a group assignment, the teacher presented the result so that everyone could discuss the correct answer together. During the discussion time, the teacher delivered guidance on how to identify the main idea, supporting details, reference, inference and meaning of the words in the context.
- 4) Independent construction of the text; the teacher gave an individual test to the students.

- 5) Linking to related text; the teacher described the advantages of descriptive text related to other text they would learn.

C. Observation

As a collaborator, the researcher observed the actual circumstances surrounding the teaching and learning process in the classroom as well as the result of using a Genre-based approach in teaching reading comprehension of descriptive text. The student's reading comprehension test score was also included in the data. It assessed how well the students understood the descriptive text and whether or not their comprehension improved.

D. Reflection

The researcher and the teacher assessed the process of teaching and learning based on their observations. In order to determine whether or not the learning objectives were met, they examined the data from the field notes, the observation checklist, and the individual test scores.

The researcher carried out this research on the eighth-grade students of SMPN 4 Sungai Raya Kabupaten Kubu Raya in the academic year 2017/2018. The subject of this research was the students in class VIII D which consist of 33 students. The teacher participant was an English teacher of SMPN 4 Sungai Raya Kabupaten Kubu Raya. The teacher would apply a Genre-based approach in the classroom while the researcher would be an observer.

The researcher used some tools for data collection such as an observation checklist, field notes, and tests. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis was required of the researcher. (Best, 2006) state that organizing, describing, and interpreting the data are some of the tasks involved in qualitative data analysis. After gathering the data, the researcher examined the activities that took place during the teaching and learning process. The data was delivered from field notes and observation checklist sheets.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Findings

The researcher implemented classroom action research to improve students' reading comprehension of descriptive text through a Genre-based approach. This action research was demanded in two cycles. The procedure of this study includes planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Following that the research findings were discussed based on the result of the observation of the teaching and learning process. The findings can be described as follows:

1) First Cycle

Planning stage

The researcher and the English teacher discussed the lesson plan before doing the action in the first cycle. The lesson plan's objective was written by the researcher for the students to accomplish. The researcher then created the instructional materials for teaching descriptive text, data collection tools that include field notes, an observation checklist, and a descriptive text test to examine the students' understanding of the material.

Acting stage

The first acting stage was conducted on Thursday, November 16th, 2017. The teacher greeted the students and checked their attendance before starting the teaching and learning process. There was no one absent in the classroom. The teacher invited the class to pray together before beginning the lecture. The teacher starts by asking the students to name an animal they are familiar with before going into the material. The teacher also distributed a zoo brochure to every student and asked some questions as a stimulus, such as: what do you see in the picture?; do you ever go to a zoo?; How do you describe the giraffe?

Next, the teacher gave an example of a descriptive text and explained how to find the topic or main idea of a descriptive text by reading and analyzing subjects that often appear in the text. The students tried to find the main idea of the text. Then teacher asked the students to find the generic structure and language feature of the descriptive text. In the joint construction of the text stage, the students made a group consisting of four or five students. The students were asked to do a group task about vocabulary task with 10 words where the students needed to find the meaning of the words using their dictionary to help them gain more vocabulary. There were also 5 multiple-choice questions from a descriptive text entitled "The Tallest Animal at the Zoo" that had to be done by the students in the group discussion. From the group task, the students tried to identify the supporting details, references, and inferences of the text. After the students finished the group task, the teacher asked them to discuss their answers. Every group presented one question and then tried to discuss the correct answer altogether. Then they concluded the discussion.

For the last activity of this cycle, the teacher gave an individual task of a descriptive text consisting of 10 multiple-choice questions. After the students finished, they submitted their work to the teacher. The teacher ended the class without concluding the lesson because the time was over.

Observation stage

In this stage, the researcher and the teacher observed the outcome of the planning and acting stages. They tried to identify the strengths and the weaknesses of the whole process of the activities and students' performance that occurred in the classroom of the first cycle. The researcher and the teacher found that the students gave positive responses in pre-activity. The students looked interested when they got an example of a zoo brochure from the teacher. Most of them were enthusiastic about answering the teacher's questions but they answered it all together so the classroom became noisy.

In the main activity, the students paid attention when the teacher explained how to find a topic in a descriptive text. Some students are busy with themselves when the teacher asks them to find the topic, generic structure and language feature of a descriptive text. In the group work, only some students were active in the discussion. They were just talking with their friends and did not seriously do their group task because they did not bring a dictionary so they had to wait for their friends. The class was not controlled well. Some students were confused with the questions but seemed shy to ask the teacher. When the teacher asked the students to present their answers, some groups did not answer the question correctly. After the presentation, the teacher discussed the correct answer with the students but did not give an opportunity to the students to ask something related to the material.

