# An Analysis of Students' Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text

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**Abstract**

This study was conducted to analyze students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. A qualitative descriptive method with observations, interviews, and documentation is utilized as instruments. The results showed that students had a variety of abilities in understanding narrative texts, from the interviews and existing observational data. Moreover, it was found that 11 students understood this material because they could explain the meaning, cite the examples, mention the general structure, and determine the general structure of narrative texts in the text entitled "Lake Toba." It was also found that four students understood this material quite well, but imperfectly because they did not mention all the general structures of narrative texts; the other five students did not understand this material because, during the interview, they could not explain the meaning, examples, and general structure of this material. based on the student's ability to answer the questions posed by the researcher.

*Keywords*: Reading Comprehension, Narrative Text.

## INTRODUCTION

English as global is an international language. which can be defined as the language used in international communication by people from two or more countries. English is not only applied when people communicate with English speakers. People of different languages help English first. It is practiced not only when people talk to British people, but also when people from different nationalities meet. English is the most widely adjusted language worldwide in various contexts. Therefore, English is not only an international language but also a global one (Rohmah, 2005).

Khosiyonoc claimed that English is a fundamental academic need for a global communication medium (Khosiyono, 2019). English not only plays an important role in the advancement of education in Indonesia, but it is also a basic provision that everyone needs to fight and survive in the face of a world that has entered this globalization era. Without realizing this, the digital world has become a part of people's lives worldwide. Therefore, to survive and keep abreast of existing developments, it would be better if we could improve our English skills to be better. Language has a central role in intellectual, social, and emotional learners and is a supporter of success in all fields of study. Language learning is expected to help students learn about their own culture and the culture of others.

According to the observations held by the researcher from February to March, it was found that there were problems that occurred in As-Syafi'iyah Islamic High School, which would be used as study material. Based on interviews with students, it is known among students of SMA Islam As-Syafi'iyah, especially class XI, that some class XI students still need to study and focus more on reading and understanding narrative texts. Some students also felt insecure about conveying their understanding of the narrative text they had read. However, some of them have enough ability to understand the narrative text and have even been able to determine the general structure and re-explain their understanding of the narrative text they have learned.

Based on the background of the study, students' reading comprehension is very different, from narrative text comprehension. Some students find it easy to understand, while others do not. The teacher used effective strategies for students to teach and explain texts. The teacher also taught text comprehension. However, in reality, students still experience difficulties in understanding reading materials, especially narrative text. This is because some students do not have dictionaries or vocabularies. Therefore, it is needed to analyze the real condition of students' comprehension of narrative text. The researcher is interested in conducting research entitled "An Analysis of Students Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text on Eleventh Grade at SMA Islam As-Syafi'iyah 02".

In this study the authors use several foundations from the relevant research that has been done before including; All previous studies have used qualitative methods. Of the five journals, three were research studies conducted at the junior high school level. one at the high school level, and one at the university level in semester 1. In the first and second studies, it was found that students did not understand the material because of their lack of motivation to read and their lack of vocabulary. The

second study explained that the average score of the students in understanding narrative texts was 77. This shows that the student's understanding of narrative texts was good. In the fourth study, using a reading test instrument with multiple-choice questions at various levels, such as easy, medium, and difficult, it can be concluded that scores increased at each level of the test. The results of this study show that students have a fairly good ability to understand narrative texts, which is proportional to their average scores at each level.

In this case, the researchers found that the way to improve reading comprehension is that students need to practice reading comprehension a lot and actively participate in learning, which encourages critical thinking. Critical thinking is the first thing they get and change their way of reasoning, and do not just accept raw materials. Students can assume better about the text when they can mentally visualize themselves. Students are also encouraged to understand the narrative text because by understanding the narrative text, students can tell a series of events sequentially and are connected. This type of narrative text has imaginative characteristics or imaginary stories that aim to entertain readers, and students are attracted to thinking critically when studying and understanding narrative texts.

