



Improving Student's Reading Comprehension on Narrative Text Through Annotating Strategy at the Eighth Grade of SMP Al-Washliyah Hamparan Perak

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Abstract

This study aims to improve the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students at SMP Al-Washliyah Hamparan Perak by using Annotating Strategy. The research adopts a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design, which conducted in two cycles. Each cycle is consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The study subjects included 33 students who exhibited challenges in comprehending narrative texts, particularly in identifying main ideas and supporting details. The data of this study were collected through observation sheets, interviews, documentation, and reading comprehension tests. The analysis involved both qualitative and quantitative methods, which focused on the observation of classroom activities and the evaluation of students' performance through pre-test and post-test assessments. The results indicated a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension, with a noticeable increase in their ability to grasp narrative text content followed by the implementation of Annotating Strategy. The study recommends the wider adoption of this strategy in teaching reading comprehension, as it actively engages students in the reading process, thereby enhancing their understanding and retention of information.

Keywords: *Reading comprehension, Annotating strategy*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa kelas delapan di SMP Al-Washliyah Hamparan Perak dengan menggunakan Strategi Anotasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK), yang dilakukan dalam dua siklus, masing-masing terdiri dari perencanaan, tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi. Subjek penelitian meliputi 33 siswa yang menunjukkan kesulitan dalam memahami teks naratif, terutama dalam mengidentifikasi ide utama dan detail pendukung. Data dikumpulkan melalui lembar observasi, wawancara, dokumentasi, dan tes pemahaman membaca. Analisis melibatkan metode kualitatif dan kuantitatif, dengan fokus pada pengamatan kegiatan kelas dan evaluasi kinerja siswa melalui penilaian pre-test dan post-test. Hasilnya menunjukkan adanya peningkatan yang signifikan dalam pemahaman membaca siswa, dengan peningkatan yang nyata dalam kemampuan mereka untuk memahami konten teks naratif setelah penerapan Strategi Anotasi. Studi ini merekomendasikan penerapan strategi ini secara lebih luas dalam pengajaran pemahaman membaca, karena strategi ini secara aktif melibatkan siswa dalam proses membaca, sehingga meningkatkan pemahaman dan retensi informasi.

Kata kunci: *Pemahaman membaca, Strategi membuat anotasi*

Introduction

English holds a significant role in the current era of globalization. English is a globally language that is used by people worldwide for communication. In Indonesia, English as a foreign language used for communication with people from other countries in the world. The English proficiency is a prerequisite that all individuals must possess. English had been widely used in everything, especially in looking for a job and to get scholarship for studying in domestic and international situation.

In the school, English is as a compulsory subject learned from junior to senior high school. In learning English, there are four skills that must be mastered. They are reading, listening, speaking, and writing. One of the most important skills for students is the ability to read because by reading, students can get a lot of knowledge, information and experience that should be known in modern times. Reading is a crucial skill in English learning, enable students to develop their minds, understand lessons, gather information, and find references. It is a fluent process that combine information in the text with the reader's background knowledge. In other words, reading comprehension is essential for understanding the meaning conveyed in a text. It is a crucial part of everyday life, as it is commonly used to obtain knowledge. Without good reading comprehension, students are unable to learn and understand the information they read (Juliana, 2018).

In the preliminary study at SMP Al-wasliyah Hampan Perak, researcher identified some problems faced by the students in understanding English narrative text in the class. One of problems was the students are not interested in understanding reading text because they always had difficulty finding the information in texts. They did not have the ability to catch the main ideas and supporting details in the text. As a result, in this case, students became slow to find information from the text. Secondly, students couldn't understand English texts well when they learnt to read due to the less of media and strategy used in the reading teaching process (Juliana & Army, 2021). Most of them remain passive reading while studying. And then, they had no encouragement to read because they had lack of motivation to read English materials. As a result, they felt bored and give up when asked to find information in the text. Therefore, it is needed the alternative strategy to solve these problems when

teaching reading comprehension in the classroom. One of the strategies to teach students' reading comprehension and suitable for students' need is Annotating Strategy.

Annotating Strategy is a strategy that can be used in the process of teaching reading. Students should be more interested in understanding reading in class by using Annotating Strategy. By using this strategy students are able to motivated and active in learning, especially reading comprehension activities. Harmer (2001:115) states that various strategies used by English teachers are used in teaching reading from elementary schools to universities. Annotating Strategy is a strategy that involves deliberately interacting with a text to enhance the reader's understanding, recalling, and reacting to the text. It can be conducted by using various ways such as underlining key words, writing margin notes, and summarizing main ideas. Annotating Strategy helps students develop a deeper understanding of the text, think critically, and improve their comprehension and retention of information.