The teacher gave an individual test of descriptive text for the last activity, but some students were cheating and working with their friends. The teacher closed the class without concluding the lesson or giving feedback because the time was over.

Reflection stage

Throughout this cycle, there were some weaknesses found in the teaching and learning process, even the teacher's performance, the students' attitude, and the researcher as a collaborator:

- a. The students made a noise when answering the teacher's question.
- b. When the teacher gave them a task to complete, the students were preoccupied with themselves.
- c. In the group discussion, some students were too lazy to do the group task and just talked or played around because they did not bring a dictionary so they had to wait for their friends.
- d. Some students were shy to ask the teacher about the group task when they felt confused.
- e. The teacher did not provide the students with a chance to ask questions about the material.
- f. Some students were cheated on their friends' answers when doing an individual test.

- g. The majority of students received low scores on the individual test. The result of the student's scores in cycle 1 can be seen in the following chart:

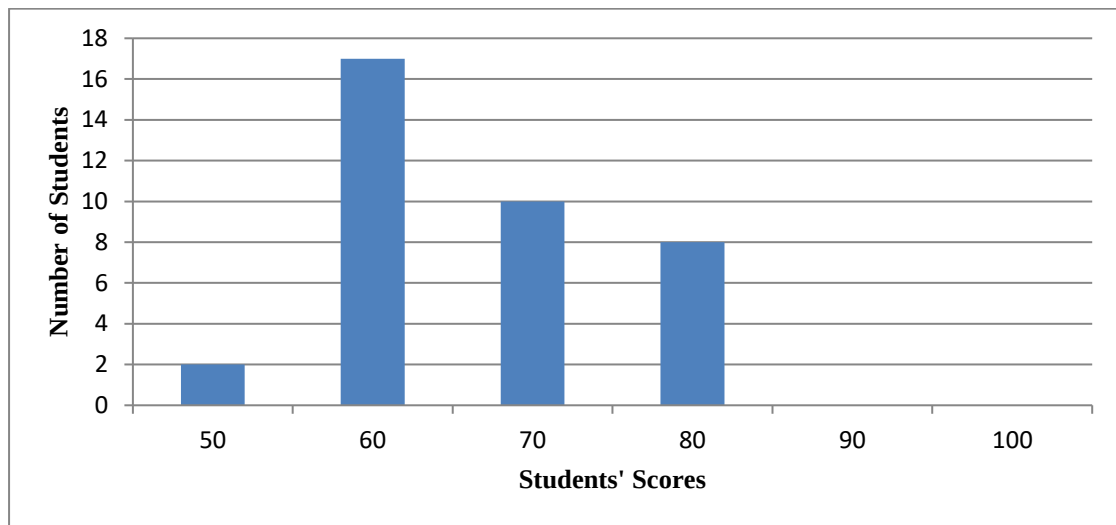


Figure 1. The Chart of Students' Scores in Cycle 1

Thus, in the next cycle, the researcher would overcome those problems by doing some activities:

- The teacher should handle the class by asking the students to raise their hands if they want to answer the teacher's question,
- Properly, the teacher walks around when the students doing the task to see if they do the task and the students can confidently ask something related to the task.
- The teacher should ask the students to bring a dictionary to the English lesson.
- The teacher should manage the class well, encourage the students to be serious in the group discussion and pay attention to the students who were not active in the class.
- The teacher should give the students an opportunity to ask something related to the material.
- The teacher needs to ensure that each student completes the individual test on their own.

2) Second Cycle

Planning stage

The researcher and the teacher chose to carry out the cycle with various modifications after considering the reflection of the first cycle, in which the students could not reach the indicator aspect of success. A revised strategy for cycle 2 was discussed by the researcher and the teacher. They planned to conduct the second cycle on November 23rd, 2017. In order to address the issue identified in the first cycle, the researcher and the teacher designed the teaching and learning plan during this meeting. In particular, the lesson plan and the materials for teaching reading descriptive using a Genre-based approach were reviewed again by the researcher and the teacher.

In the objectives of learning, the researcher wrote the same thing as the previous lesson plan. The students should be able to determine the main idea, identify supporting details, reference, inference, and find the meaning of the word in the context of a descriptive text correctly. The researcher also prepared the new material for teaching descriptive text, an observation checklist and field notes for the instrument to collect the data and a descriptive text test to measure the students' comprehension of the material.

