Exploring Students' Response in Reading Comprehension of Narrative Text through REAP (Read, Encode, Annotate, and Ponder) and Story Map Strategy

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A B S T R A C T

English teachers should strive to create a living atmosphere in the classroom by carefully determine a proper strategy that supports the goal of the learning and entices students' enthusiasm to learn more. The REAP and story map strategy are the two among several strategies that has been affirmed to improve students' reading comprehension of narrative text. This present study aims to explore students' attitudes regarding the joint-strategy of REAP strategy and story map strategy in assisting their reading comprehension of narrative text. A descriptive case-study design was used for this study and data obtained from the three instruments will be descriptively analyzed by using thematic analysis and measuring mean score of questionnaire results to interpret the data. Upon the data being analyzed, there are two major findings highlighted in the study. First, the two strategies used in the classroom involved cognitive processes such as critical thinking and motivation comes second following with students' experiences at last. Second, students had positive attitudes toward the strategies used in the reading activity since they passionately participated in the drills. Specifically, these findings suggest that the mentioned strategies are appropriate to be applied in advancing students' reading comprehension of narrative text.

1. Introduction

Reading comprehension when learning English should be the first thing to look at for its significance to English in general. Four aspects of English including writing, speaking, listening, and reading indisputably requires great reading comprehension skill. According to Bamford & Day (1998), reading skill itself is considered as the ability to comprehend and recognize the meaning of written texts. However, students in Indonesia who learn English at school still encounter many difficulties to face with when they learn English especially reading English texts. Some difficulties faced by them mostly come from unfamiliarity with the language itself, less vocabulary, and lack of motivation to learn English. To solve the problem, English teachers need to choose and master a proper and even better

strategy in teaching reading in order to improve students' reading comprehension. Reading comprehension can be described as an ability to grasp written form materials (Santi, 2015). Anderson et al. (1985) defined reading comprehension as the process of creating meaning through the coordination of several complex processes, such as word reading, word recognition and fluency (Klingner, Vaughn, & Boardman, 2007). The purpose of reading comprehension is to achieve the goal of students becoming good readers. Being a good reader means that students can understand information and able to think critically with the text being read. Therefore, to achieve students as good readers, teacher need to influence students by creating a living environment in the classroom. According to Martin et al. (2015) students tend to enjoy the learning in the classroom if the material is interesting. Narrative text can be a good option to familiarize students with English texts so they can be motivated to learn any kind of texts in English. Narrative text is a type of text that tells chronological and plotted story from the beginning until the end. This type of text involves fictitious situation that students personally involved in the process of reading (Rosada, Rufinus, & Bunau, 2015). By familiarizing with narrative text, students can be trained to asking questions about the story and seeking answers by themselves. Not only that, narrative text also encourages students to think critically and creatively as an act of cognitive process.

To facilitate students in reading narrative text, authors chose REAP strategy combined with story map strategy. According to Powell et al. (2012), REAP is a good strategy that can be applied by the English teachers in assisting reading comprehension of narrative text. REAP is a four-step strategy that was introduced by Eanet and Manzo as a tool to improve critical reading, writing, and study skills (1976). REAP itself stands for Read (R), Encode (E), Annotate (A), and Ponder (P). The first step is to Read where students read the whole text at first to find the main idea and following with Encode where students find difficult words as well as identifying generic structure of the text. The next step is to Annotate where students need to write or summarize important points that they already found before. The last step is to Ponder. Ponder means to discuss with peers by exchanging thoughts or questions about the story.

Upon after reading by using REAP strategy, authors chose story map to help students in writing the important ideas of the story. Story map aids students' reading comprehension by putting informational details from the narratives as quoted by Bangsri & Phusawisot (2020). Story map is presented with graphic visual form that contains text boxes for students to fill in after reading the text and they can retell the story based on their own understanding shaped into their own words. Additionally, story map represents an important part or even the entirety of a story in a shorter form in a form of graphic visual along with the connections between its fundamental components (Davis & McPherson, 1989). Therefore, the use of story map is appropriate considering the form of story map that consists of story elements such as elements in the narrative texts (Nurpitriyani, 2015).

Three previous research were centered to as a reference for this current study. The first previous research is about REAP technique that could increase students'

reading comprehension of any kind of English texts as reported by Susanto (2021). It is also revealed that REAP strategy could help students to comprehend narrative text and its elements successfully in the classroom (Ramdhani & Pusparini, 2022). Another result of previous research stated that story map successfully increased positive attitude from students which means students were enthusiastic and passionate while using the story map strategy in improving their reading comprehension of narrative texts (Bangsri & Phusawisot, 2020).

