

The Influence of Story Mapping Strategy on Reading Comprehension of Narrative Texts in Grade VIII Students of SMP Negeri 20 Pekanbaru

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Abstract: Reading comprehension is an essential skill in language learning because it helps students understand, analyze, and interpret written texts effectively. One strategy that can support students' reading comprehension is the use of story mapping, which helps learners identify the structure and key elements of a narrative text. This study aims to determine the effect of the Story Mapping Strategy on students' reading comprehension ability in narrative texts at SMPN 01 Kampar. The research used a quantitative approach with an experimental design. The subjects of the study were students of SMPN 01 Kampar. Data were collected through reading comprehension tests, observation, and documentation. The data were analyzed using a simple regression test with the help of statistical analysis. The results showed that the story mapping strategy had a positive and significant effect on students' reading comprehension ability. This was proven by the significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and the calculated t value of $3.981 > t$ table 1.699 . In addition, the coefficient of determination (R Square) value of 0.353 indicates that the story mapping strategy contributed 35.3% to students' reading comprehension ability. In conclusion, the story mapping strategy is effective in improving students' reading comprehension ability in narrative texts. This strategy can be used as an alternative learning method to increase student engagement and understanding in reading activities.

Keywords: Indonesian, Narrative Text, Reading Comprehension, Story Mapping Strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is the ability to process text, understand its meaning, and to integrate it with what the reader already knows. (Saputri et al., 2025). The fundamental skills needed for effective reading comprehension are knowing word meanings, understanding word meanings from the context of a text, identifying antecedents and references within a text, following the organization of a passage based on its content, identifying the main idea of a passage, and answering questions addressed in a passage. The ability to comprehend text is influenced by the reader's skills and ability to process information. If word recognition is difficult, students use too much of their processing capacity to read individual words, which interferes with their ability to understand what enhances reading comprehension and inference, including increasing vocabulary, critical text analysis, and practicing in-depth reading (Heni et al., 2020).

There are several types of reading, one of which is narrative. Narrative text is a type of text that describes a sequence of fictional events. It consists of orientation, complication, or problem resolution (Yolanda et al., 2025). To solve problems in teaching narrative text, teachers can use methods and techniques that are suitable and interesting for students. Techniques depend on the teacher, their imagination, creativity, and class conditions. Certain problems can be solved using various techniques (Akip et al., 2019).

However, for some junior high school students, reading is still considered a difficult language skill to master. This is due to their low reading skills and low interest in reading. Students tend to have difficulty comprehending the content of reading (Hikmah & Pranata, 2020). They exhibit various problems related to low comprehension, such as limited decoding skills, lack of reading fluency, and difficulty in comprehending the text comprehensively. One of the difficulties often experienced by junior high school students is the inability to comprehend

texts, especially narrative texts in Indonesian language subjects. Students often have difficulty understanding the content of stories, finding the main idea, and identifying important information such as characters, plot, and setting. This indicates that students' reading comprehension skills still need to be improved through the use of appropriate learning strategies (Ummah et al., 2026).

Effective learning strategies are needed to help students improve their reading comprehension skills, especially in narrative texts. One strategy that can be used is story mapping, which helps students organize information in texts into visual forms such as charts or diagrams. Through this strategy, students can more easily identify story elements such as characters, plot, setting, and conflict, thereby deepening their understanding of the text's content (Nufus, 2018). Furthermore, story mapping also encourages active student involvement in the learning process, thereby increasing their interest and motivation in understanding both English and Indonesian texts (Syafii, 2021).

Several researchers have conducted studies on improving students' comprehension of narrative texts through the use of story mapping methods. One such study, by Sa'iidah & Sukidi (2021), found that four students demonstrated improved comprehension questions, maintained their performance after the intervention, and increased their tendency to incorporate story mapping components into their retellings. Meanwhile, other students experienced relatively slower improvement; although progress was made in most aspects, the development had not yet reached the maintenance stage. Another study, by Nur (2020), found that story mapping strategies significantly improved students' reading comprehension. This was because the use of story mapping helped students identify information in the text more easily compared to conventional methods.

