



Journal of English Teaching and Applied Linguistic

<http://jurnal.stkippgribi.ac.id/index.php/jeta>

print ISSN 2722-3388

online ISSN 2722-3396

**THE USE OF STORY FACE STRATEGY TO IMPROVE STUDENTS'
READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH A DEEP LEARNING
APPROACH IN TEACHING NARRATIVE TEXT AT SMKN 1 SITIUNG**

JANTIKA SABRINA

RIYADI SAPUTRA

NORASIAH

UNIVERSITAS DHARMAS INDONESIA

jantikasabrina@gmail.com

Abstract: Reading comprehension is an essential skill in English language learning, particularly in understanding narrative texts. However, many students experience difficulties in identifying main ideas, understanding sequences of events, and comprehending texts. This study aimed to examine the effect of implementing the Story Face Strategy through a Deep Learning approach on students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. A quantitative pre-experimental design with a one-group pre-test and post-test was employed. The participants were 20 eleventh-grade students of the Computer and Network Engineering (TKJ) program at SMKN 1 Sitiung, selected through purposive sampling. The research instrument was a reading comprehension test consisting of multiple-choice and essay questions that had been tested for validity and reliability. Data were analyzed using the Shapiro-Wilk test, Paired Samples *t*-test, and Normalized Gain (N-Gain) test. The findings revealed a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension, with the mean score increasing from 51.30 in the pre-test to 80.95 in the post-test ($p < .001$). The N-Gain score of 0.6136 indicated a moderate level of improvement. These findings suggest that the Story Face Strategy integrated with the Deep Learning approach is effective in improving students' reading comprehension of narrative texts.

Keywords: *Story Face Strategy, Deep Learning, Reading Comprehension, Narrative Text, English Language Teaching*

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is one of the most important skills in English language learning because it enables students to obtain information, build knowledge, and develop critical thinking skills. Reading is not only the process of recognizing words in a text but also the process of understanding meaning. Connecting ideas, making inferences, and relating new information to prior knowledge. Therefore, reading instruction should not only help students find correct answers but also encourage them to develop a deeper understanding of what they read.

In line with the current direction of education in Indonesia, learning is expected to implement the Deep Learning Approach, which emphasizes meaningful learning, mindful learning, and joyful learning (Kemdikdasmen, 2025). This approach encourages students to become active participants in the learning process so that they do not simply memorize information but understand concepts deeply, relate them to their own experiences, and apply them in different situation. In reading instruction, the Deep Learning approach helps students construct meaning through active engagement and reflective thinking. The successful implementation of meaningful learning also depends on teachers' readiness to apply innovative instructional practices. Norasiah et al. (2025) emphasized that teachers' knowledge, instructional skills, and positive attitudes are essential in creating effective English language learning environments. Therefore, teachers' readiness becomes one of the key factors in supporting the successful implementation of student-centered learning approaches, including the Deep Learning approach.

Despite its importance, reading comprehension remains a major challenge for many students learning English as a foreign language. Many students still have difficulty identifying the main idea, understanding specific information, making inferences, and recognizing the relationship between ideas in a text. These difficulties are often caused by limited vocabulary, insufficient background knowledge, and the lack of effective reading strategies, making it difficult for students to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the text (Ramadhianti & Somba, 2023). In addition, teachers are expected to implement appropriate

instructional strategies that actively engage students throughout the learning process. Norasiah et al. (2025) emphasized that teachers' readiness to adopt innovative teaching practices plays an important role in improving the quality of English language instruction. Therefore, selecting appropriate instructional strategies is essential to help students overcome reading comprehension difficult.

A similar condition was found among the eleventh grade students of the Computer and Network Engineering (TKJ) program at SMKN 1 Sitiung. Based on the preliminary observation and the students' midterm examination results on narrative texts, most students did not achieve the school's Minimum Learning Achievement Criteria (KKTP) of 75. Their scores ranged from 60 to 72, indicating that many students still had difficulties in identifying the main idea, understanding the sequence of events, and comprehending the overall meaning of narrative texts. These findings suggest that the reading instruction implemented in the classroom has not fully supported students in developing meaningful reading comprehension. One instructional strategy that can be used to address this problem is the Story Face Strategy. This strategy is a visual learning strategy that uses a face shaped graphic organizer to help students identifying the important elements of a narrative text, such as the characters, problem, sequence of events, and resolution (Staal, 2000). By organizing these elements visually, students can understand the structure of the story more clearly and connect each part of the text more effectively. As a result, the reading process becomes more meaningful and easier to understand.

Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of various instructional strategies in improving students' reading comprehension. Riyadi (2020) found that the implementation of the Multi Pass Strategy significantly improved students' reading comprehension of narrative texts by guiding students to identify important information through a systematic reading process. Likewise, Syah and Saputra (2020) reported that the stratgey significantly improved students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. Similarly, Azizah et al. (2021) reported that the Story Face Strategy not only improved students' reading achievement but also increased their participation during classroom activities. Furthermore, Emeliaet al. (2024) found a significant improvement in students' learning outcomes

based on the comparison of pre test and post test scores after implementing the Story Face Strategy.

