

# THE JIGSAW METHOD APPLICATION IN READING COMPREHENSION

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## Abstract

Reading comprehension is an essential basic skill in learning English. In junior high school, students often need help understanding descriptive text due to limited vocabulary and differences in language structure between English and Indonesian. This research aims to determine the application of the Jigsaw method in teaching reading comprehension of descriptive texts in grade 7 of junior high school. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The research participants were six 7th-grade students and 1 English teacher at a junior high school in Cikampek. Data collection was carried out through observations and interviews with teachers and students. The research results show that applying the Jigsaw method can help students understand the content of descriptive text. This research also identified several challenges in implementing the Jigsaw method, such as difficulty translating text from Indonesian to English and lack of coordination from group friends. However, the benefits of the Jigsaw method in learning reading comprehension of descriptive text show that students can understand the content of the text very well.

**Keywords:** Reading Comprehension; Descriptive Text; Jigsaw

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is an important language skill, as is reading comprehension, which is also very important for language learning and improving language skills. Reading allows a person to obtain a lot of information. Students must have good reading skills because reading is essential in communication activities (Ahmada, 2019). However, most students still need help with reading comprehension, especially those studying English as a foreign language. Students at school often need help in reading descriptive text. These include problems finding important information and understanding difficult or complex vocabulary. According to (Saraswati et al., 2021), students not only have to think about translating words, phrases, sentences, or even paragraphs but also understand tenses, meanings, and grammatical elements that differ between English and Indonesian. According to (Lailatul Mufida, 2019), the jigsaw method is a cooperative learning method that helps students learn a topic by teaching each other. This method allows students to actively participate in the learning process and gain a better understanding of the material. This cooperative learning method uses specific skills to teach various skills. This research aims to determine the application of the Jigsaw method to students' reading comprehension and to identify and analyze the challenges educators and students face when using it to study reading comprehension. There have been several previous studies, including (Rahmasari & Aini, 2023), which used a jigsaw task using scramble sentences to teach reading descriptive text, following (Ekaningsih, 2020), which used a jigsaw to improve reading comprehension in the description text. Then there is (Sinaga et al., 2023), who uses a jigsaw to determine reading comprehension in descriptive text. Then there is (Nurulita et al., 2023) using puzzles to improve students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts. Moreover, (Amelia

Br Sembiring, 2021) tested the effect of implementing Jigsaw on student achievement in reading comprehension of narrative text. Then (Ahmada, 2019) examined the impact of Jigsaw in teaching reading comprehension of narrative texts.

This research focuses on applying the Jigsaw method in teaching reading comprehension of descriptive texts in grade 7 of junior high school. This aims to understand how to use the Jigsaw method, including learning steps and group interaction dynamics. This research also identified challenges faced by students and teachers, such as difficulties in organizing groups and differences in students' reading abilities. By understanding and overcoming these challenges, the Jigsaw method can enable students to learn reading skills more effectively.

## METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to understand the application of the Jigsaw method in teaching reading comprehension of descriptive texts at the junior high school level. Qualitative research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of social phenomena through descriptive and interpretive analysis. It involves collecting data in words, images, or objects to gain better insight into the topic under study. Based on the concept developed by (Aspers & Corte, 2019), this research focuses on differentiation, process, proximity, and increasing understanding in the context of the phenomenon studied.

Case studies are used to investigate contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts. This method allows for in-depth exploration of the complexity of a research problem by combining multiple sources and types of evidence (Yin et al., 2017). (Creswell W. John & Creswell J. David, 2018) emphasized that a case study is an approach that examines certain phenomena within a specific time frame and activity, such as a program or social group, by collecting detailed and in-depth information using various data collection methods.

This research was conducted at a junior high school in West Dawuan, Cikampek, Karawang, West Java. Purposive sampling was used to select research participants based on specific characteristics, namely high, medium, and low levels of English proficiency. Based on these criteria, the researcher selected six grade 7 students who had been chosen by the English teacher at the school: two students with high English performance, two students with medium performance, and two students with low performance, as well as one English teacher. With this method, the research aims to provide in-depth insight into applying the Jigsaw method and the challenges in teaching reading comprehension at the junior high school level.