Before implementing the story mapping technique, teachers need to thoroughly understand how to use and apply it in the learning process. In general, there are several procedures to follow in creating a basic story map (Komalasari et al., 2026). First, the teacher or student reads the story text thoroughly to understand the content and storyline. Next, the title, theme, or main topic of the story is placed in the center of the story map, either in the form

of a main box or at the top of the semantic chart. After that, connecting lines are drawn symmetrically from the center of the map to represent the main events in the storyline. Then, from each section that describes the main event, further connecting lines are added to more detailed sections to contain important details related to the main event, including relevant information from the story summary. Finally, the story map that has been compiled is reviewed to ensure the completeness and clarity of the information presented.

There are several steps in teaching narrative text using the story mapping technique, compiled based on Farris's book. First, the teacher introduces the concept of story mapping and explains its benefits for students in understanding the text. Next, the teacher explains the main components of story mapping by first identifying elements in a story, such as theme, important characters, and the characteristics or personality traits of each character, then continues by identifying the orientation or significant development of the story line. In the next stage, the teacher provides guidance to students if errors occur, for example by asking students to reread the story through guiding questions or by providing examples (modeling) so that students can produce appropriate responses. After that, students are asked to read the text independently. Then, the teacher directs students to understand the story that has been selected and complete the story mapping worksheet based on their understanding independently. Finally, the teacher provides an evaluation to measure students' reading comprehension of the story, for example through a written test completed individually.

Furthermore, it's important to emphasize that the use of story mapping techniques serves not only as a visual aid, but also as a cognitive strategy that can help students organize information systematically. With story mapping, students can more easily understand the relationships between elements in narrative texts, such as the relationship between characters, plot, setting, and conflict and its resolution. (Nurhaibah & Hakim, 2025). This is expected to improve students' critical thinking skills in analyzing text content, so that they not only understand the story superficially, but are also able to draw deeper meaning from the reading material they study.

In line with this, this study focuses on empirically examining the effectiveness of story mapping techniques in improving students' reading comprehension, particularly in narrative texts. This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions, particularly for English teachers in selecting and implementing innovative and effective learning strategies. Furthermore, the results of this study are also expected to serve as a reference for future researchers interested in developing similar studies in different contexts and educational levels.

METHOD

This study used an experimental method with a quantitative approach. According to (Sugiyono, 2021) quantitative research is a method used to examine a population or sample by collecting data through research instruments and analyzing the data statistically to test hypotheses. This method was used to determine the effect of applying the Story Mapping technique on students' reading comprehension ability.

The study was conducted in April 2026 at SMP Negeri 20 Pekanbaru, located in Pekanbaru. The selection of this research site was based on the consideration that the school has characteristics relevant to the purpose of the study, namely to examine the effect of the story mapping technique on students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. The research was carried out during the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The population of this study consisted of all eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 20 Pekanbaru in the 2025/2026 academic year. The sample was taken from one class considered representative of the population using purposive sampling. The selected class consisted of students with relatively homogeneous abilities to support the experimental research process.

The research procedure used a *pre-experimental design* in the form of a *one-group pretest-posttest design*. At the initial stage, students were given a pretest to determine their initial reading comprehension ability before the treatment. Next, the researcher applied the story mapping technique in several learning sessions. After the treatment, students were given a posttest to determine the improvement in their reading comprehension ability after the application of the technique.

Data collection techniques included tests, observation, and documentation. The tests consisted of pretest and posttest, which were used to obtain data on students' reading comprehension ability in narrative texts. Observation was used to monitor the teaching and learning process in the classroom, while documentation was used to support the research data. Data analysis was conducted using quantitative statistical analysis by calculating the mean scores, the improvement of students' scores before and after treatment, and simple statistical tests to determine the effectiveness of the story mapping technique in improving students' reading comprehension ability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that the story mapping strategy has a positive and significant effect on students' reading comprehension skills in understanding narrative texts in Indonesian language subjects at SMP Negeri 20 Pekanbaru. This finding is supported by the implementation of a systematic learning scheme, intervention results that show an increase in student abilities, and conformity with previous research. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of the story mapping strategy is effective in improving students' reading comprehension skills in narrative texts.