## METHODOLOGY

The research used a qualitative approach descriptive qualitative. Qualitative research is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups ascribed to a social or human problem. The research process involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher interpreting the meaning of the data. The final written report had a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, focusing on individual meaning and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 2009).

This research was conducted in SMA Islam As-Syafi'iyah 02 Bekasi in class and school environments. The participants were students of the grade 11 IPS, which consisted of 20 students for observation and interviews. Researchers collect data in SMA Islam As-Syafi'iyah 02 at jl. Jatiwaringin no.8, Jaticempaka, kec. Pondok Gede, Bekasi City, West Java and the research will be conducted from February to March in the second semester of the 2023 academic year. The researcher used four techniques in collecting data, such as observation, interviews, and documentation. This observation was made to determine the student's comprehension of English, especially narrative texts. The researcher collected data directly and paid attention when the teacher and students in grade eleven carried out teaching and learning activities as represented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Observation Sheet

| No | Question | Yes | No |
|----|----------|-----|-----|
| 1. | Are students interested in reading? | | |
| 2. | Are students interested in learning narrative text? | | |
| 3. | Do students understand the narrative text material? | | |
| 4. | Can students explain what a narrative text is? | | |
| 5. | Can students demonstrate the general structure of narrative texts? | | |
| 6. | Can students provide examples of narrative text? | | |
| 7. | Can students identify the overall narrative structure of a story? | | |
| 8. | Can students analyze narrative texts? | | |
| 9. | Do students like narrative text material? | | |
| 10. | Do students think that mastering English through narrative texts is beneficial? | | |

The second instrument is an interview with students to describe and identify their perceptions of the reading comprehension of narrative texts.

Table 2 Interview Questions List

| No. | Question | Yes | No | Reason |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Do you like reading? | | | |
| 2. | What kind of books do you like? | | | |
| 3. | Do you understand the narrative text material? | | | |
| 4. | Explain the meaning of the narrative text. | | | |
| 5. | State any examples of narrative text! | | | |
| 6. | State the generic structure of the narrative text. | | | |
| 7. | Re-tell the story of Lake Toba. | | | |
| 8. | Determine the generic structure of the story of Lake Toba that you read. | | | |
| 9. | Tell the conclusion of the story of Lake Toba. | | | |
| 10. | Tell the ending of the story from Lake Toba. | | | |

For the data analysis, is performed by working with data, organizing data, sorting it into manageable parts, synthesizing, searching for, and finding patterns, looking for what is important and can be learned, and deciding what to do which can be learned (Moleong, 2011).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to the observation analysis using the observation sheet as in Table 1, for the first question if the students are interested in reading, it was found that there were differences in the level of interest in reading. 9 students showed a very high interest in reading, 4 students had a moderate interest in reading, and 7 students showed no interest in reading activities. These results indicate a variation in interest in reading among students. As many as 9 students who are very interested in reading can be considered an enthusiastic and passionate group for carrying out reading activities. Meanwhile, 4 students with a moderate interest in reading may show a more moderate interest in reading. On the other hand, 7 students showed no interest, which could indicate a lack of interest or motivation in reading.

While for indicator number 2, out of a total of 20 students observed, 11 students showed a very high interest in learning narrative texts. 4 students showed sufficient interest in learning narrative text materials, although not too high. However, 5 students were not interested in learning narrative text materials. These data revealed variations in students' interest in learning narrative texts. The majority of students (11 out of 20) showed very high interest, which can be considered an enthusiastic and passionate group in learning narrative texts. 4 students showed sufficient interest, although not as much as the first group. On the other hand, 5 students showed no interest in narrative text material at all, which might indicate a lack of interest or connection with the topic. Knowing the level of student interest in learning narrative texts is important for educators to design appropriate strategies. This can help increase students' interest and involvement in understanding and mastering narrative text materials more effectively.

