

IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION BY USING STORY PYRAMID AND PLUS MINUS INTERESTING STRATEGY

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Abstract

This research shows that there were several problems faced by students at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa in learning English, especially learning reading comprehension. Therefore, researcher was interested in conducting research entitled "Improving Students' Reading Comprehension by Using Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting Strategy at the Tenth Grade of SMA Negeri 2 Alasa". This research aims to observe the learning difficulties of these students, whether using the Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting strategies could improve reading comprehension skills of the tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa and find out which strategy was more effective in improving reading comprehension skills. In this research, the researcher used classroom action research (CAR). CAR is an examination of learning activities in the form of an action, which is carried out to improve the teaching and learning process so as to improve learning outcomes that are better than before. Based on the results of the analysis, the pre-test results in class X-IPS which used the Story Pyramid strategy obtained an average score of 61.05%, while in class X-IPA got 56,84%. After the students learned by using these two strategies, the average post-test score for class X-IPS was 73.68% and class X-IPA was 74.21%. From these calculations it was concluded that there was a significant improvement in students' scores in reading comprehension and the use of Plus Minus Interesting strategy was more effective in improving students' reading comprehension with an average score increase of 17.37% compared to Story Pyramid's 12.63%.

Keywords : Improving; Reading; Comprehension; Strategy

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the language abilities that cannot be separated from the other skills because a student's competence in one element will help them master. It is an important educational goal because without reading, one's life is incomplete, language will not improve. The students gain their knowledge by reading.

Reading is an active process that includes a skill of recognition and comprehension (Selong, 2019). It means comprehend the content, the reader must think critically about what they read. In other terms, reading is the activity of interacting with written material to obtain knowledge that the reader need.

Students nowadays do not only read one type of material. They are also interested in fiction or nonfiction content, continuous or discontinuous, printed or electronic. Students need to have enough reading skills to understand different genres (Sari et al., 2020). Text can also be displayed in the form of words or visuals. In order to comprehend the texts, students generally learn how to use their personal, social, cultural, and academic knowledge and experiences to read and interact with the ideas in the book as well as the thoughts and reactions of other readers. It has been determined that expert comprehension necessitates the efficient use of all of these processes, as well as the creation of techniques for understanding phrases, paragraphs, and entire texts.

Reading comprehension is the interaction of readers with written material to extract meaning, message, or information (Manurung, 2022). Students are expected to learn information and knowledge from the content being read. There are many reasons why reading comprehension is an important learning skill. If a person can recognize the symbols written but cannot understand the meaning, it means that he does not have much. The ability to comprehend the text is included in the understanding of the text to discover the key idea, specific and detailed information inference, and understanding meaning of term.

There are various types of English text. If the objective of the text is to amuse or entertain the reader, the kind of text is to pay attention to the characteristics of the narrative genre (Sipayung et al., 2021). Narrative text is a story with content concerning a series of related occurrences. It means a narrative is a text that contains information about a series of events. In storytelling, there are numerous types of relationships between events. Readers can derive moral conclusions from narratives.

Based on preliminary observations also some interviews with the English teacher and some grade X students, the researcher discovered problems with students learning in SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. The problems as follows: First, the students are deficient in understanding the content of a reading text. It makes it tough for students to describe the details and precise information from the book. Second, the students are uninterested in reading English. During the teaching and learning process, the student felt bored and sleepy as a result of the situation. They said that the teacher merely asked the students to read the text and complete the comprehension questions supplied in the textbook. There is little interaction between the teacher and the students.

Based on the difficulty stated above, strategies assist readers in better understanding what they read. Reading may interest students because it is done for more than just academic purposes. It can also help them to refresh their minds. In other words, reading is critical for students (Manik, Sondang; Yinghuei, C.; Manurung, I.; Dewi, M; Eliana, 2022). The researcher chooses Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting strategy as the strategies applied in teaching reading to help students achieve the level of comprehension as the goal of reading comprehension.

