


Enhancing Narrative Text Comprehension Through Picture story Among Eighth Grade Students at Junior High Schools

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ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui efektivitas penggunaan buku cerita bergambar dalam meningkatkan kemampuan pemahaman naratif siswa kelas 8 SMP. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif dengan desain One-group Pretest–Posttest. Sampel dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Sampel dalam penelitian ini terdiri dari 32 siswa dari kelas 8H SMP N 14 Semarang. Instrumen pengumpulan data berupa 25 soal pilihan ganda yang diberikan melalui pre-test dan post-test. Data yang diperoleh telah di pastikan normalitas dan homogenitasnya sebelum di uji menggunakan paired sample t-test. Hasil analisa yang di peroleh menunjukkan adanya signifikan ($0.000 < 0,05$) pada kemampuan pemahaman siswa. Hasil penelitian ini didukung oleh nilai rata-rata post-test sebesar 87,75 lebih tinggi dibandingkan nilai pre-test sebesar 68. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa buku cerita bergambar efektif digunakan dalam meningkatkan pemahaman naratif. Oleh karena itu, buku cerita bergambar layak direkomendasikan sebagai media pembelajaran alternatif yang efektif untuk mengajarkan teks naratif di tingkat sekolah menengah pertama.

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of using picture books in improving the narrative comprehension skills of eighth grade junior high school students. The method used is quantitative with a one-group pretest-posttest design. The sample was selected through purposive sampling. The sample in this study consisted of 32 students from class 8H of SMP N 14 Semarang. The data collection instrument consisted of 25 multiple-choice questions administered through pre-tests and post-tests. The data were analyzed using a paired sample t-test hypothesis, which showed a significant increase ($0.000 < 0.05$). The results of this study are supported by the post-test average score of 87.75 compared to the pre-test score of 68. These findings indicate that picture storybooks are effective in improving narrative comprehension. Therefore, picture storybooks can be recommended as an effective alternative learning medium for teaching narrative texts at the junior high school level.



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INTRODUCTION

English is an international language that plays an important role in education, technology, and economics. According to Jiangsu, (2024), reading skills are an essential educational foundation for mastering lifelong learning. In the context of formal education in Indonesia, English is taught from elementary school to university. One of the skills that students must master is reading comprehension, which is the basis for mastering other language skills. Additionally, Oktarina et al., (2020) states that reading plays a role in broadening one's horizons to new ideas. Good reading skills provide opportunities for students to access information, expand their knowledge, and hone their critical thinking skills. According to Suryani et al., (2021), reading comprehension is the ability to understand and interpret the main message of a text and relate it to prior knowledge.

At the junior high school level, one type of text taught in English language learning is a narrative text. Narrative text represents a form of storytelling that presents a sequence of events and is often encountered in literature such as novels, fairy tales, and folk tales, requiring readers to engage deeply with the storyline (Dhillon et al., 2020). Narrative text aims to entertain readers while conveying moral messages through stories. Narrative texts play a role in conveying life values, providing entertainment to readers, and shaping their perspectives so that they are able to understand and interpret a story (Boyd et al., 2020). However, based on initial observations, many students struggle to understand the meaning conveyed in the text, such as recognizing the plot, characters, and moral values. This impacts students' low learning outcomes in reading comprehension. Contributing factors include the use of uninteresting learning media, a lack of supporting illustrations, and teaching methods that tend to be monotonous.

To overcome this problem, the positive use of media has been proven to influence and improve student learning activities (Damayanti, 2021). One type of media that can be used is picture books. Picture books consist of text and visual illustrations, where visual illustrations can strengthen students' understanding of the reading material and encourage them to continue learning (David & Sulaiman, 2021). This media can help students visualize stories, understand context, and increase their interest in reading. Picture storybooks can attract children's attention, which in turn can encourage greater interest in learning and foster a high level of curiosity (Marhamah, 2022). Previous studies have shown that using picture books can help students understand the structure of narrative texts, remember the plot, and increase their interest in reading. This application is expected to create enjoyable and interactive learning, encouraging learning interest in the classroom. This statement aligns with the characteristics of adolescents.

Based on this background, this study focuses on efforts to enhancing the narrative text comprehension of eighth-grade junior high school students through picture storybooks. It is hoped that the results of this study can help English teachers select effective learning media and serve as a reference for future researchers in developing innovative and interesting learning strategies.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative method with a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design. In this design, one group of students was given a pretest, then received treatment in the form of learning using picture storybooks, and finally took a posttest to measure their improvement in understanding narrative texts.

The population in this study was nine eighth-grade classes. The research sample consisted of 32 students from class VIII H at SMP Negeri 14 Semarang, who were selected using purposive sampling. The research instrument used was a 25-question multiple-choice reading comprehension test designed to measure students' comprehension of narrative texts. The instrument's validity was tested using content validity with a pilot test, while its reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha.