Question number 3 revealed the answer that 11 students understood narrative text material well. Four students only understood the material a little, but not too deeply. In addition, 5 students did not understand narrative texts. These data indicate that there are variations in the students' understanding of narrative text materials. Most students (11 out of 20) were able to understand the material well, indicating a good level of understanding. Four students had a lower understanding and understood only in a limited way. Therefore, it was noted that five students did not understand narrative text material at all. On the other hand, when the students were asked to explain what a narrative text is, there were differences in their ability to explain what narrative text is. As many as six students were able to explain the narrative text well, showing a deep understanding of the material. In addition, eight students were able to explain narrative texts, although with a few limitations, so there were some deficiencies in their explanations.

To answer question number 5 which is do the students demonstrate the general structure of

narrative texts, it appears that 12 students could determine the general structure of narrative text in a given text. This shows that the majority of students were able to identify and understand how narrative texts are generally structured. Nevertheless, among the group of students who were able to determine the general structure of narrative texts, 3 students had absolutely no ability in that regard. Although the majority of students can recognize the structure of narrative texts, a small number of students still face difficulties in understanding the elements involved in compiling narrative texts. The students are also able to provide examples from the text; 19 students can provide examples from narrative texts and 1 student cannot do so.

For questions number 8, 9, and 10, it was discovered that 8 students were very good at identifying narrative text structures in a story, 5 students were quite capable but not too perfect, and 7 students could not identify all of them. While 14 students are known to be quite capable and able to analyze narrative texts even though they need little help, the remaining 6 students still need to study again seriously because they are not yet able to analyze narrative texts. Moreover, of the 20 students, it was found that half liked narrative text material, and 10 other students did not like this material, because it was considered a less interesting story. Lastly, students' perceptions of the benefits of mastering English through narrative texts may vary depending on the individual and the context. However, many students generally see the benefits of learning English through narrative texts. While there are various benefits to mastering English through narrative texts, each student has different preferences and learning styles. Some students may be more interested in non-fictional texts or other sources of information. Therefore, educators need to vary the learning material and adapt it to the needs of students so that they remain engaged and motivated to learn English.

The second instrument is the interview, for the first question, the students in the discussion shared their varied preferences when it came to reading. It is known that 9 people like reading, 4 people have moderate reading interest, and 7 people do not like reading. Some individuals expressed a preference for listening to music or engaging in outdoor activities instead of reading. On the other hand, some enjoyed reading books, while others favored spending their time playing mobile phone games. The reasons behind these preferences differed as well, with some finding reading enjoyable due to its educational and entertaining aspects. Additionally, some participants preferred listening to stories or engaging in conversations. Some individuals had also developed a fondness for reading since childhood, while others did not find it as interesting. While several participants acknowledged the benefits of reading, such as gaining new knowledge, finding inspiration, and experiencing pleasure, some sought alternative methods to explore their interests. These alternatives included audiobooks, podcasts, and videos.

From question number two, it can be concluded that the students in the discussion had diverse preferences when it came to books. From the data obtained, it was found that 10 people liked to read novels, 1 person liked to read books with the fairy tales genre, 8 people did not have a book they liked, and 1 person liked online books. Some of them expressed a preference for seeking entertainment and knowledge from sources other than books. However, they did mention enjoying a range of book genres and titles, including Harry Potter, Wattpad stories, novels, motivational books, horror stories, fantasy storybooks, school books, anime, comic books, Indonesian school books, and romantic novels. Despite exploring different titles and genres, none of the books seemed to truly capture their interest or enthusiasm.

Then from number three, based on the data it is known that 11 people understand the narrative text material, 4 people understand the narrative text material and 5 people do not understand this material. While some expressed a clear understanding, others claimed to have a deep comprehension, and a few admitted to not understanding it at all. Some participants found the teacher's explanation to be unclear, while others considered it normal to have difficulty grasping the material entirely. Among the participants, some had a solid understanding, while others had only a limited comprehension. It was also noted that participants' understanding of the material was still developing, with some acknowledging that they had not yet fully mastered it.