Acting stage

The second cycle was done on Thursday, November 23rd, 2017. The teacher greeted the students, prayed together, and checked students' attendance. There were no students absent that day. Afterward, the teacher asked some questions about descriptive text from the previous meeting to the students to review what they had learned. The teacher said that more than half of the students got low scores for individual tests in the last meeting. Then she encouraged the students to be serious in the class activities. In the building the context stage, the teacher brainstormed with students by asking them to mention some animal they know. The teacher also gave a brochure to every student and asked them some questions as stimulus such as "What do you see in the picture?"; "Do you ever go to the zoo?"; "What kind of animal do you see in the zoo?"; "How do you describe the animal?" Those questions attracted the students to try to describe certain animals. Before the students answered the questions, the teacher instructed them to raise their hands if they wanted to answer the questions.

The teacher gave a descriptive text to every student and reminded them how to find the topic of a descriptive text. The teacher walked around after asking the students to find the main idea of the text. The students tried to find the answer. Then, the teacher and the students together determined the generic structure and language features of the descriptive text. Next,

they did a group discussion. The students were asked to work in a group consisting of four students, but there was one group that had five members because of the odd number of students. The group task was about a descriptive text of Bekantan. The students had to read the text carefully and fill in the blank boxes with their group. The box was used to write the information that students got from the text such as features of Bekantan, food that Bekantan eats, and the habitat of Bekantan or the place where Bekantan lives. After the students filled the blank boxes with their answers, the students had to discuss 5 multiple-choice questions of the descriptive text of Bekantan. Again the teacher walked around when the students doing the group task to ensure they focused on the discussion. Also, the students could confidently ask something related to the task when the teacher was near them.

Once all the students finished the group task, the teacher invited them to present their answers. Every group presented one question. The teacher guided the discussion. Then they concluded altogether. The teacher gave the students the opportunity to ask something related to the material or discussion. She asked the students whether there was something they did not understand. After making sure that students understood all the material they had done, the teacher gave an individual test to every student. The test consisted of ten multiple-choice questions of a descriptive text. The teacher also warned the students that cheating was forbidden and that they would get a minus score if they were found cheating.

Before the end of the meeting, the teacher and the students concluded the material of descriptive text they had learned. Then, the teacher asked the students' opinions about the activities in this meeting, such as (1) What do you think about our activities in learning descriptive text today?; (2) Do those activities help you in learning descriptive text, especially reading?; (3) If those activities help you in learning descriptive text, in your opinion what part of the activities helps you more in learning descriptive text? Afterward, the teacher gave feedback to the students and closed the meeting by saying goodbye.

Observation stage

In this second cycle, the researcher and the teacher discovered that the students responded enthusiastically. When the teacher told them that they got a low score in the last meeting, they looked disappointed. Then, the teacher encouraged the students to be active in the class activities so that they could understand the material of descriptive text. The classroom was more organized. When the teacher asked a question, the students did what she asked and raised their hands to answer the question. The teacher tried to encourage the students who were hesitant to speak up by encouraging them to raise their hands. When the teacher asked the

students to find the topic, generic structure, and language features of a descriptive text, most of the students were trying to find the answers.

The class was controlled well once the teacher walked around while the students were doing group discussions. The students were focused on answering the group task. They did not hesitate to ask the teacher when they did not understand the question. In the presentation, all groups answered the group task correctly. The teacher concluded the students and gave the opportunity to the students to ask something related to the material or discussion. There was a student who asked about a reference question because he was still confused about how to find the answer then the teacher explained it again. The teacher made sure all students understood the material of descriptive text before giving them an individual test. No students were cheating in doing the individual tests; they tried to find the answers by themselves. When the teacher asked students' opinions about the class activity before the end of the class, some students gave their opinions after raising their hands and most of them told the teacher that they liked the activities, especially in filling the box about Bekantan. It helped them to understand the text.

Reflecting stage

In this stage, the researcher and the teacher reflected on what had been done in this cycle. Based on the result of the students' mean score, the teacher and the researcher concluded that the indicator of success point was fulfilled. The students performed better than they had in the last cycle. It meant that the students showed progress in comprehending descriptive text through a genre-based approach. The students had been able to improve their ability to determine the main idea, identify supporting details, reference, inference, and find the meaning of the word in the context of descriptive text correctly. The researcher and the teacher made the decision not to carry out the action in the next cycle because the students already had great scores in comprehending descriptive text through a Genre-based approach, it could be seen in the following chart:

