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ENHANCING EIGHTH GRADERS' READING COMPREHENSION OF NARRATIVE TEXTS THROUGH THE QUESTION-ANSWER RELATIONSHIP (QAR) STRATEGY

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the impact of the QAR strategy on students' reading comprehension through narrative text using the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy. The research was quantitative method using one group pretest-posttest through pre-experimental design. This research was conducted at MTsN 01 Binjai. The population of this study was all students of eighth grade MTsN 01 Binjai in the 2024/2025 academic year as the population. The sample was taken from one class of eighth grade students, namely class VIII-4, consisting of 20 students, with details of 11 females and 9 males. To collect data, this study used pretest and posttest as instruments. The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed through hypothesis testing using the T-test. The average pre-test score was 50 and the average post-test score was 85.5. The T-test score result was 14.4. The result is greater than the t-table value at 5% significance, namely t-table (2.093) and a significance value of 1%, t-table (2.861).Thus, the result was in accordance with the criteria of t-test > t-table. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The results of the study showed that there was a significant change in the score of students' reading comprehension skills through narrative texts between the pre-test and post-test. This study shows that students' problems in understanding narrative texts have been solved by using the QAR strategy. In other words, the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy improves students' reading comprehension of narrative texts.

Keywords: *Reading, Narrative Text, QAR, EFL, Teaching, Education*

INTRODUCTION

Reading proficiency is crucial for understanding texts, as it is conceptualized as "the cognitive capacity to process written information at optimal velocity while maintaining comprehensive understanding". According to Burhan (2011), reading represents an integral component of the learning process and serves as a cornerstone for knowledge acquisition. Furthermore, reading mastery is essential for effective communication and information acquisition, as the process is intrinsically linked with comprehension abilities. As Reski (2018) elucidates, reading and comprehension exhibit a symbiotic relationship, wherein students

engaging with textual material inherently endeavor to extract and interpret the embedded meaning. This correlation indicates that comprehension necessitates textual engagement, and increased reading exposure correlates with enhanced information acquisition.

Reading comprehension is one of the essential skills that all students must master in order to successful in education and everyday life. To understand what they read, students must acquire knowledge through direct experience and engage with the text to maintain interest. However, many students have difficulty understanding narrative texts that often require a deep understanding of the plot, characters, themes, and story structure. According to Roza & Khairani (2019), textual cognition involves extracting concepts, acquiring knowledge, and decoding semantic content. The capacity to effectively comprehend written material serves as a crucial foundation for students' cognitive abilities in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of data.

Therefore, insufficient reading proficiency may present significant impediments in educational advancement, particularly when acquiring English as a foreign language (EFL).

Increasing vocabulary, understanding grammar, increasing reading speed and fluency, increasing reading enjoyment, and strengthening self-confidence and motivation. Azizah (2022) stated that extensive reading can help students in improving reading skills.

Based on the results of interviews with English teachers, researcher obtained information that students still had difficulty reading texts. This problem is often faced by MTsN 01 Binjai students, especially class VIII students. A significant proportion of students exhibit comprehension deficits in textual analysis and assessment response formulation. Academic performance metrics reveal that approximately 70% of eighth-grade learners achieved scores below 60 on the standardized reading evaluation, demonstrating substantial challenges in reading proficiency.

According to pedagogical staff observations, this academic underperformance stems from students' inadequate mastery of strategic comprehension techniques. During literacy instruction sessions, learners display notable disengagement and diminished attentiveness to pedagogical discourse. Furthermore, when presented with reading materials, numerous students demonstrate superficial engagement, limiting their interaction to cursory examination of introductory and concluding segments. Consequently, students' reading comprehension capabilities remain suboptimal, as evidenced by their assessment outcomes, highlighting the imperative for enhanced methodological interventions in literacy instruction to facilitate skill development.

Related to the above problems, researcher offer alternative solutions to teachers by using Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategies to improve reading comprehension in teaching, especially on narrative texts. Using appropriate learning strategies can improve students' reading comprehension. Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) said that reading strategies help students reduce their difficulties in reading written texts and achieve better understanding.