The story pyramid is one of the graphic organizer strategies. Another popular method that can be used for various genres and customized in a variety of ways is the graphic organizer. Graphic organizers, sometimes known as story maps, concept maps, or semantic organizers, provide numerous benefits to students. Reading comprehension graphic organizers are systems that assist students organize what they are reading. Reading comprehension becomes increasingly crucial as students advance through the educational system (Erika Sinambela; Theoria, Sinaga; Agustinus, 2020). According to Macon et.al in Rahmawati (2020), Story Pyramid helps students identify the highlights of the story and describe the important parts of using a limited number of words (Rahmawati, 2020). This means that the description of key story information, such as the main character, setting, and major plot events, can be understood using the story pyramid. The purpose of this strategy is to provide students with the opportunity to practice their reading skills with the teacher. The purpose of story pyramid strategy is to help students understand the text. Based on the previous explanation of the story pyramid method, it can be stated that it is one of the most effective strategies for teaching reading comprehension. It needed students to effectively absorb the material and utilize it by researching the text's detail information. It makes students' more critics of thinking skills and helped them arrange key points from the material.

According to De Bono in Sharma (2017), Plus Minus Interesting is designed to open every participants' thinking and encourages creativity. This strategies that help students form opinions based on their views (Sharma, 2017). Plus Minus Interesting is one of the most useful and effective tools for directing attention and generating thinking for analyzing ideas, texts and learning topics. Plus Minus Interesting is a learning strategy that teachers can use to teach subject matter to all of their students. In the teaching-learning process, Plus Minus Interesting strategy use the table chart as a medium to pique students' attention in the subject matter. Plus Minus Interesting is a powerful thinking tool that is so simple and everyone can uses it anyway (Hasibuan & Samosir, 2019). It means that Plus Minus Interesting strategy is very simple to utilize because we may use it in any situation. According to Setyarini et.al (2021), Plus, Minus, Interesting strategy relevant to be an innovative strategy to promote the students' critical thinking skills (Setyarini et al., 2021). Plus Minus Interesting is one of the most important and effective methods for directing attention and stimulating thought about many aspects of a topic, situation, or piece of work. Based on the ideas above, this teaching strategy may be employed in a variety of classroom tasks, such as investigating difficulties and improving students' reading abilities.

Based on the discussion above, the study aims to investigate the Improving Students' Reading Comprehension by Using Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting Strategy at the Tenth Grade of SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. Then the study attempted to answer the following research question.

1. Does student's reading comprehension can be improved by using Plus Minus Interesting and Story Pyramid Strategy at the Tenth grade of SMA Negeri 2 Alasa?
2. Which strategy is better to improve student's reading comprehension at the Tenth grade of SMA Negeri 2 Alasa?.

METHODS

This research was classified as classroom action research which consists of four phases including planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Ferrance, cited by Wahid states that there are 5 stages of action research, including problem recognition, data collection, data interpretation, action implementation, and evaluation (Wahid et al., 2023). According to Kemmis and McTaggart as cited by (Meesuk et al., 2020) said in different ways that there are four steps to applying action research in the classroom: planning, acting, observing and

reflection. The researcher then composes a research plan using Plus Minus Interesting strategy and Story Pyramid Strategy to find relevant materials based on the syllabus. In its implementation, this research consisted of several meetings, namely carrying out a pre-test, implementing action using both strategies in cycle 1 with three meetings and cycle 2 was a revision of cycle 1 consisting of three meetings. According to (Banditvilai, 2020), reading strategies had a positive effect on the students' reading comprehension. Based on the preceding statement, we conclude that if students are aware of a variety of learning strategies, it will be easier for them to be active learners. Furthermore, McLaughlin in Mulatsih and Manurung said that by using these reading strategy the teacher defines summarizing as extracting the key concepts from what they are read (Mulatsih & Manurung, 2019). The researcher begins to implement the strategy of teaching reading according to a set lesson plan individually to observe class activities during teaching-learning process.