For the fourth question, it was found that 6 students could explain the meaning of narrative text very well, 8 students could explain narrative text material even though it was not perfect, and 6 students could not explain the meaning of narrative text material. The conclusion is narrative text refers to a form of storytelling that is characterized by its entertaining nature and fictional content. It typically involves a short story or imaginative text that follows a sequential order of events. While narratives, such as Harry Potter and fairy tales, share similarities with real stories, they are not based on factual events. Instead, they often feature a well-defined storyline that captivates the readers and keeps them engaged. Narratives can encompass various genres, ranging from fantasy and legend stories to fabricated tales designed purely for entertainment purposes.

From question number five, examples of narrative texts include "7 Angels, Lake Toba, Tangkuban Boat, Harry Potter, Animal Story Book, Malin Kundang, Novels, Fairy Tales, Cinderella, Comics, Anime Books, Romance and Horror Novels, Legend Story and Snow White, Golden Cucumber, Borobudur Temple, Buto Ijo the Giant, Ghost Stories in the Novels, Disney, Naruto, Cartoon Stories on Television, Story in the Movie." These examples represent a variety of narrative texts that span different genres and mediums, including books, legends, folklore, movies, and cartoons. They provide engaging and imaginative storytelling experiences for readers and viewers alike. From all participants, it was found that 19 students could state examples from narrative texts and only 1 student could not state examples.

The data from the sixth question stated that 12 students could mention the general structure of the narrative text well, 5 students could only state two of the four general structures in the narrative text, and 3 students could not mention it at all. That Narrative text follows a specific structure consisting of orientation, complication, resolution, and reorientation. Some students were able to identify and mention all of these general structures of narrative text, while others were unable to mention them at all. While some students demonstrated an understanding of these structural elements in narrative text, others may still need guidance and further learning to fully grasp and identify them.

The next question regarding the story of Lake Toba is retold by different individuals with various perspectives and levels of detail, 2 students could retell completely and perfectly, 17 students could only retell the essence of the story, and 1 student could not retell. The narrative revolves around a man named Batara who enjoys fishing and encounters a magical fish that can transform into a human. He marries the fish, and they have a child who is referred to as a fish child. This child's existence is said to be the origin of Lake Toba. There are mentions of broken promises, curses, and the significance of Samosir Island within Lake Toba. The story highlights the connection between human activities and the creation of Lake Toba, which is described as the largest lake with abundant fish.

From question number eight, it can be concluded the students' responses regarding the generic structure of the story of Lake Toba varied. Some participants were able to identify all or some of the generic structures, including orientation, complication, resolution, and re-orientation. 8 of them were able to determine the general structure of the narrative text well, 7 people were quite able but not all the general structures were determined by them, and 5 students could not determine which general structure the narrative text was given. However, some participants did not show a clear understanding or were unable to determine the generic structure. It is worth noting that some participants specifically mentioned the orientation and reorientation sections as part of the structure of the story. Overall, while there were variations in the responses, a significant number of participants were able to identify the genetic structures present in the story of Lake Toba.

The last two questions showed that the student's responses regarding the conclusion of the story of Lake Toba varied. Some participants mentioned different aspects of the conclusion, from the data obtained it was found that 7 students were very able to state the conclusions of the narrative story given, 9 students could conclude but not too perfectly and according to the story, and 4 students could not determine which conclusions were in the narrative story. Overall, the conclusion of the story of Lake Toba revolves around the theme of promises and their consequences, emphasizing the importance of keeping one's word. Moreover, the participants' responses regarding the ending of the story from Lake Toba indicate a predominant sense of sadness and unhappiness. Of all the participating students it was

found that 17 students could mention the ending of the narrative story they had read and 3 people did not know what the ending of the narrative story was. Several participants described the ending as sad, unhappy, and pitiful. Some specifically mentioned the mother being hurt or the transformation into a lake as contributing to the overall sadness of the ending. There were no mentions of a happy or positive ending. Overall, the consensus among the participants is that the ending of the story from Lake Toba evokes a sense of sorrow and dissatisfaction.

The results of this research are the interviews among the students provided insight into their reading preferences, their understanding of narrative texts, and their interpretations of the Lake Toba story. Students expressed varying preferences in terms of reading, especially narrative texts. Some enjoy books, whereas others seek alternative forms of entertainment. Examples of narrative texts shared by students include a wide range of genres and media. Students demonstrated varying degrees of understanding of the generic structures of narrative texts, with some being able to identify all the common structures, while others struggled to do so.