Additionally, the two chosen strategies were previously decided from the interview with the English teacher at a public junior high school in Bekasi, Indonesia. Before doing research, the English teacher stated clearly that students are still lacking in English reading comprehension. Students are said to have difficulty to understand the meaning of English words and understand a story written in English. By this, it means that students are still unfamiliar with English texts which now will be the focus of this present study. To further help students in familiarizing with English texts, authors tried to do research focusing on students' responses by using REAP strategy combined with story map strategy in facilitating their reading comprehension. Although many researchers have studied about the same topic, authors wanted to do in-depth research and discuss the case regarding the combined strategies in facilitating students' reading comprehension with the goal for students to have a better understanding narrative text and its elements as well as to perceive English texts specifically narrative text as more comprehensible material in the future.

2.   Methodology

To address the two research questions, this current study adopted a descriptive case-study as one of qualitative approach as a research design to get detailed data of students' response in learning narrative text by using REAP strategy and story map strategy. As stated by Creswell (2007), a descriptive case study is focused in a case or several cases that will be analyzed in-depth by assembling several sources of information. Hence, the data will be descriptively discussed in this study. This study involves gathering the data, classifying, evaluating, and forming conclusion from the data. This is in line with the use of descriptive qualitative research which functions to summarize and identify patterns in the data (Mello, 2021). The data will be collected from the three instruments.

The three instruments used in this study were observation notes as primary data and questionnaires as secondary data. Furthermore, data analysis for primary data refers to Braun & Clark (2006) using thematic analysis and using the Index of Item-Objective-Congruence (IOC) for measuring students' mean score in order to interpret the score to a more detailed explanation as this study adapted qualitative research. The site of this research was carried out at a junior high school in Bekasi, West Java, Indonesia. This school was targeted as a research site for its availability and proven that students are still lacking in familiarity with English texts. Thus, the research finally was conducted in a classroom of eight graders with an amount of 37 students consisting of 20 boys and 17 girls participated in

the study. Interviews data was collected from the three students who were carefully selected by the correspondence English teacher.
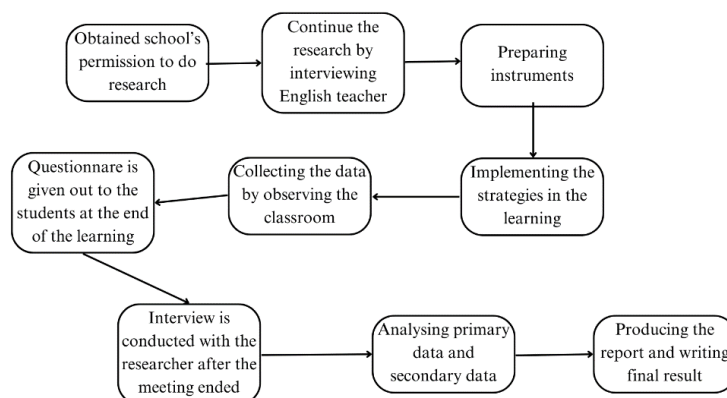

Figure 1. Research Procedures

Below is the distribution table of each phase that describes the process of analyzing the data.

Table 1. Data Analysis Process

Phase		Description of the process
1	Familiarisation	Author reads and re-reads the results of observation and interview transcripts that have been transcribed into soft file and translated into English.
2	Finding codes	Author finds similar codes and assigns codes to the transcripts.
3	Searching for themes	Author begins to look for themes after generating initial codes found in the transcript.
4	Reviewing themes	Author reviews the themes by choosing appropriate ones. After that, the author sums up the themes into four.
5	Defining and naming themes	The author defines and names themes after sorting out appropriate themes with the codes.
6	Writing the report	Author starts producing the report by writing the results and relating it to existing theories.