One of them is the QAR (Question-Answer Relationships) strategy. The Question Answer Relationship (QAR) methodology constitutes a metacognitive framework for comprehension that facilitates systematic analysis of information sources in responding to textual inquiries. This pedagogical approach, conceptualized by Taffy Raphael, establishes structured questioning protocols (Aziz & Yasin, 2017). Additionally, this methodological framework enables learners to categorize diverse question typologies, formulate appropriate responses, and identify relevant textual evidence (Sartini et al., 2018). The QAR strategy is considered to be more effective than any other strategy in teaching reading such as SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) and reciprocal teaching since it encourages students

to interact with questions and find the answers based on their prior knowledge. SQ3R is structural process of comprehending reading texts which leads to a study habits, QAR strategy allows students to locate and justify the answers which resulting in better comprehension (Anggraini, 2024). Compared to the reciprocal teaching, QAR is easier to implement since QAR can be taught individually while reciprocal teaching often requires group discussion (Nur'aini et al., 2025). Therefore, QAR is the most effective strategy in teaching reading comprehension.

This investigation applies the QAR methodology specifically to narrative text comprehension among eighth-grade junior high school students. Narrative text encompasses both factual and fictional accounts, whether written or oral, incorporating interconnected events with specified actors, settings, temporal contexts, and plot developments (Annisa & Oktavia, 2020).

As we know that the purpose of this study are:

1. To determine the effect of QAR strategy on students' reading comprehension of narrative texts.
2. To determine how QAR strategy improves students' reading comprehension of narrative texts

METHODS

Research Design

This investigation employed a quantitative methodology to examine the research objective: Assessing student comprehension progress following QAR strategy implementation. The study utilized an experimental framework incorporating single-group assessment before and after intervention. According to Ary (2010: 328), experimental methodologies are categorized into three distinct types: pre-experimental, true experimental (with randomization), and quasi-experimental, based on their control mechanisms.

To address the primary research inquiry, the investigator implemented a pre-intervention and post-intervention assessment protocol to evaluate progress. Initial measurements were taken to establish baseline comprehension levels. The researchers administered preliminary evaluations prior to implementing the experimental protocol. Upon completion of the intervention phase, subsequent assessments were conducted to measure the participants' reading comprehension outcomes.

The research population comprised all eighth-grade students enrolled at MTsN 01 Binjai during the 2024/2025 academic term. The research sample consisted of a single eighth-grade class, specifically VIII-4, with a total enrollment of 20 students (11 females and 9 males). To coIIect data in this research, researchers will use instruments to obtain data. In this research, researchers conducted tests (pre-test and post-test) as instruments and provided narrative text with QAR strategy as treatment.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

1. The impact of implementing the QAR strategy on students' reading comprehension.

The analysis of pre-test and post-test data demonstrates a measurable improvement in students' reading comprehension abilities following the implementation of the Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy. Specifically, participants exhibited enhanced performance in narrative text comprehension after exposure to the QAR methodology. The quantitative evidence of this improvement is detailed in the subsequent data presentation.

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Table 1. Scoring Aspect of Reading Comprehension Pre-test and Post test

No	Aspect of Reading Comprehension	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain
1	Main Idea	9,5%	17%	7,5%
2	Factual or Detailed Information	10,5%	16%	5,5%
3	Vocabulary	12%	18,5%	6,5%
4	Referent	6%	18%	12%
5	Inferent	12%	16%	4%

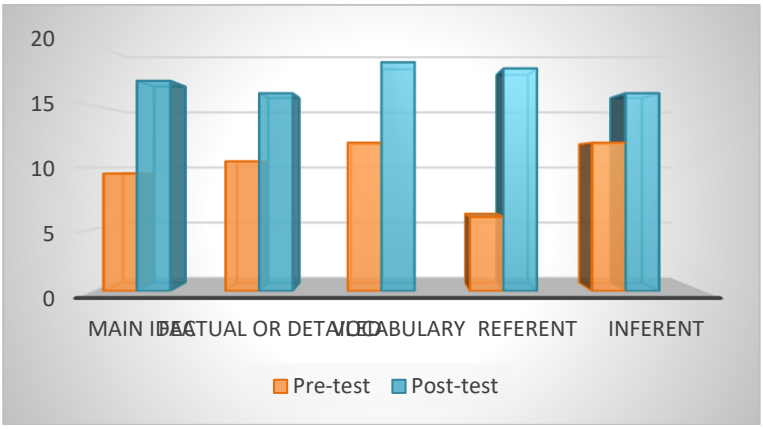


Figure 1. The Aspect of Reading Comprehension

From the diagram above, it can be concluded that overall, the posttest results are superior in all aspects compared to the pretest. which shows that the treatment given is effective in improving students' ability to understand narrative texts. The greatest increase was seen in the referent aspect with a difference of 12% increase where at the pretest stage the value obtained by students was 6% and after undergoing treatment and answering the posttest questions the value obtained increased by 18%. This shows that after undergoing treatment using the question and answer relationship (QAR) strategy on narrative texts, students' reading comprehension of narrative texts as a whole increased. This result is in line with Gilakjani & Sabouri (2026) which states that strategies in reading can help students to gain comprehension.