In this research, the researcher filled out both the observation sheet of student activities during the learning process. The researcher evaluated the action after it was completed by discussing the students' task results at the end of the class, the observation results, and other relevant source data. If any flaws or errors are discovered, the researcher attempted to solve the problem. The researcher continued to the second cycle after revising plan. The research was conducted in the first stage, and the researcher attempted to minimize the same error. This research is carried out at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. This research concentrated on the tenth-graders.

The subjects of this research are tenth-grade students from SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. In this research included 38 students, including 19 students from class X-IPS and 19 students from class X-IPA. This class was chosen as the subject of the research for the following reasons: First and foremost, as previously stated, the students struggled with English reading comprehension. Second, this school needed to repair and improve student quality.

The data that will be used to evaluate the progress of students' ability are in the form of grades or scores derived from students' assignments of reading comprehension by using Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting Strategy in this research. The following are the procedures that will be implemented in order to obtain results by the researcher:

1. The researcher develops lesson plan and prepare research instrument.
2. The researcher give a pre-test to each class studied which is designed to assess students' reading ability before the strategy implemented.

3. The researcher conduct a test in the form of essay based on the text related to narrative text story around student's surrounding.
4. The researcher conducts teaching and learning process by using Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting Strategy respectively in class X IPS and X IPA.
5. The researcher give a post-test designed to evaluate student progress after implementing the strategy.
6. The researcher collects data through observation sheets, student worksheets, and documentation.
7. The researcher analyzes the score of students before and after taking the test and then calculates the average value. If the data analysis shows the improvement, the research is stopped and the researcher draws conclusions from the research. However, if the results of the data analysis indicate no improvement in students' reading comprehension, the researcher plans to continue the research in the next cycle.

Based on the mentioned research problems, the researcher analyzes the learner's score of the essay reading comprehension test to determine whether students' abilities can increase after utilizing the Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting Strategy Development with the following stages:

1. The researcher conducted a pre-test on the two classes to be analyzed, X IPS and X IPA.
2. Following the pre-test, the Story Pyramid Strategy will be used in class X IPS, whereas Plus Minus Interesting strategy will be used in class X IPA.
3. A post-test is then administered to the two classes investigated.
4. Using statistical procedures, the researcher computes the average score on the pre-test and post-test.
5. When scoring the test, the following formula is used to calculate the student's score:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Notes:

$\bar{X}$: Mean

$\sum X$: The total number of the students' score

N : Number of the students'

6. To determine the outcomes, the researcher will compare pre-tests and post-tests. The results will be compared to the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) at this institution, which is at least 65.
7. If students fail in cycle 1, the researcher moves on to cycle II, and so on. The following formula is used to calculate the percentage of students who pass the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) in each cycle:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

P : Class percentage

F : Frequency

N : Number of student

8. To determine if students' reading comprehension improved, the researcher examined whether they are able to pass the KKM score of 65 after receiving treatment or not in each cycle.
9. To determine whether technique is more effective at improving students' reading comprehension skills, the researcher compared the top scores of the two classes that met the Minimum Mastery Criteria.

RESULTS

Data for this research were obtained from pre- and post-tests conducted in the X-IPS and X-IPA classes. X-IPS was taught using Story Pyramid while X-IPA was taught using the Plus Minus Interesting strategy. Both of these classes followed the same testing and the resulting data are presented as follows:

Table 1. The data of class X-IPS at Pre-test, Post-test 1 and Post-test II

No	Name	Pre-test	Post-test I	Post-test II
1	ADZ	30	50	60
2	DBH	70	80	90
3	FRZ	30	40	50
4	GG	50	70	90
5	HSH	40	70	80
6	HW	50	70	80
7	HWZ	40	50	70

8	IH	40	60	70
9	JZ	50	70	90
10	KH	70	50	70
11	LPZ	20	50	70
12	LSZ	40	70	70
13	MG	60	70	80
14	OG	40	80	90
15	PSH	40	40	50
16	RMZ	60	60	70
17	RJZ	20	50	70
18	YH	40	60	70
19	YG	20	70	80
Total		810	1160	1400
Average		42,63	61,05	73,68