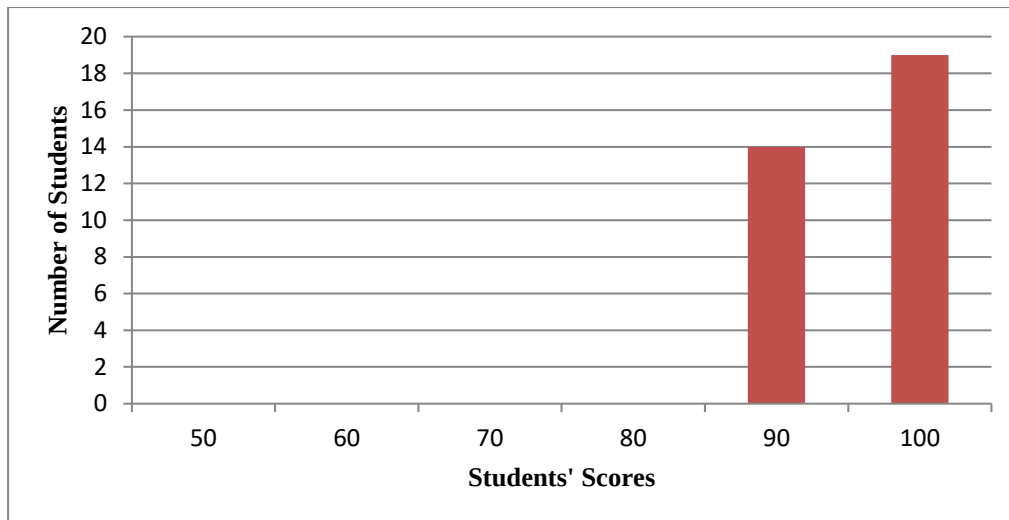


Figure 2. The Chart of Students' Scores in Cycle 2

B. Discussion

From the research findings, the researcher had some important points to discuss. Students' comprehension of descriptive text could be enhanced by using a Genre-based approach. As a teaching method that has a strong relation with text, the stages of Genre based approach made students focused on comprehending of selected genre of text while this research was on descriptive text. In building the context, by displaying a sample of a zoo brochure, the teacher got the students' interest in the classroom. In order to encourage the students to freely share their ideas and thoughts about the subject, the teacher also posed a few questions. There are no rights or wrong answers allow the students to express their opinions without worrying about making a mistake.

Next in modeling and deconstructing the text, the teacher guided the students in analyzing the structural pattern and language features of descriptive text. The teacher also demonstrated how to find the topic and main idea of the text. It can improve the students' ability to understand important details of a descriptive text. Throughout this phase, the students were also able to comprehend the objective and social function of the text. Then, the students collaborated to answer questions regarding a descriptive text in groups during joint construction of the text stage. Group discussion involved the exchange of ideas with each other. It helped students to learn more and increased their understanding of the descriptive text.

The result of the investigation led to the conclusion that the Genre-based approach had a positive impact on the eighth-grade students' reading comprehension of descriptive text in class D of SMPN 4 Sungai Raya Kabupaten Kubu Raya. The process of teaching and learning made

it obvious. The way the students were able to recognize the main idea, supporting details, references, inferences and meaning of words in the context of a descriptive text was a further sign of progress. Additionally, the students' individual text scores showed improvement from cycle 1 to cycle 2. This is shown by the chart that follows:

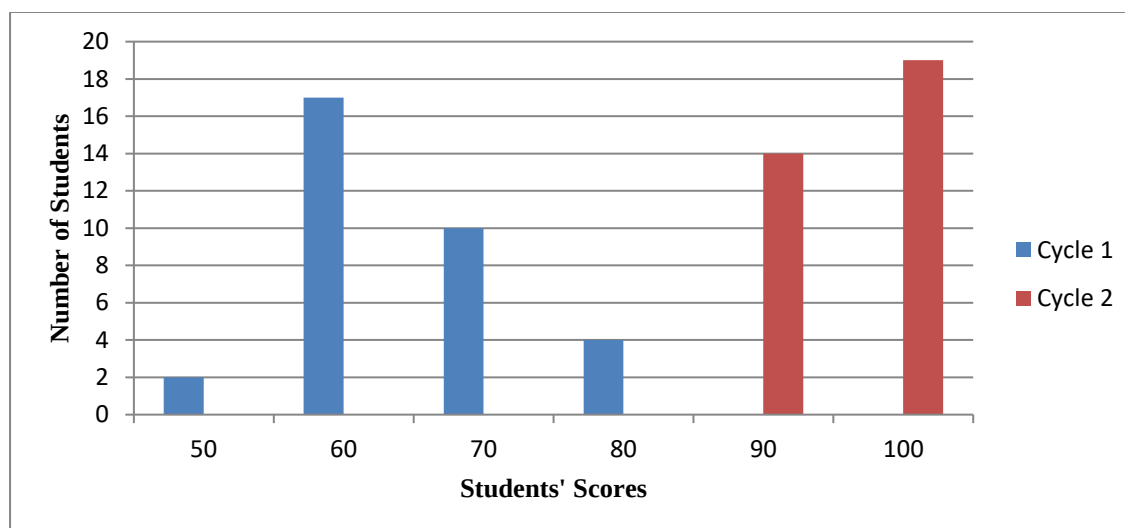


Figure 3. Students' Improvement from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2

From the chart above, it was found that the majority of students received low scores in cycle 1. Then in cycle 2, their score increased and most of them got perfect scores on individual tests.