According to Rona and Thomas (2018:131) there are some benefits of Annotating Strategy for students' reading comprehension. First, students can actively read and monitor their understanding. When students encounter information that they cannot put into their own words, they know that they do not comprehend the information. Second, students can actively construct ideas and make connections to what they know (Simpson & Nist, 1990:122). In this way, this strategy is flexible and should facilitate deeper processing (Anderson & Armbruster, 1984:193) and metacognitive awareness. Third, Annotating Strategy can motivate the students because they are reading the text with a purpose. Fourth, Annotating Strategy can help students to organize the information so that they can see links between the main points and supporting details (Juliana, 2021)

Next, Annotating Strategy is used to track how the writer moves and record his or her own questions and thoughts. Carol Porter-O' Donnell (2004:89) states that annotation is technique used when reading or re-reading. Annotating Strategy encourage readers to read more actively and keep them more engaged. This allows the reader to talk to the text, and there is a recall of the ideas that emerge in the meaning of the reading. To annotate, readers must write in the margins of the text while reading it. Annotation means marking text to find important

information and storing readers' ideas to understand difficult texts (O'Donnell, 2004: 82). In addition, Annotating Strategy by Holschuh and Aultman (2009:134) as an effective strategy that involves reading with a pencil in hand and includes various marking techniques, such as underlining and highlighting words and passages as well as writing notes, making questions, comments, conclusions, examples, and opinions alongside the text (Juliana, 2016).

Annotating a text can be a powerful strategy to comprehend narrative text. A key of comprehending narrative is a sense of plots, themes, characters, events, and how they relate. Several activities and tools to help students learn purposefully to mark up what they read in narrative text. Students can examine their marked responses to narrative text. Six ways of responding to narrative text are to make predictions, to ask questions, to state opinions, to analyze author's craft, to make connections, and to reflect on the content or their reading process. Once the list of categories is completed, students create a cluster or another visual aid that they can use as a reference while writing about their reading. Then these activities can be done during before, while and after reading. Before reading, students examine the language features and the generic structure of narrative text or the way the text is set up. In this phase, the students write questions, make predictions and connections near these parts of the text. During reading, students mark in the narrative text such as Characters (who), When (setting), Where (setting), Vocabulary: Important information. In this phase, the students summarize, make predictions, formulate opinions, make connections, and look for the answer. After reading, students reread annotations and draw conclusions. In this phase, students reread introduction and conclusion. Students repeat and retell what they understand about the text. Rona and David (2018:213) states that by underlining words, phrases or ideas that are difficult to understand in a particular context, adding comments and notes can help students to improve comprehension and begins the process of remembering and an active reading. In short, the use of annotating strategy is expected to improve students' reading comprehension in narrative text at the eight-grade of SMP Al-Washliyah Hamparan Perak with the minimum school passing score (KKM) for eighth grade students is 75. This is a fairly high level for students in learning English. This condition

encouraged researcher to conduct Classroom Action Research (CAR) with the aim of improving students' reading comprehension in narrative text by using Annotating Strategy.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher was interested to conduct the research entitled "Improving Students' Reading Comprehension on Narrative Text Through Annotating Strategy at the Eighth Grade of SMP Al - Washliyah Hamparan Perak."

Method

The research design utilized Classroom Action Research (CAR) to examine teaching and learning phenomena. The primary goal was to understand problems during learning and provide solutions by involving action or changes in classroom practice. CAR involves continuous intervention and reflection by teachers, researchers, and colleagues. The study aimed to improve students' reading comprehension in narrative text using an annotation strategy. The research was conducted at SMP Al-Washliyah Hamparan Perak, focusing on eighth grade students in the 2024/2025 academic year.

The research was conducted at Jalan Muhammad Saleh Abdullah No. 1 Hamparan Perak, Kec. Perak, Kab. Deli Serdang, North Sumatra. The study involved 33 eighth-grade students in the academic year 2024/2025. The research procedures were based on Kurt Lewin's CAR design, which is a spiral-like approach. The research procedures were divided into two cycles, each consisting of four steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Classroom Action Research by Lewin's design involves four phases: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. If problems persist in the first cycle, the second cycle is necessary. The researcher conducts a preliminary study to reflect on their beliefs and understand the context of the idea. This study aims to gather data on problems faced by teachers and students in teaching learning activities. If problems persist, the cycle is continued in the second cycle.