Table 2. The data of class X-IPA at Pre-test, Post-test 1 and Post-test II

No	Name	Pre-test	Post-test I	Post-test II
1	APH	65	70	70
2	AG	45	55	65
3	AW	70	75	85
4	BZ	65	60	70
5	BSH	65	70	75
6	FH	60	60	70
7	HYEH	50	65	70
8	HPZ	60	70	75
9	JZ	60	55	70
10	LMH	50	70	70
11	MH	50	65	75
12	MFH	60	60	80
13	NG	70	70	75
14	SBZ	40	60	80
15	VSZ	40	50	60
16	WNZ	50	70	80
17	WH	60	70	75
18	YPH	70	60	80

19	YSZ	50	70	85
	Total	1080	1225	1410
	Average	56,84	64,47	74,21

The data above was obtained by researchers from pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test 2 in both classes. The pre-test is carried out at the beginning to see students' knowledge before treatment is given to them. After the pre-test was carried out, the activity continued in cycle 1 by implementing the reading comprehension strategy treatment, namely Story Pyramid in class X-IPS and Plus Minus Interesting strategy in class X-IPA. After implementing the treatment, the researcher conducted post-test 1 to see student learning outcomes.

Based on the post-test 1 data that was obtained, the researcher saw an improvement in student scores when compared to the pre-test. However, the student's score is still below the KKM. Therefore, the researcher planned the research again to continue to cycle 2. The implementation of learning activities in cycle 2 was based on improving learning from the previous cycle 1. So the final score on post-test II is obtained as in the table above.

In the class that received the Story Pyramid treatment, the pre-test mean was 42.63%, post-test 1 was 61.05, and post-test II was 73.68. Meanwhile for the class that applied Plus Minus Interesting, the pre-test mean was 56.84%, post-test 1 was 64.47% and post-test II 74.21%.

Table 3. Frequency of students' score in Pre-test X-IPA

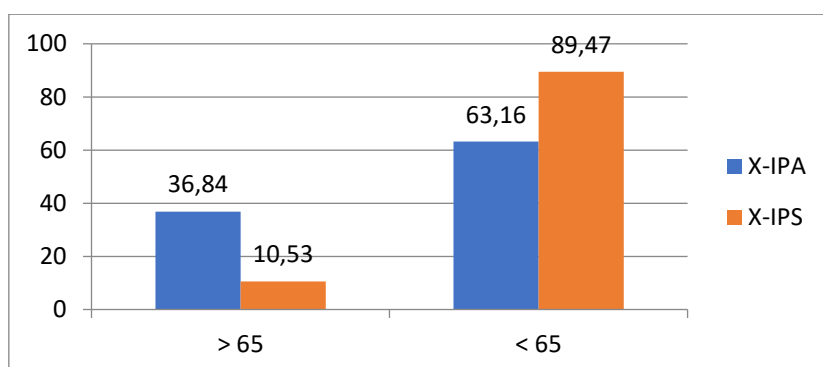
No	Grade	Frequencies	Percentage	Explanation
1	>65	7	36,84 %	Complete
2	< 65	12	63,16%	Incomplete
	Total	19	100 %	

Source: The result score of reading pre-test at X-IPA of SMAN 2 Alasa

Table 4. Frequency of students' score in Pre-test X-IPS

No	Grade	Frequencies	Percentage	Explanation
1	>65	2	10,53 %	Complete
2	< 65	17	89,47%	Incomplete
	Total	19	100 %	

Source: The result score of reading pre-test at X-IPS of SMAN 2 Alasa

**Figure 1. The Percentage of the Students' Completeness Score on Pre-test**

Based on the data above, it could be inferred that X-IPA 12 students (63,16%) were not successful and 7 other students (36,84%) were successful, in X-IPS 17 students (89,47%) were not successful and 2 other students (10,53%) were successful. The successful students were those who got the minimum mastery criteria at SMA Negeri 2 Alasa least 65. The successful students were fewer than those unsuccessful students. From the pre-test result, the writer got the average of 56,84 in X-IPA and 42,63 in X-IPS, so the result was unsatisfied. Therefore, the writer used plus minus interesting (PMI) strategy to improve the students' reading skill.