Table 1. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	0.594	0.353	0.331	5.45686

The analysis results in Table 1 show that the R value is 0.594, indicating a moderate relationship between the story mapping strategy and students' reading comprehension skills. The R Square value of 0.353 indicates that 35.3% of

the variation in students' reading comprehension skills can be explained by the story mapping strategy, while the rest is influenced by other factors outside the study.

Table 2. ANOVA ^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	471,942	1	471,942	15,849	0,000
Residual	863,542	29	29,777		
Total	1335,484	30			

- a. Dependent Variable: Reading Ability
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Story Mapping Strategy

Based on Table 2, the F value obtained was 15.849 with a significance value of 0.000 (<0.05). This indicates that the regression model

is significant, so it can be concluded that the story mapping strategy has a significant effect on students' reading comprehension skills.

Table 3. Coefficients ^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Const.)	50,417	10,959		4,600	.000
Method DRTA	.552	.139	.594	3,981	.000

Dependent Variable: Ability Read Understanding Narrative Text

Based on Table 3, the regression coefficient value for the story mapping strategy is 0.552 with a significance value of 0.000 (<0.05). This indicates that the story mapping strategy has a positive and significant effect on students' reading comprehension skills. The beta coefficient value of 0.594 indicates that the relationship between these variables is in the moderate category. Furthermore, the regression equation obtained is:

$$Y = 50.417 + 0.552X$$

which means that every increase in the use of the story mapping strategy will increase students' reading comprehension skills by 0.552.

Discussion

The discussion in this study shows a positive influence of the story mapping strategy on students' reading comprehension skills in Indonesian language subjects, especially in understanding narrative texts of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 20 Pekanbaru. The learning carried out on students provided results indicating that the story mapping strategy was effective in helping students understand the plot, characters, setting, and structure of the story more systematically. The story mapping strategy has characteristics that support the improvement of reading comprehension skills because it emphasizes organizing information in visual or diagram form. Through this strategy, students can more easily identify important elements in narrative texts, so that the process of understanding the content of the reading becomes more focused (Halik, 2025) . The implementation of this strategy is also carried out

through structured steps, starting from reading the text, identifying story elements, to mapping information in the form of story diagrams (Sinaga, 2026) .

In the context of learning, the use of story mapping strategies can also be linked to a student-centered learning approach. Students not only read passively but also actively process the information obtained. This is in line with previous research (Wirandari & Kristiantari, 2020), which stated that the use of visual strategies such as story maps can improve students' reading comprehension skills because they help connect the main ideas in the text. Furthermore, story mapping strategies can be integrated with learning principles that consider differences in student abilities. Teachers can adjust the format of the story map according to the needs and level of understanding of students, so that the learning process becomes more effective and inclusive. In this case, students with different abilities can still follow the learning well through the help of information visualization (Saputri et al., 2025) .

Based on the results of statistical tests, a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ was obtained and a calculated t value of $3.981 > t$ table 1.699. These results indicate that there is a positive and significant influence of the story mapping strategy on students' reading comprehension skills. This finding is also supported by the results of observations during the learning process which show an increase in student involvement in understanding the text as well as test results that show an increase in reading comprehension skills. Thus, it can be concluded

that the story mapping strategy is an effective strategy to improve students' reading comprehension skills, especially in understanding narrative texts in Indonesian subjects. This strategy not only helps students understand the content of the reading, but also encourages active student involvement in the learning process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the story mapping strategy has a positive and significant effect on students' reading comprehension skills in narrative texts of grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 20 Pekanbaru. This is proven through the results of statistical tests that show a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and a calculated t value of $3.981 > t$ table 1.699. The application of the story mapping strategy can help students understand the elements of narrative texts such as plots, characters, and settings more systematically. In addition, this strategy also increases students' active involvement in the learning process, thus impacting on improving reading comprehension skills. Thus, the story mapping strategy can be used as an alternative effective learning strategy in improving students' reading comprehension skills, especially in Indonesian language subjects on narrative text material.

THANK-YOU NOTE

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