Researchers will conduct checklist observations and interviews. The observation list contains points that must be paid attention to during learning. If an event matches the statement on the observation checklist, the researcher can affix the checklist to the sheet. After the learning process, researchers will interview students' and teachers' responses to learning to read descriptive texts using the Jigsaw method. In this interview, researchers will interview sources directly to gain a deeper understanding. Alghasab said that data collection, known as interviews, involves direct communication between researchers and respondents or subjects (Alghasab et al., 2019)

In this study, researchers used analytical data from (Miles & Huberman, 1994), also quoted by (Rahmasari & Aini, 2023)<sup>1</sup>. Data analysis is an action to understand a research topic better, carried out in 3 stages, namely:

1. Data Reduction

Researchers who have obtained interview results will be transcribed, which makes it easier for researchers to simplify them. Likewise, the results of observations made by researchers will be simplified and grouped so that researchers can understand them better.

2. Data Display

After the data has been reduced, the results of interviews and observations will be presented in narrative form, which can help show the main findings clearly and easily understood.

### 3. Conclusion

After analyzing the results of interviews and observations, conclusions will be drawn from the research. This conclusion includes a summary of significant findings that will answer the researcher's questions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The data listed here was obtained through a series of observations and interviews by researchers. Data collection was carried out over two days. Observations were conducted in one class, and interviews were conducted with six students and one English teacher at one of SMPN in Cikampek.

#### 1. Implementation of the Jigsaw Method in Learning Reading Comprehension

This research focuses on how to use the Jigsaw method to teach students in class 7th to understand reading descriptive text. Data was collected over two days through observation and interviews. According to the researcher's observations, the teacher carried out preliminary activities as usual, reading prayers, providing knowledge about what a jigsaw is, then continuing to the core of the lesson where the teacher divided students into initial groups and then gave pieces of descriptive text to each group to understand.

After that, the teacher provides instructions for students to join their friends who have the same text and form expert groups to discuss pieces of the text to understand the descriptive text more deeply. After the students have finished discussing in expert groups, the teacher returns to give instructions to the students. Return to the initial group and combine the text. Then, after mixing the texts, the students make a group presentation in front of them, witnessed by other friends; the teacher also evaluates the group presenting in front by asking other friends whether the presentation from the group in front is correct. Teachers also noted increased students' understanding after using this jigsaw method.

In interviews conducted by researchers, teachers said there had been changes in students' reading comprehension.

"I saw that there were students who experienced changes. When the descriptive text was given, I gave them time to read their descriptive text, and what I saw was that some of them still looked confused. When the jigsaw method started to be implemented by combining students who had the text same descriptive, students who feel confused can understand the text because of discussions with friends who understand and study it. "And there were also some boys during the discussion who didn't really focus on the discussion, but when they made a presentation, the students were able to understand the descriptive text well." (**Teacher**).

This also proves that the jigsaw method helps students understand their reading. The teacher has provided advice to teachers who want to use this method.

In the interview the teacher also expressed a suggestion for other teachers who want to use this jigsaw method

"My advice as a teacher, to other teachers who want to apply the jigsaw method, is to prepare carefully the material that will be presented in front of the class, and to be able to manage the class and guide students well, so that the results achieved can be achieved optimally." (**Teacher**).

In applying the Jigsaw method, although there are changes in students, students' reading comprehension increases. However, in observations made by researchers, there were still some students who did not participate in the learning well. These suggestions can enable teachers who want to apply this method to prepare themselves well.

## 2. The Challenges of the Jigsaw Method in Learning Reading Comprehension

Based on observations and interviews, one of the main problems faced by students is difficulty understanding descriptive text and translating it from English to Indonesian. Due to limited vocabulary, many students experience difficulties. However, this problem can be solved by talking in expert groups, where students help each other and share knowledge.

"The problem is that it is difficult to translate English words, and it is difficult to put the words together." **S1 (High).**

"Translating English is hard; that's the only problem." **S3 (Medium).**

However, these challenges can be overcome when students join with friends who have the same experience and can face these challenges. They got help from friends who understood.

"At first, I was confused, but another friend taught me, so I understand." **S5 (Low).**

"Yes, if you do it yourself, you get confused, yesterday I had a friend teach me " **S6 (Low).**

With this solution, students who previously had difficulty understanding descriptive text can now do so, and the jigsaw method can help students understand descriptive text. In addition, lack of group participation and coordination are also obstacles. Certain students are not active in discussions, which can disrupt group learning. Teachers found that some students had a tendency not to engage in discussions, and they needed special attention to engage actively. One of the students complained that his friend needed to be more active and wanted to be given information, which could hamper the group discussion and understanding process.

"Yes, sometimes friends don't want to be told; their friends are lazy." **S2 (Medium).**

This was also confirmed by the teacher, who stated that the obstacles he felt in guiding children were that some students still needed to participate in discussions on applying the jigsaw method.