2.The process of QAR strategy improving students' reading comprehension of narrative text.

BeIow, the researcher expIains how the QAR strategy improves students' reading comprehension of narrative texts:

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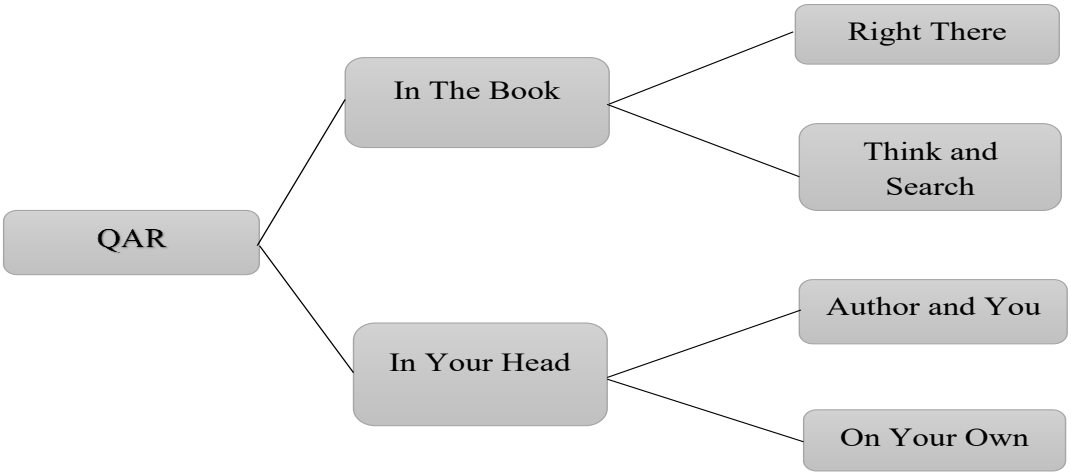


Figure 2. Categories of QAR Strategy

In the context of narrative text, this strategy focuses on understanding story elements such as characters, plot, and theme. In addition, aspects of comprehension such as main ideas, factual information, vocabulary, referent, and inferent can also be associated with the QAR question category. The following explains the QAR strategy process to improve reading comprehension and how these aspects are included in the QAR question category:

Table 2. Integration of reading comprehension aspects in the QAR category

No	Aspect of Reading Comprehension	Categories of QAR Strategy	Reason
1	Main Idea	• Think and Search • Author and You	Students need to connect several parts of the story to find the main idea. Sometimes the main idea is not stated clearly and must be inferred.
2	Factual or Detailed Information	• Right There	Factual information is usually stated clearly in the text and can be found directly in a single sentence or paragraph.
3	Vocabulary	• Right There	Definitions of specific words or phrases that can be found directly in the text. For example, a question asks about the meaning of specific words in a sentence of the text.
4	Referent	• Think and Search	Referring to pronouns or references that must be found through the context

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			of several sentences or paragraphs. To find references to words such as "he", "it", or "they", students must pay attention to several sentences or paragraphs.
5	Inferent	• Author and You • On my Own	Inferent requires a combination of understanding of the text and students' personal knowledge or experience. The answer is not stated directly in the text and requires further analysis.

The Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) methodology serves as an instructional framework that enhances students' comprehension of question-text correlations. A key beneficial outcome of QAR implementation is the enhancement of analytical reading capabilities. Through systematic question categorization exercises, learners develop advanced textual analysis proficiencies. This is particularly evident in the Thinking and Search component, which necessitates the synthesis of distributed textual information, thereby fostering both comprehensive content understanding and sophisticated cognitive processing abilities essential for academic advancement.

- Data Description

This study examines the efficacy of the Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) methodology in enhancing reading comprehension skills, conducted at MTsN Binjai with 20 eighth-grade students from class VIII-4. The research protocol encompassed a structured five-session implementation framework, systematically focusing on QAR strategy application for narrative text comprehension enhancement.

1. Pre-Test

The computational analysis revealed that students demonstrated a mean proficiency level of 50 points in reading comprehension assessments. This empirical value falls notably below the established Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM). Given this performance deficit, the implementation of the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy emerges as a necessary intervention to enhance students' comprehension capabilities, particularly in the domain of narrative texts.