The research procedure began with a pretest to determine the students' initial abilities. It was followed by treatment in the form of narrative text learning using picture storybooks for three sessions focused on vocabulary introduction, story flow, and narrative elements. After the treatment, students were given a posttest to measure their abilities after learning. The pretest and posttest data were analyzed using a paired sample t-test to determine whether there was a significant difference between the scores before and after the treatment.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The research was conducted in July in class 8H. In this study, data was obtained by conducting pre-tests and post-tests. The data obtained was then analyzed. The analyzed data showed that the average post-test score was higher (87.75) than the pre-test score (68.00).

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis

Class	N	Minimum	Max	Mean
Pretest	32	52	80	68.00
Posttest	32	76	100	87.75

Based on the table of maximum and minimum values, it can also be interpreted that the lowest scores have increased and the highest scores have reached perfect scores. This shows a positive change in students' abilities

The next step is to conduct a normality test as a prerequisite for further analysis. The normality test is performed using the Shapiro–Wilk test. The results show that the pretest scores have a significance value of 0.132 and the posttest scores have a significance value of 0.104, both of which are greater than 0.05.

Table 2. Test of Normality

Class	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre test	.137	32	.131	.949	32	.132
Post test	.147	32	.076	.945	32	.104

This normality test shows that the data is normally distributed. Therefore, we can proceed to test the hypothesis using a paired sample t-test.

After the data is normally distributed, the next test is homogeneity. The homogeneity test uses Levene's Test to ensure that the significance value is >0.05.

Table 3. Test of Homogeneity

Test of Homogeneity of Variance					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
English Outcome	Based on Mean	2.666	1	62	.108
	Based on Median	2.763	1	62	.102
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	2.763	1	51.726	.103
	Based on trimmed mean	2.818	1	62	.098

The table above shows that the significance value is >0.05, which means that the data has homogeneous variance.

The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test have been tested and are normally distributed and homogeneous. Therefore, a paired sample t-test can be performed.

Table 4. Test of Hipotesis

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pret est Postt est	- 21.938	4.912	.868	-23.708	-20.167	- 25.266	31	.000

Based on the results of the paired sample t-test sig-2 tailed, the value is 0.000<0.05. These results indicate a significant difference between the post-test and pre-test scores. The average and highest scores prove that the use of picture storybooks has a positive impact on improving narrative text comprehension.

Discussion

Before the implementation of picture storybooks, both the experimental and control classes had relatively similar levels of reading comprehension. Most students still experienced difficulties in understanding the plot, vocabulary, and moral messages in narrative texts. At this stage, students tended to read mechanically without truly understanding the meaning of the text, as indicated by their pre-test scores, which were in the moderate to low range

After the implementation of learning using picture storybooks, there was a significant increase in the experimental class, as evidenced by the data analysis results showing that the post-test results increased in the experimental class.. This clearly provided motivation and a deeper understanding of the

reading content. Students appeared more enthusiastic about participating in reading activities because they were aided by contextual illustrations. The pictures in the books provided visual cues that made it easier for students to remember the plot, characters, and moral messages, so they were more confident when answering questions both orally and in writing

Meanwhile, in the control class that used conventional methods without visual aids, some students still showed improvement, but not as much as the experimental class. Without the support of pictures, students had to rely entirely on their understanding of the written text, which was a barrier for some students, especially those with limited vocabulary. This made some students in the control class appear more passive and less confident when asked to explain the content of the reading.

The results of the study show that the pre-test and post-test scores increased significantly after the students received the picture storybook treatment to improve narrative comprehension. This shows that the picture storybook medium can help students learn narrative texts. Students become more imaginative when reading stories with pictures. Picture storybooks also make it easier for students to understand the content of the reading material (David & Sulaiman, 2021)

The results of this study are consistent with those of Simangunsong (2023), who found that using picture storybooks significantly improves the reading comprehension skills of junior high school students. In his study, the average student score increased from 54 to 75 on the posttest. This increase is also similar to the results of a study by Adhitya Sujarwo (2023), who reported that picture storybooks help students understand the plot and vocabulary in narrative texts more effectively than conventional methods.

Unlike (Kusteja & Pratamawari, 2022), who used a literature review method focusing on picture books, this study produced empirical data rather than a synthesis of literature. This study used a pre-experimental method focusing on the direct use of picture books to improve students' understanding of narrative texts in the classroom.,

These findings align with Clark & Paivio (1991) Dual Coding Theory, which states that information is more easily remembered when processed through two channels: verbal and visual. In the context of learning to read narrative texts, the combination of pictures and text in picture storybooks provides visual support that helps students build a more complete mental representation of the story. Therefore, the significant increase in posttest scores in this study is not only statistically significant, but also practically relevant, as it demonstrates the effectiveness of this media for daily teaching.

CONCLUSION

The use of picture storybooks in teaching English to eighth-grade junior high school students has been proven to significantly improve narrative text comprehension. Through a one-group pretest–posttest pre-experimental design, this study found a significant difference between pre- and post-learning scores. This means that the use of picture storybooks to improve narrative comprehension has been proven to have a positive effect and is worth using as an interesting and effective learning alternative.

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