Although these studies reported positive results, most of them mainly focused on improving students' reading scores and learning outcomes. Only a few studies have examined the integration of the Story Face Strategy with the Deep Learning approach, which emphasizes meaningful understanding, active participation, reflective learning, and deep conceptual comprehension. Therefore, research investigating how the Story Face Strategy supports the implementation of the Deep Learning approach in teaching reading, particularly narrative texts at the vocational high school level, is still limited.

To address this research gap, the present study integrated the Story Face Strategy with the principles of Deep Learning approach. This study does not only focus on improving students' reading scores but also aims to promote meaningful learning by encouraging students to understand the structured and meaning of narrative texts through active, reflective, and students centered learning activities.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of using the Story Face Strategy through the Deep Learning approach on the reading comprehension of narrative texts among the eleventh grade students of SMKN1 Sitiung.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach using a pre experimental research design with a one group pre test and post test design. This design was selected to examine the effect of implementing the Story Face Strategy through the Deep Learning approach on students' reading comprehension. In this design, the students were given a pre test before treatment and post test after the treatment. The difference between the pre test and post test scores was used to determine the effectiveness of the implemented strategy.

The study was conducted at SMKN 1 Sitiung, Dharmasraya Regency, West Sumatra, during the 2025/2026 academic year. The participants were 20 eleventh grade students from the Computer and Network Engineering (TKJ) program. The sample was selected using purposive sampling because the class showed relatively

low reading comprehension achievement, particularly in understanding narrative texts, based on the results of the preliminary observation and the students' midterm examination.

The research instrument was a reading comprehension test consisting 20 multiple choice questions and 5 essay questions related to narrative texts. Before being administered, the instrument was examined through item validity, reliability, difficulty index, and discrimination index analyses to ensure that the test was appropriate for measuring students' reading comprehension.

The research was conducted in the three stages. During the first stage, the students completed a pre test to measure their initial reading comprehension ability. In the second stage, the researcher implemented the Story Face Strategy through the principles of the Deep Learning approach in teaching narrative texts. The learning activities encouraged students to identify the main elements of the story, including the characters, setting, problem, sequence of events, and resolution, by completing a Story Face graphic organizer. Throughout the learning process, students actively participated in discussion, reflection, and collaborative learning activities to develop a deeper understanding of the text. This instructional process required the teacher to facilitate active learning, guide classroom interaction, and implement appropriate teaching strategies throughout the lesson. As emphasized by Norasiah et al. (2025), teachers' knowledge, instructional skills, and positive attitudes are essential for successfully implementing innovative and student-centered learning practices. Therefore, teacher readiness plays an important role in supporting the effective implementation of the Story Face Strategy through the Deep Learning approach. Finally, after the treatment was completed, the students took a post test to measure the improvement in their reading comprehension.

To collected the data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 20 a Shapiro-Wilk normality test was conducted to determine whether the data were normally distributed. Since the data met the assumption of normality, a Paired Samples t-test was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the pre test and post test scores. In addition, the Normalized Gain (N-Gain) test was calculated to measure the effectiveness of the treatment and

the level of students' improvement after the implementation of the Story Face Strategy through the Deep Learning approach.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Improvement of Students' Reading Comprehension

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the Story Face Strategy through the Deep Learning approach improved students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. The improvement can be seen from the comparison between the pre test and post test scores.

Table 1. Summary of Students' Pre test and Post test Scores

Test	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Pre test	51.30	42	70
Post test	80.95	72	92

As presented in Table 1, the students' mean score increased from 51.30 in the pre test to 80.95 in the post test. In addition, the minimum score improved from 42 to 72, while the maximum score increased from 70 to 92. These results indicate that students achieved better reading comprehension performance after learning through the Story Face Strategy.

The improvement suggests that the Story Face Strategy helped students understand the structure and content of narrative texts more effectively. Through the Story Face graphic organizer, students were able to identify important story elements such as the characters, setting, problem, sequence of events, resolution, and moral value. Organizing these elements visually enabled students to connect ideas within the text and develop a more comprehensive understanding of the story.

These findings support the theory proposed by Snow (2021), who states that reading comprehension involves constructing meaning by integrating textual information with prior knowledge. The findings are also consistent with Staal (2000), who argues that the Story Face Strategy facilitates students' understanding

of narrative texts through visual organization. Furthermore, the implementation of the Deep Learning approach encouraged students to participate actively in classroom discussions, reflect on the content of the text, and construct meaningful understanding rather than simply identifying correct answer.

The effectiveness of the learning process also depends on teachers' readiness to implement innovative instructional practices. Norasiah et al. (2025) emphasized that teachers' knowledge, instructional skills, and positive attitudes are important factors in creating effective English language learning environments. In the present study, the implementation of the Story Face Strategy through the Deep Learning approach required the teacher to actively facilitate discussion, guide students' reflection, and support collaborative learning, which contributed to students' improved reading comprehension.