2. Post-Test

Statistical computation of the summative assessment reveals a mean performance value of 85.5 points in narrative text comprehension proficiency. This empirical outcome demonstrably surpasses the predetermined minimum competency threshold of 75 points. The quantitative analysis conclusively establishes a substantial enhancement in students' comprehension capabilities following the pedagogical intervention utilizing the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy in conjunction with narrative text instruction.

3. **The Improvement of students Score between Pre-Test and Post Test**

The quantitative analysis of assessment data demonstrates a marked differential between

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initial and final performance metrics. The preliminary evaluation yielded a mean score of 4.50, while the subsequent assessment revealed a substantially higher average of 85.5 points. This empirical evidence substantiates a statistically significant improvement in students' narrative text comprehension capabilities following the implementation of the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) pedagogical intervention.

4. Examining Hypothesis

The quantitative analysis of assessment data demonstrates a marked differential between initial and final performance metrics. The preliminary evaluation yielded a mean score of 4.50, while the subsequent assessment revealed a substantially higher average of 85.5 points. This empirical evidence substantiates a statistically significant improvement in students' narrative text comprehension capabilities following the implementation of the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) pedagogical intervention.

Table 4.6 Hypothesis testing criteria

Hypothesis	**Testing**	
	t-test > t-table	t-test < t-table
Ha	Accepted	Rejected
Ho	Rejected	Accepted

Based on statistical analysis, the results of the t test (see attachment) show an observation t value of 14,4 and degrees of freedom (df) of 19. The statistical analysis comprised a comparative evaluation of t-test values against established critical thresholds at both 5% (2.093) and 1% (2.861) significance levels. The computational outcomes demonstrate that the observed t-value exceeded the tabulated critical values at both significance parameters. These statistical findings are systematically documented in the tabular presentation below.

Table 4.7 T Score Result

T-Test	**N**	**T-Table**	
		5%	1%
14.4	20	2.093	2.861

Based on Gay's (2006) statistical hypothesis testing framework, the acceptance of Ha and rejection of Ho is predicated upon the condition where tcount exceeds ttable. The empirical analysis reveals that the calculated t-test value surpasses the critical threshold established in the statistical table. This quantitative evidence demonstrates a statistically significant variance between initial and post-intervention comprehension scores among students exposed to the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) methodology in narrative text instruction. The data conclusively validates that the integration of the QAR strategy in English narrative text pedagogy effectively enhances students' reading comprehension performance metrics.

CONCLUSION

The study confirms the effectiveness of the QAR strategy in improving students' reading comprehension, particularly in narrative texts. The empirical investigation demonstrates the pedagogical efficacy of the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) methodology in enhancing narrative text comprehension among Class VIII-4 students at MTsN 01 Binjai. The quantitative analysis reveals a statistically significant improvement in reading comprehension performance following the implementation of the QAR intervention through narrative texts. This conclusion is substantiated by comparative assessment data, which

indicates a marked elevation in mean performance metrics from an initial score of 50 points to 85.5 points in the post-intervention evaluation. Statistical validation through Repeated t-test analysis yielded a p-value of 0.01, falling below the designated significance threshold of 0.05, while the calculated t-value of 14.4 exceeded the critical table value.

The empirical evidence demonstrates that students effectively mastered the five fundamental dimensions of reading comprehension through the QAR methodology, particularly in the context of fairy tales and legendary narratives. The strategic framework facilitated the development of comprehension organization, critical analytical capabilities, and profound textual understanding. The pedagogical intervention garnered positive learner engagement, with participants demonstrating enhanced textual comprehension through the structured QAR approach. The methodology's efficacy is evidenced by its facilitation of improved comprehension outcomes and enhanced accessibility of textual content, establishing QAR as an empirically validated strategy for augmenting students' reading comprehension capabilities.

Given its positive outcomes, this strategy is recommended for broader classroom implementation and further exploration across other text genres. The findings of this research present a valuable pedagogical approach that educators can incorporate into their instructional repertoire. The Question Answer Relationship (QAR) methodology demonstrates versatility beyond narrative text instruction, offering potential applications across diverse textual genres. Educational practitioners are encouraged to enhance their pedagogical innovation and creativity in methodological selection and material delivery. A strategic emphasis on developing engaging instructional approaches is particularly crucial for fostering student engagement in English language acquisition, with specific attention to reading comprehension development. Furthermore, students can use the Question-Answer Relationship strategy to understand and answer questions in reading texts. The QAR strategy provides several types of questions that can be easily understood and answered while reading the text. Moreover, this study can be a reference for other researchers to use this kind of Question-Answer Relationship strategy for further research because this strategy can improve students' reading comprehension.

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