"The problem I experience is that there are still students who don't participate in learning, just sit quietly watching other friends, and don't participate in discussions. As a teacher, I have to keep paying attention. To students and help them continue to participate in learning." **(Teacher).**

## Discussion

Based on the results of the interviews and observations that have been described, a discussion is carried out regarding the research findings, which are linked to the theories that have been explained and adapted to the focus of the research and discuss in-depth aspects of the application of the Jigsaw method, as well as providing views regarding challenges and suggestions for improvements in the future.

## 1. Stages of Implementing the Jigsaw Method in learning reading comprehension

Through observations and interviews over two days, it was found that the Jigsaw method involved critical stages consisting of forming an initial heterogeneous group, dividing the descriptive text into small parts, and forming an expert group to study each part of the text. Students then return to the original group to teach the part of the text they have understood to the rest of the group, ending with discussion and integration of information. This application allows students to become "experts" on certain parts of the text and share their knowledge with friends. The same as (Herman et al., 2020) theory, which explains the implementation of the jigsaw as follows:

- a. **Group Formation**  
Students in a class are divided into small groups, usually four to six students per group, called "starting groups." In this group, each student is tasked with studying and understanding part of the text.
- b. **Material distribution**  
The text to be studied is divided into several parts, and each group receives one part of the text. For example, if a text has four sections, each student in the initial group will study one section of the text.
- c. **Establishment of an Expert Group**  
Students from different home groups study the same part of the text and then form "expert groups." Expert groups discuss and study text passages thoroughly to ensure that every student has the same understanding.
- d. **Expert Group Discussion**  
Students in expert groups share information and discuss important issues. Specialist groups aim to ensure that each student understands a passage of text thoroughly before returning to their home group.
- e. **Division back to the original group**  
After the discussion in the expert group is finished, students return to their original groups. There, each student acts as an "expert" and is responsible for teaching their part of the text to the rest of the group. This process ensures that each group member receives a complete understanding of the text through explanations from other group members.
- f. **Discussion and Combination of Information**  
After the home group members have spoken and integrated everything they learned from the expert members, each student can ask questions and indicate which parts of the text they need help understanding.

## 2. Challenges Of the Jigsaw Method In Learning Reading Comprehension

Although the Jigsaw method effectively improves reading comprehension, several challenges must be overcome. Students need help translating descriptive texts from English to Indonesian due to their limited vocabulary, per the findings of (Handayani et al., 2022). In addition, a lack of group coordination often causes some students to become passive and not actively involved in discussions, reducing learning effectiveness. This can be seen from the researcher's observations, which noted that some students did not participate in discussions and tended to be passive.

According to (Handayani et al., 2022) some students may become less active or not take full responsibility for their learning, especially if they feel comfortable hiding behind their group's efforts. The success of this method is highly dependent on the active participation of all group members, and unbalanced involvement can reduce its effectiveness in learning. (Khadem et al., 2022) also emphasized that ineffective student participation is one of the main challenges because this method requires active participation and deep understanding from all group members to be successful. The analysis above shows that this theory is the same as the findings regarding the challenges of the Jigsaw method in teaching reading



comprehension in junior high schools. Both have similarities, namely difficulties when translating English texts and the need for more information in the Jigsaw group.

## CONCLUSION

This research examines the application of the Jigsaw method in teaching reading comprehension of descriptive texts to grade 7 students at one of the junior high schools in Cikampek. The research showed that the Jigsaw method increased students' involvement and understanding of descriptive text. With this method, students can become experts on certain parts of the text and share their knowledge with other group members, facilitating collaboration and active interaction.

The teacher noted a positive change in students' understanding, where students who initially had difficulty understanding the text could understand it better after discussing it with their friends. However, the research also found several challenges, such as difficulties translating texts from English and a need for more active participation in group discussions. Therefore, the teacher's role is vital in leading the class and supporting students throughout the learning process. Suggestions for teachers are that they must prepare material, form groups carefully, and ensure that all students are actively involved. For future research, it is recommended to explore the use of the Jigsaw method in a broader context and analyze its long-term impact on student's critical thinking and collaboration skills.

Students are advised to participate actively in group discussions, use dictionaries, and talk with friends who understand more to overcome difficulties in understanding the text. Respecting friends' opinions and providing constructive feedback is also essential. Future researchers can also explore the application of the Jigsaw method in various contexts and strategies to overcome problems such as group coordination and text comprehension. Analysis of the long-term impact of the Jigsaw method on students' critical thinking and collaboration skills will also provide more profound insight.

This research has several limitations, such as the sample size, which is limited to only one class in one school, and the short duration of data collection of two days. Long-term research with a broader scope will provide deeper insights. Variation in student participation is also an essential factor influencing learning outcomes, and additional support may be needed for students who need more help with group participation.

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