Table 5. Frequency of students' score in Post-test X-IPA

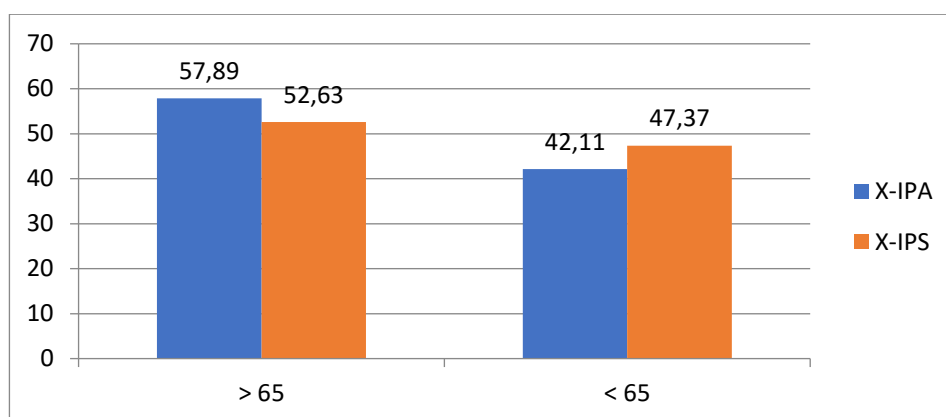
No	Grade	Frequencies	Percentage	Explanation
1	>65	11	57,89 %	Complete
2	< 65	8	42,11%	Incomplete
	Total	19	100 %	

Source: The result score of reading pre-test at X-IPA of SMAN 2 Alasa

Table 6. Frequency of students' score in Post-test X-IPS

No	Grade	Frequencies	Percentage	Explanation
1	>65	10	52,63 %	Complete
2	< 65	9	47,37%	Incomplete
	Total	19	100 %	

Source: The result score of reading pre-test at X-IPS of SMAN 2 Alasa

**Figure 2. The Percentage of the Students' Completeness Score on Post-test**

Based on the result above, it could be seen that 11 students (57,89%) got score up to the standard and 13 students (43,33%) got score less than the standard. It was higher than the result of pre- test. The criterion of students who were successful in mastering the material should get minimum mastery criteria, at least 70. Learning process was said success when 75% students got score ≥ 70 . The fact showed that the result was unsatisfying.

DISCUSSIONS

After getting the data, the researcher calculated the data to measure the improvement in students' abilities at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 2 Alasa as in the table below:

Table 7. Mean Score of Pre-Test and Post-Test

No	Class	Treatment	Pre-test	Post-test 1	Post-test 2	Improvement
1	X-IPS	Story Pyramid	42,63	61,05	73,68	31,05
2	X-IPA	Plus Minus Interesting	56,84	64,47	74,21	17,37

From the table above, it can be seen that there has been an increase in students' reading comprehension abilities when seen from the average score of students' pre-test and post-test results. When compared between the Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting strategies, the increase in student scores using the Story Pyramid strategy is higher than that of Plus Minus Interesting.

The discussion presented further arguments and explanations in the research finding about the students' pre-test and post-test. In this section, the discussion focuses on improve teaching reading comprehension by using Plus Minus Interesting and Story Pyramid strategy at the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 2 Alasa. In this research, pre- and post-tests were performed in the tenth grade student of SMA Negeri 2 Alasa namely X-IPS and X-IPA.

