

EFL Students' Engagement in Reading Classroom by Using Story-Mapping

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Abstract

Reading comprehension of EFL students have been concern of scholars by researchers, they have low motivation, interest and participation in the process of reading comprehension. Due to this problem, teacher should choose a suitable strategy to teach reading comprehension especially in narrative text reading. This study is aimed at investigating how students are engaged in reading classroom by using story-mapping technique. The study used a case study as a qualitative research design, involving ninth grade students at Junior High School in Cibitung as participants. The data were collected through observation and interview. The findings showed that EFL students' engagement in learning reading narrative text by using story map technique resulted in three types, namely cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, and behavioral engagement. The story map can help students learn to read narrative text in a cognitively. Furthermore, students exhibit positive reactions as well as emotional engagement with the story mapping technique. Finally, students who engage in behavioral engagement actively participate in the learning process.

Keywords: EFL classroom, reading, students' engagement

Introduction

Reading English text has become the most potential issue in Indonesia. It is proved by EPI (English Proficiency Index) (2022) that Indonesian English's skills are in the low category, Indonesia ranks 81st out of 111 countries in English proficiency below other Asian countries, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, India, South Korea, Hong Kong and Vietnam. This means that Indonesian English skills comprehension was poor. Therefore, Indonesia is one of the countries that implemented English as a school subject to provide Indonesians with the English language ability. This compulsory subject must be taught from junior high school to university (Mistar,

2005). Students are expected to acquire reading skills by studying English in school.

Unfortunately, many students in Indonesia faced difficulties in understanding English text. This case indicates that students have low ability in reading comprehension. For example, EFL students who struggle with comprehend English text thought that it is not important to learn English subject because it is a difficult foreign language. Also, they lack of motivation and enthusiasm in reading English then students felt bored because they cannot understand information from the text as they read. In addition, some students do not have suitable strategy for reading comprehension as a result students were passive in English class (Hidayanti, 2018;



Susiawati & Yanto, 2022; Annisa & Oktavia, 2020; Harida, 2017).

In order to improve students' reading ability, teachers ought to focus on how actively students participate in class. To overcome this situation, the teacher must pay attention to the students' involvement in educational activities in order to enhance their reading skills. Students who actively participate in the lesson are able to discuss the concepts with a peer partner and ask and answer more complex questions about the lesson. They even can assist a peer by elaborating on a concept or skill. One of the significant factor in this situation was students' disengagement in classroom activities. Aker & Ellis (2019) assert that a lack of engagement indicates a mismatch between the needs of the learner and the learning environment. Therefore, the more connections teachers can make between students and the subject, the more they will know about their students. Learning and achievement would both increase if student participation in class increased.

In working through those problems, teacher should choose a suitable strategy to teaching reading comprehension especially in narrative text reading. Graphic organizer is one learning approach that can help students to create organized schema. Among the various types of graphic organizer (venn diagrams, concept maps, semantic maps, etc.), story maps are one technique that can use for comprehend narrative text. Story-

mapping is a technique that can help students in analyzed narrative text. Marganet (2005) defined story - mapping as an organized or arranged visual summary of the story. It is intended to highlight key points of generic structure in a narrative text such as title, character, setting, plot, problem and resolution. According to Anderson, et al. (as cited in Rathvon, 2008) story mapping is based on the reading comprehension schema theory, which claimed that a reader's capacity to combine prior knowledge structure (schemata with textual information) is a prerequisite for adequate comprehension.

Previous studies have clearly established the improvement of students' reading comprehension ability using story map technique. They have not focused on the students' engagement in the use of story mapping technique for comprehend narrative text at a Junior High School. Hence, this present research aims to investigate and explore the types of students' engagement in reading comprehension of narrative text use story-mapping technique especially learning narrative text in EFL students at Junior High School in Cibitung.

There are many researchers that concern story mapping for teaching reading comprehension. Research from Sriyana, et al. (2018) examined the use of story mapping technique to increase students' involvement in reading comprehension, the results showed that it was able to improve students' paying attention, answering questions and join the



discussion. Research from Amini, R. H. (2020) showed that it can increase students' achievement in learning narrative text rather than without use story mapping technique. Third, a report from Annisa & Oktavia (2020) showed that story mapping technique was able to solve students' problem, it allowed them to understand and comprehend narrative text and determine the appropriate part from it.