This research consists of four steps: preliminary study, planning, action/implementing, observing, and reflecting. The preliminary study aims to identify classroom problems during the learning process, such as students' reading comprehension of narrative text. After obtaining permission from the English teacher, the researcher meets students and asks

questions related to teaching and learning English in the classroom.

Planning involves preparing materials, lesson plans, teaching aids, class observation sheets, and developing students' worksheets. Activities in Cycle I include preparing materials, lesson plans, teaching aids, class observation sheets, and pre-tests to determine whether students' comprehension improves or not. In Cycle II, the researcher analysed problems and mistakes made in the first cycle, revises the lesson plan and strategy, prepares an observation checklist for activities in Cycle 2, and prepares a post-test.

Action/implementing is the process of doing something, teaching students to improve their reading comprehension using Annotating Strategy in narrative text. The researcher explains about narrative text and Annotating Strategy, asks students to read narrative text using Annotating Strategy, and analyses students' problems when reading narrative text using Annotating Strategy. Activities in Cycle I include giving pre-tests, teaching reading materials through Annotating Strategy, asking students to identify narrative text using Annotating Strategy, and asking them about difficulties or problems when reading narrative texts using Annotating Strategy.

Activities in Cycle II involve dividing students into groups, providing suitable materials and directions for using Annotating Strategy, guiding and discussing with students how to use the strategy, giving another reading comprehension exercise, and giving students a post-test.

Observation is made during the teaching and learning activities to assess students' learning outcomes. Activities in Cycle I include checking students' activities, observing the results of Pre-test and Pos-test I, and observing the condition of teaching learning process and students' activities in learning process.

Reflecting is a feedback process that helps teachers make decisions and evaluates the effect of large issues. Activities in Cycle I involve evaluating and doing a reflection in the teaching and learning process, collaborating with the English teacher to review the value and suitable actions to improve students' reading comprehension in narrative text, and comparing the results of observation and test sheets on cycles 1 and 2.

This research utilized three data collection techniques: observation sheet, interview, and reading comprehension test. The researcher observed class conditions and activities during the teaching learning process, recording observations and results in field notes. Interviews were conducted with students and English teachers to gather feedback on the use of Annotating Strategy in comprehending narrative text. The researcher asked questions about class activities, class condition, students' behavior, and proficiency level in reading.

Additional instruments were used to support the research process, such as using photo and video cameras during action and observation stages. The results of these documentations were used as data in the research. Field notes contained all notes taken by the teacher-collaborator during teaching-learning activities.

A reading comprehension test was used to measure students' reading comprehension. A pre-test assessed the pre-cycle reading comprehension of students before the Annotating Strategy was applied in the classroom. The purpose of the pre-test was to determine the initial condition of the research subject in reading comprehension of narrative text. The post-test evaluated and received feedback about the implementation of Annotating Strategy in teaching narrative text.

The pre-test consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions, with each correct answer receiving a 5 point score and an incorrect answer receiving 0 points. The questions were given based on the learning topic. Overall, the research employed various data collection techniques to gain a comprehensive understanding of the teaching and learning process.

This researcher analyzed qualitative and quantitative data in this research. The analysis of qualitative data that used in this research was observation of students' activities during teaching learning process, and the interview before and after implementation of Classroom Action Research (CAR) namely planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The analysis of quantitative data that used in this research is reading comprehension test which consists of 20 multiple choices questions for each cycle. In scoring reading test, the students reading scores are ranged from 0 - 100 by accounting the correct answers.

Result and Discussion

The researcher found that there was an improvement of students' reading comprehension at narrative text. The result of data analysis from the pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II stages revealed that students achieved successful scores, indicating that students improved their reading comprehension. The findings were obtained from students' tests result in each cycle. The findings are organized into three main sections: pretest in preliminary study, first post-test in Cycle I, and Second Post test in Cycle II.

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1. Pre-Test in the Preliminary Study

In the preliminary study, the researcher found that students struggled with reading comprehension, especially in finding main ideas, supporting details, and understanding implied information in English narrative texts. The pre-test mean score was 50,30, with only 6 out of 33 students scoring above the minimum completion criteria of 75.