Based on the range of percentage and classification of students' score, the researcher found that was effective in improving students' reading ability. Pre-test results showed that there were 2 students or 10,53% of class X-IPS passed the test and at the class X-IPA only 14,29%. It means the reading comprehension ability of all students is still weak. After treatment with Plus Minus Interesting and Story Pyramid strategy, post-test 1 results improved. This shows that at X-IPS there were an improvement toward students score which was 47,37 while at X-IPA was 64,47. However, the results are not satisfactory because students are still dominant who did not pass the KKM. So, the researcher continued to cycle 2 and used the advantages and disadvantages that occurred in cycle 1 as a reference for improving learning. The students score for cycle 2 was better than before. The mean of students of X-IPS got scores 73,68 while class X-IPA 74,21. From these scores, students' reading comprehension abilities have increased compared to the previous post-test and their scores have passed the KKM. This means that by using Think Talk Write and Self-Regulated Strategy Development there is an increase in students' abilities, especially in expressing ideas and detailed information in recount text.

The implementation of the Plus Minus Interesting and story pyramid strategy can improve reading comprehension of students. Because the story pyramid strategy here is possible helps students comprehend the text and understand the generic structure of text through fun reading activities. This strategy made students easier to get detailed information from text and help them analyze narrative text from easiest to hardest based on the lowest to highest pyramid line, which also contains the general structure of narrative text such as such as orientation, complication, sequence of events, resolution, and coda. The improvement can also be seen in student performance when given treatment, students showed interest and enjoyed participating in activities. Students were interested in reading the text to form keywords for each line story pyramid and gave enthusiasm for finding detailed information from the text.

This result is in line with some expert theories. Related to Hasibuan and Samosir on the research *“The Effect of Plus Minus Interesting (PMI) Method on Students’ Achievement in Writin Analytical Exposition Text a Research at the Eleventh Grade of Students SMK Negeri 1 Padangsidempuan”* told that Plus Minus Interesting Method has a significant impact on students' achievement in reading analytical exposition texts in the eleventh grade (Hasibuan & Samosir, 2019). It also supported by Eulis (Rahmawati, 2020) in *“Story Pyramid: An Inovation of English Teaching Strategy in Promoting Students’ Reading Skill”* explained that Story Pyramid Strategy is effective in teaching narrative text to Senior High School students' reading comprehension. Also in Cahyani and Nurhadi on the research *“Enhancing Reading Skills and Language Creativity Through the Plus Minus Interesting: A Case Research at the Primary School Level”*, the results showed significant improvements in various aspects of students' written reading, including word count, vocabulary usage, flow and organizational structure, after implementing the Plus Minus Interesting (Cahyani & Nurhadi, 2023).

Similarities between previous research and this research concern the usage of story pyramid strategy although the differences relate to the methodology and design of research and the type of skills used. The first previous research using experimental method and focus on teaching reading analytical exposition text, the second used quasi experimental with a quantitative approach and the third by employing a case study research method. While, this research was focus on using Plus Minus Interesting and Story Pyramid strategy in improving reading comprehension of student in teaching narrative text.

Consider to the research results, Plus Minus Interesting and Story Pyramid strategy is effective in improving students' reading comprehension of narrative text and proposed to be applied to the teaching process.

CONCLUSION

The results of research show that in conducting reading activity through Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting strategy can improve the reading ability of the tenth grade SMA Negeri 2 Alasa students.

Based on the explanation of cycle 1 and cycle 2, it could be concluded that the use of Story Pyramid and Plus Minus Interesting strategy could improve students' reading narrative text. There was a progress based on their average score in the pre-test which was 62,24 improve to 72,4 in post-test 1 and finally became 77,03 in post-test 2. It could be seen that there was an effective progress from pre-test, post-test 1, and post test 2. The amount of score improvement from post-test 1 to post-test 2 was 4,63. In improving the students' reading narrative text, the researcher used plus minus strategy as strategy to train the students' reading narrative text and made the students more understand narrative text in reading also interested in learning english reading. Because plus minus interesting strategy made students more attracted to study and understand about narrative text. Using plus minus interesting strategy made students easier to read a narrative text. As result, the students' score is improve because they have been trained with plus minus interesting strategy.

Furthermore, it can be inferred from the discussion above that by using plus minus interesting strategy, the students had an improvement in reading narrative text. The students felt easier better than before, and they were also able to read a good narrative text. It is proven in their learning result, which was showed a significant improvement from pre test until cycle 2.

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