3.   Results and Discussion

Based on the observations and interviews result, authors recognized few patterns that frequently appeared in the process of analysis. Authors divided it into four aspects including thought processes, students' engagement and motivation, students' view of the strategies, and then strategies' effectiveness. The mentioned four aspects will answer the first research question: How does REAP strategy combined with story map assist students' reading comprehension of narrative text? This research question discusses how the two strategies can assist students' in engaging with narrative text.

a. Thought Processes involved in the Reading Activity

The first thing to look at as how the strategies can assist students' reading comprehension of narrative text is how the thought processes involved in the reading activity. This came from the observation notes and interviews with class representation that students seemed to adopt and involve a lot of thought processes or cognitive activities such as critical thinking. It can be seen from the way students passionately involved in the learning activity when they read using REAP and story map strategy. During the implementation of REAP strategy, students were seen to think critically, as well as be able to summarize, inference, and absorb the content of the story quickly.

Figure 2. Students' utilizing REAP strategy as they read

Students were paying attention to the text being read and they were able to connect the ideas from the plot of the story after reading the whole text. This indicates that students quickly absorbed the strategy and start to ponder or discuss the story to meet the conclusion. Additionally, the ability to think critically is in line with previous study that stated that students improve critical thinking skill in this step by using their own language to retell the main idea of the text (Santi, 2015). After reading carefully, students are required to fill in a story map form by putting ideas of the story that goes into each box according to its elements. In this process, students presented their own ideas from the story by their own words which resulted to them having to build their own words. This is consistent with Powell et al. (2012) theory that students internalize information in a text not only by taking notes in the Annotate phase, but also by writing down important points in their own words (Ramdhani & Pusparini, 2020). This requires students to memorize in detail the information in the text they are reading. Additionally, not only they can process some new skills, they also can finally understand the whole story that they thought they cannot understand at first. Students revealed that they were able to comprehend the content of the story after using the combined strategies. This can be seen from the interview excerpts from the students participated in this study.

For example, from the beginning to the end of the story, I can draw conclusion by observing and identifying the text, thanks to the REAP strategy, I already know the problems with the story and then can apply this to the story map. (Student 1)

Therefore, it can be concluded that REAP strategy with story map assist students' reading comprehension by involving thought processes in the learning process based on the interview results with the participants of this study.

b. Students' engagement and motivation of learning narrative text

This section discusses the themes that included motivation and student engagement in the classroom. Research participants mentioned a number of source codes that appeared frequently in the interview results, including: applicability to everyday life, collaboration and motivation to reread. The phrase "applicable to everyday life" refers to the moral of the story, which motivates students to read stories with a moral. Students tend to enjoy story where they can take something, in this case, a meaning from it. From the interview results, a student stated that lesson from the story is beneficial for their daily lives.

You can use it to your advantage. A lesson or meaning is like a content or a solution, like the end of a story. In our daily lives. (Student 3)

They also thought that the moral or meaning of the story helped them apply it to everyday life rather than just reading it as entertainment. Thus, they also supposed that this type of activity involves discussion or collaboration with peers. In this case, students can share their opinions about the story by discussing it with fellow students, which can motivate them to read and understand the story from different perspectives. An excerpt from the interview result can also support this result.

You can share information or answers with your friends, so it can be important to work together to solve problems. It can also be useful to answer questions and find answers to questions from narrative texts. This is very useful. (Student 1)

In addition, one of the steps of the REAP strategy enables students to read the text in more detail, and students believe that this strategy helps them to fill in story maps and summarize stories easily. A study participant stated that the REAP strategy and story maps can motivate them to reread the text and remember important details.

When you read a text, sometimes you do not remember everything (the text) even if you have read everything, and filling in the story map helps you remember the important parts because it is easier to remember. (Student 2)

In summary, the combination of REAP and story map strategies can improve student motivation and engagement in the classroom, especially in reading comprehension of narrative texts.

c. Strategies' effectiveness in the classroom

In this section, authors examine students' responses about the effectiveness of blended learning strategies. Students indicated that the REAP strategy and story map strategy were effective as instructional methods and much better than traditional reading or reading without strategic aids. Looking at the observation and interviews result, the reading activities with REAP and story map strategy has successfully held in the classroom with the students passionately and actively participated in every interaction with the teacher or with fellow students at the classroom. This is supported by student's interview excerpt that states both strategies are easy to use.

As I said, with REAP, it is easier to remember things when filling in a story map than when reading in general because it is structured. (Student 2)

Another participant made a clear comparison between the two strategies based on how they work and which strategy she prefers when reading narrative texts.