Table 1. The Percentage of Students' Scores in Pre-Test

No.	Category	Value Range	Frequency	%
1	Very Good	80- 100	7	21,21%
2	Good	75- 79	17	51,51%
3	Sufficient	60- 74	6	18,18%
4	Poor	50- 59	0	0%
5	Very Poor	0- 49	3	9,1%
Total			33	100%

Based on the table above, it can be seen students' percentage scores in reading comprehension at narrative text entitled "Ali

Baba". From a total of 33 students, there were 1 student (3,03%) who in the very good category, 3 students (9,09%) who had the ability to read narrative text in the good category, 10 students (30,30%) were in the sufficient category, and in the low category there were 4 students (12,12%). Meanwhile, as many as 15 students (45,45%) were in the very low category. This showed that there are some students who had mastered the reading comprehension at narrative text entitled "Ali Baba" well, most students still need to improve their reading comprehension to reach a higher category.

2. First Post-Test in Cycle I

In Cycle I, the researcher implemented the annotating strategy. The post-test mean score improved to 71,03, with 24 out of 33 students (72,72%) achieving the minimum completion criteria. This result represented an 27,28% improve from the pre-test. However, there were still 9 students get score below 75.

Table 2. Students' Percentage of First Post Test Scores in Cycle I

No	Category	Value Range	Frequency	%
1.	Very Good	80- 100	1	3,03 %
2.	Good	75- 79	3	9,09 %
3.	Sufficient	60- 74	10	30,30%
4.	Poor	50- 59	4	12,12 %
5.	Very Poor	0- 49	15	45,45 %
Total			33	100%

At this stage, the researcher identified the difficulties experienced by students in reading narrative text entitled "Ali Baba". The researcher gave students the opportunity to express their difficulties. Most students had difficulty to understand the text, it was due to students had difficult to find the main ideas and supporting details, lack of motivation in learning English, and students were less able to answer questions based on the text. After knowing these obstacles, the researcher offered assistance to students who still had difficulty understanding the text due to the problems. The results of the study showed an improvement in students' reading comprehension. There was 21,21% of (7 students) reached the very good category, 51,51% (17 students) were in the good category, and 18.18% (6 students) were in the sufficient

category. Only 0% (0 students) were still in the low category, while 9,1% (3 students) were in the very low category. The researcher noted a significant improve in students' reading comprehension showed that the percentage of students who passed the Minimum completion Criteria or KKM of 12,12% in the pre-test to 72,72% after cycle I was implemented.

3. Second Post-Test in Cycle II

In Cycle II, the researcher made enhancements to implement the annotating strategy. The post-test mean score further improved to 82,39, with 32 out of 33 students (96,96%) achieved the minimum completion criteria. This result represented a 83,84% improve from the pre-test. The percentage of students successfully meeting the minimum completion criteria improve from 12,12% in the pre-test, to 72,72% in Cycle I, and 96,96% in Cycle II.

Table 3. Students' Percentage Score of Second Post Test in Cycle II

No	Category	Value Range	Frequency	%
1	Very Good	80-100	28	84,84%
2	Good	75- 79	4	12,12%
3	Sufficient	60- 74	1	3,03%
4	Poor	50- 59	0	%
5	Very Poor	0- 49	0	%
Total			33	100%

At this stage, the researcher asked students about the process of teaching and learning in reading comprehension by using the Annotating Strategy. The first item in this category, researcher asked students about their conditions and feelings in learning to read narrative text entitled "Malin Kundang" through the Annotating Strategy. It was shown that 75.5% of students agreed that they felt interested in learning to read English narrative text through the Annotating Strategy. The second item showed that 80% of students said that the material was suitable to be applied in reading teaching and learning process. The results of the study showed an improvement in students' reading comprehension. There were 84,84% of students

(28 students) reached the very good category, 12,12% (4 student) was in the good category, and 3,03% (1 students) were in the sufficient category. Only 0% (0 student) was still in the low category, while 0% (0 student) was in the very low category. Researcher noted that there was a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension with the percentage of students who passed the Minimum completion Criteria of 3,03% in the pre-test, 21,21% in first post-test and 84,84% in second post-test after cycle II was implemented.

The researcher concluded that the annotating strategy was effective in improving students' reading comprehension of English narrative texts, as evidenced by the significant improvement in test scores and the number of students achieving the minimum completion criteria by the end of Cycle II. Familiar topics like "Malin Kundang" also improve student interest in reading English materials.