4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of a Genre-based approach to improve students' reading comprehension of descriptive text was proceeding well, as evidenced by the research findings and discussion, and it had a significant influence on students' achievement in the teaching and learning process. While selecting a certain genre seems to be an influential tool for both teaching and learning itself, the Genre-based approach allows the students to concentrate on understanding a particular genre of text. It was also noticeable in the increase in the test results that students had from cycle 1 to cycle 2. In conclusion, the implementation of the Genre-based approach improved students' reading comprehension of descriptive text in the eighth-grade students of SMPN 4 Sungai Raya Kabupaten Kubu Raya in the academic year 2017/2018.

Bibliography

- Aliah, N., Suwarni, A., & Natsir, N. (2024). Evaluating the impact of innovative assignment design on student engagement and learning outcomes in higher education. *International Journal of Education, Language, Literature, Arts, Culture, and Social Humanities*, 2(2), 13–20.
- Adelnia, R., & Salehi, H. (2016). Improving Iranian high school students' reading comprehension using the tenet of genre analysis. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 7(4), 187–196.
- Best, J. W. (2006). *Research in education* (10th ed.). Pearson Education Inc.
- Fatmawati, K., Purwantiningsih, E. S., Kusuma, R. A., Indrawati, A., Wardana, L. W., & Rahma, A. (2023). Implementation of entrepreneurship learning in business centers at the vocational high school level: Systematic literature review (SLR). *International Journal of Education, Language, Literature, Arts, Culture, and Social Humanities*, 1(2), 38–52.
- Fitrawati. (2009). Improving senior high school students' reading comprehension using reading strategies derived from genre-based approach. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Seni*, 10(2), 89–99.
- Gunning, T. G. (2010). *Reading comprehension booster*. Jossey-Bass.
- Kusdinar, F. A., Dewanti, R., Mayuni, I., & Nurhasanah, D. (2023). Designing interactive video in English writing materials for seventh graders. *International Journal of Education, Language, Literature, Arts, Culture, and Social Humanities*, 79–95.
- Kuntadi, T. N., & Hidayat, F. D. (2023). Training children's character education through technology-based learning media. *International Journal of Education, Language, Literature, Arts, Culture, and Social Humanities*, 1(1), 35–44.
- Melansari, N., Adu, B., & Narni, N. (2023). Code mixing used by the teacher in teaching English at SMP Negeri 14 Baubau. *International Journal of Education, Language, Literature, Arts, Culture, and Social Humanities*, 1(1), 14–28.
- Misnawati, M., Poerwadi, P., Veniaty, S., Nurachmana, A., & Cuesdeyeni, P. (2022). The Indonesian language learning based on personal design in improving the language skills for elementary school students. *Multicultural Education*, 8(02), 31–39.
- Nadila, S. B., Prayitno, R. D., Indrawati, A., Wardana, L. V., & Mahendra, A. M. (2023). Problems of implementing business education in early childhood education (PAUD): Systematic literature review (SLR). *International Journal of Education, Language, Literature, Arts, Culture, and Social Humanities*, 1(2), 66–78.
- Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sadeghi, B., Hassani, M. T., & Hemmati, M. (2013). The effects of genre-based instruction on ESP learners' reading comprehension. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(6), 1009–1020.

- Serravallo, J. (2010). *Teaching reading in small groups: Differentiated instruction for building strategic, independent readers*. Heinemann.
- Silalahi, M., & Simarmata, L. (2022). Improving the students' writing skill by using clustering technique at tenth grade of MA Al-Kautsar. *Bilingual: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*, 4(1), 31–48.
- Sudar, S. (2024). Speech function by lecturers and students in the communication using WhatsApp: Sociopragmatics study. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 12(1), 105–116.
- Taryana, T., Safar, M., Rukiyanto, B. A., & Prayitno, M. A. (2024). Contemporary educational perspective: Howard Gardner and Daniel Goleman's approach in cultivating adaptability and resilience. *International Journal of Education, Language, Literature, Arts, Culture, and Social Humanities*, 2(1), 69–80.