In other study, Harida (2017) showed that students can be more active and interested in learning reading, it also increases students reading comprehension in narrative text. Research from Susiawati & Yanto (2022) examined the implementation of story mapping in reading narrative text, it showed that story mapping can assist students to comprehend the text, sharpen their ability to analyze narrative text parts and was able to motivated students to read. While Hidayanti (2018) showed a result that learning reading comprehension using story map technique in EFL students at Bandar Lampung is less effective and not maximal due to some problems from the teacher and students that influence each other, also some students seemed less respond and did not have motivated.

Theoretical Review

Students Engagement

All students have individual interest and enthusiasm in learning activities at school which affects their behavior and

performance, it was called students engagement. Student engagement is focused on the relationship between the effort, time, and other appropriate resources invested by students and their schools to enhance the student experience and improve student's learning outcomes and growth (Trowler, 2010).

In addition, Fredricks, et al (2004) mentioned there are three elements of students' involvement; they are cognitive engagement, emotional engagement and behavioral engagement. Cognitive engagement as a term for students when they put forth the mental effort to interact with the learning resources. It refers to particular involvement with regard to psychological investment in learning, such as making an effort to comprehend learning, being adaptable in problem-solving, having a positive outlook in the face of difficulties, and emphasizing learning strategies. Christenson et al. (2012, as cited in Mekki & Hamdan (2022) proposed that students' cognitive engagement is related to active self-regulation and learning strategies that students adopt and employ during the learning process.

While, affective or emotional engagement is a term for students' emotional reaction in school teaching and learning activity such as happiness, sadness, boredom, interest and anxiety. The emotions also related to students feeling toward school about liking or disliking school, teacher, or



assignments; experiencing joy or sorrow in school, or boredom or interest in the work; and feeling accepted, included valued, and/or respected by people at school (Finn, 1989 as cited in Fredricks, et al (2004)). In addition, when students feel as though they are a part of their schools and that learning is a valued activity at school, they are more likely to put forth an effort and stick with it. It means that emotional engagement can indirectly influences behavioral engagement in academic performance.

Meanwhile, behavioral engagement refers to students' involvement in academic tasks which includes behaviors. It is about their commitment to following the rules set by the instructors delivering the course. Students who are behaviorally engaged typically adhere to behavioral standards, such as attendance, participation, effort, ask question, concentration. Additionally, other positive behaviors such as following the rules at school, completing all assignments and not causing trouble at school. In the other side, student also show no signs of disruptive or negative behavior, such as inappropriate behavior in the classroom (for instance, a student posting hostile comments or being rude to his or her classmates) (Pentaraki & Burkholder, 2017). Therefore, from the explanations above, there is a need to measure and understand student engagement in order to figure out how to provide quality and efficient services to students.

Students Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of understanding the meaning of text. In this case, reading comprehension is students' ability in understanding English text. The statement is in line with Duke. N (2003) who stated that the student should be able to understand the material well because comprehension is the process by which the reader derives meaning from their interaction with the text by fusing their prior knowledge and experiences. Therefore, reading can be a crucial component to achieving the objectives of the teaching and learning process, particularly in the learning of English.

Narrative Text

Narrative text is one kind of literary text referred to a text which tells an imaginary or fictional story, also can be based on a real incident in chronological order that aims to entertain the readers. Besides, not only has main purpose to entertain the readers, but also provided moral values or life lessons from the story. The narrative text story can be form of fable, folklore, legend, novels, short story, etc. Furthermore, Anderson, M., & Anderson, K. (2003) classified different categories of narrative which are romance, crime, humor, mystery, fantasy, real-life action, diary novels, adventures, and science fiction. Meanwhile, in narrative text the readers could predict events of the story because it organized in schematic structure (Hudson. T, 2007). It means that readers who read

narrative text can familiar with the elements of the story.