Compared to traditional reading, REAP and story maps work differently because with traditional reading you cannot recognize the important elements of the story, whereas with REAP you can recognize where the important elements of the story are in a structured way. With narrative maps, you can summarize the important parts of the story. That's why I prefer to use REAP and narrative maps together. (Student 1)

It is clear from the above statement that this participant believes that using the REAP strategy and narrative map strategy helps him find important ideas in a story. This is in line with the statement from previous study that when students be able of understanding and comprehending ideas when reading the text, they become active or good readers by guidance or without guidance (Cahyaningtyas & Mustadi, 2018).

d. Students' view of the strategies used in the learning activity

This theme explores how the research participants perceived the combination of the two strategies. It also shows how students felt after using both strategies in reading activities. The initial codes that frequently emerged from the interviews were: clear, interesting, modern strategy, more organized, unique, better than traditional reading, not too difficult. Students indicated that they faced some difficulties during the REAP activity, such as annotating the text, but they also said that these strategies were interesting and unique.

Yes, it was interesting because you can find words in the story and analyze them, e.g. find nouns and verbs in past tense and adverbs, and you can read first and try to understand the text because you have to read it properly first. (Student 1)
Yes, because I think REAP can structure the important things in the story, whereas I think story maps are more of a summary of what the story is about. (Student 1)

In summary, the interviewees' perceptions were generally positive, with some initially negative responses, but most students indicated that they found the REAP strategy and the narrative map strategy unfamiliar but interesting to learn in class.

To answer the second research question, "What are students' attitudes after learning narrative texts using the REAP strategy combined with the story map strategy?" the degree of agreement with each aspect was analyzed on a five-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Another instrument, a questionnaire, was distributed to the 37 students, to support the existing primary data, namely the observation checklist and the interviews. The questionnaire contained the students' self-assessment notes. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed by calculating the mean and standard deviation and then interpreting the calculated results into five levels, ranging from very low to very high (Bangsri & Phusawisot, 2020). The five levels mentioned by Best (1981) and cited by Bangsri (2020) are as follows.

Very High   = 4.5-5.00
High   = 3.50-4.49
Moderate   = 2.50-3.49
Low   = 1.50-2.49
Very Low   = 1.00-1.49

The following table below shows overall mean score of questionnaire aspect interpreted as mention by Best (1981).

Table 2. Overall mean score of questionnaire aspects

	Aspect	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
1.	Attitudes towards the REAP strategy in reading comprehension	3.97	0.99	High
2.	Attitudes towards the story map strategy in reading comprehension	3.80	0.92	High
3.	Attitudes towards the reading comprehension strategies in reading class	4.10	0.88	High
4.	Attitudes towards the teaching and learning in reading class	4.25	0.74	High
	Total	4.03	0.89	High

The above data shows that the mean of the students' responses to the questionnaire is 4.03 with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.89, which is high. This indicates that students positively appraise the use of combined strategies in reading comprehension of narrative texts. This indicates that students responded positively to the use of combined strategies in reading comprehension in the case of narrative texts. This shows that students responded positively to the use of combined strategies in reading comprehension in the case of narrative texts. One of study participant openly said that he prefers to read using the two strategies when reading a narrative text in order to understand the whole story from the beginning until the ending.

Compared to traditional reading, the way REAP and or story map work is different, because if we read normally, we can't determine which things are important from the story. From the REAP method, we can determine in a structured way where the important things in the story are. From the story map, it's more about summarizing the important contents of the story. So, I prefer to read using the REAP strategy and the story map strategy. (Student 1)

From the statement above, authors concluded that REAP and story map strategy helps students to highlight key points in the story even though they were just introduced to the strategy at that time. Moreover, the overall mean score shows that the last aspect has the highest mean score of 4.25, indicating that students can make inferences in reading comprehension, in this case when reading narrative texts. This also shows that students were particularly satisfied with the teaching and learning of the reading activity in the classroom.

4.   Conclusion

The descriptive analysis and research results showed that the REAP strategy combined with the story map strategy resulted in a positive response from students in terms of improved comprehension of narrative texts. Based on the observation and interview results, students said that they were not only able to easily understand narrative texts in English, but they were also able to remember key points and apply their understanding in their own words on a story map. Thirty-seven students participated in the study and the results showed that students responded positively to reading using the story map strategy after the REAP strategy, and were very enthusiastic and motivated to learn more. Specifically, this study examined students' responses to the use of the REAP strategy in combination with the narrative map strategy to better train English teachers in the use of appropriate instructional strategies to promote or improve narrative reading comprehension. The study also opened new avenues for pedagogical research in the future.

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