Students' interpretations of the conclusions and endings of the stories varied, with predominant feelings of sadness and unhappiness. From the existing data with a total of 20 students, it was found that 11 people understood this material because these students could explain the meaning of narrative text, cite examples of narrative text, mention the general structure of narrative text, and determine the general structure of narrative text entitled " Lake Toba." It was also found that 4 students understood this material quite well, although not perfectly. because it was not possible to mention all the general structures of the narrative text. The remaining 5 students did not understand this material because, during the interviews, the students could not clearly explain the meaning, examples, and general structure.

This research aims to find out to what extent the students' reading comprehension of narrative text. However, the findings of the analysis above show that students have varying abilities in understanding narrative texts based on interviews and available observational data. From the existing data with a total of 20 students, it was found that 11 people understood this material because these students could explain the meaning of narrative texts, cite examples of narrative texts, mention the general structure of narrative texts, and determine the general structure of narrative texts in the text entitled "Lake Toba ". It was also found that four students understood this material quite well, but imperfectly because they did not mention all the general structures of narrative texts and five students did not understand this material because, during the interview, they could not explain the meaning, examples, and general structure of this material. Based on the ability of students to answer questions given by the researchers. The difficulties in this study were based on the results of the interviews, namely due to the weak mastery of the student's vocabulary and because the students did not like reading activities.

Several relevant research studies show the same cause, namely students' lack of understanding of narrative texts because they do not like reading. These studies were conducted by (Gultom et al., 2021) (Setyawati & Mandarani, 2021), and (Sutriono, 2018). This study used the same method, which is descriptive qualitative. Although they have similarities, there are slight differences in the studies conducted by (Gultom et al., 2021) because the research used a reading test instrument with the finding that only four out of 18 students had an understanding of narrative text. Another difference is in the (Sutriono, 2018) journal because it only uses documentation and interviews as its instruments.

Furthermore, this research is the same as the (Sembiring, 2019) research, which uses qualitative and descriptive methods. However, (Sembiring, 2019) found that students were classified as having a good understanding of the narrative texts. The participants in the (Sembiring, 2019) research were students and teachers who used interesting texts and media for their teaching. Therefore, the students were interested in learning it.

The next relevant research, although it has differences in research results, the participants studied, and the instruments. Research conducted by (Aulia, 2021) also has similarities to this research. research objectives, number of participants, and research methods. After conducting this research, the

researcher concluded that students' understanding of narrative texts varies. Depending on the teaching method and media used during the learning and teaching processes. To make students understand the narrative text material. In addition, students must also be motivated to have an interest in reading and to add to their English vocabulary.

## CONCLUSION

Based on this research, it can be concluded that students have various reading preferences, particularly in terms of narrative texts. Some students enjoy reading books, whereas others seek alternative entertainment. They also shared examples of narrative texts from various genres and media. Students' understanding of the generic structure of narrative texts varies. Some students were able to identify all the common structures in the narrative texts, while others had difficulty doing so. Students' interpretations of the conclusion and ending of the story also varied, with feelings of sadness and unhappiness dominating.

From the data collected from the 20 students, 11 understood this material. They can explain the meaning of narrative texts, give examples of narrative texts, and identify the general structure of narrative texts in the story "Lake Toba." Four other students understand this material well, even though it is not perfect because they cannot mention all the general structures of the narrative text. However, the remaining five students did not understand this material because they could not clearly explain its meaning, examples, and general structure during the interview. This research shows that there is variation in students' reading preferences, their understanding of narrative texts, and their interpretation of Lake Toba's story. There were also difficulties in collecting data, mainly due to the students' weak vocabulary mastery and their lack of interest in reading. This finding is in line with other studies showing that students' lack of comprehension of narrative texts is often caused by their dislike for reading. It should be noted that there are other relevant studies with different results depending on the participants studied and the instruments used.

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