Story Mapping Technique

One of the strategies that can be used and suitable for students to understand Narrative English text is Story mapping technique. Story Mapping is a technique where students are guided to write the text in a sequence of some steps. Li (2000) claimed that story mapping aids students in understanding the chronological progression of stories. Additionally, he claimed that story mapping is particularly helpful for assisting students in developing a sense of narrative because it allows them to comprehend the organization of narrative texts and to value the relevant plot points in narrative materials.

Method

This research used qualitative method. According to Creswell & Clark (2004), qualitative research is a useful inquiry approach for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon which asks participants broad, general questions and collects detailed views of participants in the form of words or images. This research aimed to investigated the students' engagement in the process of reading comprehension narrative text using story-map technique in secondary students. The research used qualitative method to get clear description of students' engagement in teaching and learning process by using story-mapping technique at Junior High School in Cibitung.

This research used case study design. A case study is an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., activity, event, process, or individuals based on extensive data collection (Creswell, 2007). This research conducted to describe the students' engagement of story mapping technique in the process of reading comprehension narrative text. In this case study, researcher attempts to examine individuals or groups of students in detail. Researchers tried to discover important variables in the students' engagement.

The data of this research were collected use qualitative method such as observation and interview. The researcher used observation to obtain the teaching and learning process in the use of story-mapping technique. In addition, interview to obtain in-depth data about students' response on the use of story mapping technique in reading comprehension of narrative text.

Result

The research focuses on students' engagement when learning narrative text by using the story mapping technique in class 9.1, one of the junior high schools in Cibitung. In reporting the result of this study, the researcher focused on how students interact and respond to measure their engagement in the classroom. The data were presented in the descriptive narrative report and representative transcription based on semi-structured interview. All questions in



the interview guidelines were asked to 6 students as participants. Thus, the analysis data revealed that students' engagement towards learning reading narrative text by using story mapping technique include cognitive engagement, emotional or affective engagement, and behavioral engagement.

The first result of students' engagement in reading narrative text by using story mapping is cognitive engagement. The observation revealed some indicators of cognitive engagement when the students facilitated story maps in learning reading narrative text. The indicators are students' understanding, effort, and being strategic in learning process.

The students gained understanding when they facilitated using story map. For example, the students were able to explain the definition and the generic structure of narrative text "*Mam, narrative text is a text about story*" (Student A). "*Text that tells a legend, myth and fairytale story, Mam*" (Student B). "*Text about experience, Mam*" (Student C).

Based on example above, the students indicate that they understood the learning process of reading narrative text using story mapping technique. After that, the students gave opinions about the structure of story map. Students refer to use learning strategies such as summarizing, rehearsal, and elaboration to organize, remember, and understand the material (Corno & Madinach, 1983; Weinstein & Mayer, 1986 as cited in

Fredricks, et al. (2004)). They explained the story's plot according to the story map they had completed before. At the end of the lesson, all students completed the task well and understood the story plot.

From the findings above, the researcher found several opinions regarding students' cognitive engagement in using story map technique for reading narrative text. The students revealed the same action and opinions when using story map in learning narrative text. The students gained more understanding of narrative text after using story map. It also can be seen when students present their results after learning reading with the story mapping technique.

These findings support Li (2000), who discovered that story mapping aids students in understanding the chronological progression of stories. It follows that students cognitively engage in this activity, how many ideas they put into the learning task as story mapping and attempting to comprehend the information from narrative text. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005, as cited in Lester, 2013) stated that a substantial amount of both experimental and correlation evidence suggests that active student involvement in learning has a positive impact on the acquisition of course content. Students who put more effort into their coursework generally learn more and develop their general cognitive abilities.

Emotional or affective engagement is the second result of students' engagement in



reading narrative text using story mapping. This engagement includes students' feelings of belonging, interest, and experience. It assessed by measuring students' reactions to the teacher and the schools (Lee & Smith, 1995; Stipek, 2002 as cited in Fredricks, et al. (2004)). The students who had experience in creating a story map to learn reading narrative texts felt comfortable, excited, satisfied, and happy in the learning activity. The researcher found students reaction of students' feeling toward learning process. "*I really enjoyed it, sis. Mrs. D explained it in an interesting way. So, Mrs. D asked some questions and students answered it with games (story map), so it was very fun.*" (Student A).