The research aimed to enhance students' reading comprehension of narrative texts using the Annotating Strategy. The research revealed that students struggled with understanding main ideas, supporting details, and implied information in English narrative texts. The pre-test mean score was 48.03, with only 6 out of 33 students scoring above the 75 completion criteria. The study found that students' difficulties were due to a lack of vocabulary mastery and motivation towards English learning. Interviews with students and teachers before using the Annotating Strategy also confirmed that most students had difficulty understanding English reading text.

English is a challenging language, with students often struggling with understanding the main idea and supporting details in the text. This difficulty can be attributed to complex structure and vocabulary, which can impact their interest in learning English. To improve their overall English comprehension, motivation, and skills, structured guidance in reading comprehension, including effective reading strategies, vocabulary development, and text analysis techniques, is needed.

Some students lack knowledge in mastering English vocabulary, making it difficult to understand the meaning of the text. Additionally, some students have a lack of attitude and motivation towards English learning, only able to say a few English sentences.

A researcher conducted cycle I activities to students, providing special treatment by explaining in detail about narrative text and

providing annotating strategy to improve students' reading comprehension. The results showed a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension, with the percentage of students who passed the Minimum completion Criteria (KKM) of 9.09% in the pre-test to 60,60% after cycle I was implemented. After conducting cycle 2, the researcher revised the treatment with better treatment than before, taking a more intense approach and learning to students who were expected to be able.

The results of interviews with students after using annotating strategy indicated that the effectiveness of annotating strategy in improving students' reading comprehension on narrative text was evident. The results showed that using annotating techniques improved students' ability to memorize and find the important points in the text. Students noticed a significant change in their understanding of texts, as they could focus more on the relevant information and ignore the less important stuff.

Students also reported that using annotating techniques made it easier and more enjoyable to understand and remember the content of the text they read. Students also reported that using annotating strategy made them more active while reading, as they could mark difficult or important passages and help them review or understand the content of the text in depth. They felt that their comprehension of the reading had improved significantly.

The English teacher also gave positive responses to using annotating strategy to improve students' reading comprehension. They felt that by using annotating, students were more engaged in the text they were reading, and they could better understand the content of the text. In conclusion, the use of annotating strategy has been shown to significantly improve students' reading comprehension in narrative text. By providing structured guidance, effective reading strategies, vocabulary development, and text analysis techniques, students can improve their overall English comprehension, motivation, and skills.

The study demonstrates that the use of an annotation strategy effectively improves students' reading comprehension on narrative texts. The students' scores improved from pre-test to post-test, with an average score of 48.03% in the pre-test and 69.75% in the post-test. The researchers

and teachers collaborated better in controlling the class, and the Annotating Strategy proved to be more helpful in improving students' reading comprehension. The quantitative data shows an improvement in students' scores from pre-test, first post-test, and second post-test.

The qualitative data also showed an improvement in students' activities during the teaching and learning process. The implementation of the Annotating Strategy can motivate students to be more enthusiastic in learning English narrative text. The teacher also became better at controlling the class, and students became more active in their learning. The results of the study suggest that the Annotating Strategy can improve students' reading comprehension on narrative texts of SMP Al-Washliyah Hamparan Perak.

Conclusion

The research aimed to enhance students' reading comprehension of English narrative texts using the Annotating Strategy. The study was conducted in two cycles, with four meetings per cycle. In the first cycle, the researcher used materials from "Ali Baba in" and "Malin Kundang" and provided explanations and directions to improve students' comprehension. The research lasted from July 18, 2024, to August 8, 2024. The results showed that 90% of students met the minimum completion criteria scores in the last cycle.

In the pre-cycle, 6 students succeeded with 18.18%, while 27 students were unsuccessful. In the first post-test, 20 students succeeded with 60.60%, and 13 were unsuccessful with 39.39%. In the second post-test, 31 students succeeded with 93.93%, and 2 students were unsuccessful with 6.06%.

Observations, interviews, and field notes revealed that students became more interested in the learning process and active in learning English, especially reading comprehension. The Annotating Strategy was found to be effective in improving students' reading comprehension at eighth grade of SMP Al-Washliyah Hamparan Perak, as evidenced by significant differences in mean scores on pre-test, first post-test, and second post-test activities.

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