The researcher found emotional engagement in this learning process of reading narrative text using story mapping technique that the students revealed positive reactions. Several things interested them in the story map technique, such as the unique shapes of story map columns, making it easier to order the narrative structure. The students said the story mapping technique was interesting because it was easy to understand.

These findings supported by Boulineau et al. (2004:106) who stated that story mapping is "an intervention to direct students' attention to relevant elements of stories, such as setting, problem, goal, events, or actions that contribute the goal, the outcome or resolution of each passage,

and the theme, using specific structure through visual spatial display for key information in a narrative text". Therefore, this method was effective in directing students' attention which made the students quickly identify the elements of the story and complete the story map. Furthermore, the participants said that the Story Map makes learning narrative text easier for the students because the method was new and fun for them. The students also can make their own story map shapes according to their ideas and creativity. It makes them happier and enjoyable to comprehend narrative text. This is supported by Hamer (2001) who stated that "students who are emotionally engaged with what will be studied can learn more effective because they will be amused, stimulated and challenged to learn."

The idea of engaging in learning activities is covered by behavioral engagement as the first dimension. Behavioral engagement aims to get students involved in academic and social activities that will affect their academic performance. This engagement finding includes students' curiosity, involvement and attitudes such as completing assigned, asking question, following the rules, contributing to class discussion, paying attention and responding to the teacher (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Finn et al., 1995; Skinner & Belmont, 1993 as cited in Fredricks, et al. (2004).

The indicator of behavioral engagement that the researcher found was



students' curiosity. Students' curiosity can be seen when students ask question. While learning the story mapping technique, some students became curious. A student asked about the meaning of some vocabulary, others asked the teacher directly if they faced difficulties in completing story map. In addition, some students asked whether they were allowed to use a dictionary and some asked about narrative text structure, which needed to be approved and validated.

By observing the students in the process of learning reading narrative use story mapping, the researcher found that the students were actively engaged in this learning process. According to Fredericks, et al. (2004) positive conduct, involvement in learning, and participation in school-related activities are the three fundamental categories of behavioral engagement. It was demonstrated by the participants' responses, who used the story map technique favorably while learning narrative text. The students acknowledged working hard to finish the story map and engage in learning activities effectively. Particularly, some of them had the courage to ask the teacher, raise their hands and tell the teacher what they had learned. In addition, some students ask questions to the teacher while processing learning with story mapping technique which shows their curiosity. These findings support Zygnier (2008) who stated that how a student-centered teaching style assessed engagement based on individual curiosity

and the students' discoveries. The students engaged with the teacher and shared their opinions. Besides, they also had to share ideas with other students in their group during the activity and present their results of the story map in front of the class. In addition, the participants said that they pay close attention to the teacher. It means that the students are very involved in this learning.

Conclusion

This study investigates students' engagement in reading classroom, especially in the process of teaching and learning narrative text using story mapping technique at ninth grade of a Junior High School at Cibitung. Based on the results, there are three students' engagement in learning reading narrative text using story map technique such as cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, and behavioral engagement.

Story mapping technique can assist students in cognitive way. Indicates from students understanding which significantly increased. The technique helped students understand the chronological progression of stories and develop a sense of narrative by allowing them to comprehend the structure and appreciate the relevant story sections.

Emotional engagement was also observed in the learning process of reading narrative text using the story mapping technique. Students expressed positive reactions to the unique shapes of the story



map columns, making it easier to order the narrative structure. The technique was found to be interesting and easy to understand, making it easier for students to identify the elements of the story and complete the story map.

Students were behaviorally engaged in the process of teaching-learning narrative text using story mapping technique. They acknowledged working hard to finish the story map and engaged in learning activities effectively. Some students even asked questions to the teacher, demonstrating their curiosity and engagement. Students engaged with the teacher, shared their opinions, and shared their ideas with their group during the activity. It indicates students' active participations in the learning process. Overall, the story mapping technique proved to be a valuable tool for students to enhance their understanding and engagement in reading narrative text.

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