Normality and Hypothesis Testing

Before testing the research hypothesis, a normality test was conducted using the Shapiro-Wilk test. The results showed that the significance value of the pre test was 0.073, while the post test was 0.159. since both values were higher than 0.05, the data were normally distributed. Therefore, the Paired Samples t-test was used to examine the research hypothesis.

The result of the Paired Samples t-test revealed a significance value ($p < .001$), indicating a statistically significance difference between the students' pre test and post test scores. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. These findings confirm that the implementation of the Story Face Strategy through the Deep Learning approach had a significant positive effect on students' reading comprehension of narrative texts.

The significant improvement demonstrates that students benefited from instructional activities that required them to analyze story elements, organize information, and discuss their understanding collaboratively. Rather than memorizing isolated information, students actively constructed meaning

throughout the learning process, which is consistent with the principles of the Deep Learning approach.

Effectiveness of the Story Face Strategy

To determine the effectiveness of the treatment, the students' improvement was further analyzed using the Normalized Gain (N-Gain) test. The analysis showed a mean N-Gain score of 0.6136, which falls into the moderate category. This result indicates that the Story Face Strategy provided a meaningful improvement in students' reading comprehension after the treatment.

Although the improvement was categorized as moderate rather than high, the result demonstrates that the Story Face Strategy effectively supported students in understanding narrative texts. Several factors may explain this finding, including students' initial reading ability, limited vocabulary, and the relatively short duration of the treatment. Nevertheless, the strategy successfully promoted better comprehension by helping students organize story information systematically and engage more actively in the learning process.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies conducted by Syah and Saputra (2020), Utami and Anggerayni (2020), Ibrahim and Amelia (2023), Fitri et al. (2024), and Azizah et al. (2019), all of which reported that the Story Face Strategy positively affected students' reading comprehension. However, unlike most previous studies, this research integrated the Story Face Strategy with the Deep Learning approach, emphasizing meaningful learning, active participation, and reflective thinking. This integration represents the main contribution of the present study by demonstrating that visual learning strategies can effectively support the implementation of Deep Learning principles in teaching narrative texts.

Overall, the findings indicate that the Story Face Strategy is an effective instructional strategy for improving students' reading comprehension. The strategy not only increased students' reading achievement but also encouraged them to understand narrative texts more meaningfully through active engagement, visual organization, and reflective learning. Therefore, integrating the Story Face Strategy

with the Deep Learning approach can be considered an effective alternative for teaching reading comprehension, particularly in narrative text instruction at the vocational high school level.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of the Story Face Strategy through the Deep Learning approach has a positive and significant effect on students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. The findings demonstrate that the strategy helped students understand the structure and meaning of narrative texts more effectively by encouraging them to identify the main elements of a story through a visual graphic organizer. As a result, students showed better comprehension after participating in the learning activities.

The integration of the Story Face Strategy with the principles of the Deep Learning approach also on answering comprehension questions, students were encouraged to construct meaning, connect ideas within the text, and actively participate in the learning process. These learning experiences contributed to the improvement of their reading comprehension.

This study contributes to English language teaching by providing empirical evidence that the Story Face Strategy can effectively support the implementation of the Deep Learning approach in teaching narrative texts, particularly at the vocational high school level. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to use this strategy as an alternative instructional approach to create more engaging, meaningful, and student centered reading instruction.

These findings also highlight that the successful implementation of innovative instructional strategies requires teachers to possess adequate knowledge, instructional skills, and positive attitudes. As emphasized by Norasiah et al. (2025), teacher readiness plays a significant role in creating meaningful and effective English language learning. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to use the Story Face Strategy as an alternative instructional approach to create more engaging, meaningful, and students-centered reading instruction.

Future researchers are recommended to conduct similar studies using larger samples, different educational levels, or other text genres to further examine the effectiveness of the Story Face Strategy in various learning contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Dharmas Indonesia, for the academic support provided throughout this research. The author also extends appreciation to the principal, the English teacher, and the eleventh grade students of SMKN 1 Sitiung for their cooperation and participation during the research process.

REFERENCES

- Azizah, N., Marbun, R., & Bunau, E. (n.d.). Improving Students' Reading Comprehension on Narrative. 1–9.
- Emelia, D., Tobing, L., & Harida, E. S. (2024). Story Face Strategy in Teaching Reading Narrative Text. 12(01), 112–124.
- Fitri, D. A., Safitri, L., Negeri, I., Djamil, S. M., & Bukittinggi, D. (2024). The Effect of Using Story Face Toward Students' Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text At 9 th Grade of MTs Muhammadiyah Padang Panjang. 8, 5538–5542.
- Kemdikdasmen. (2025). Pembelajaran Mendalam Garis Besar. Implementasi Pembelajaran Mendalam Dalam Rangka Mewujudkan Pendidikan Bermutu Untuk Semua. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sL9jFWXnfAs>
- Nelvia Ibrahim, R. A. (2023). Story Face Strategy in Reading Comprehension. 2(6), 1793–1800.
- Norasiah, N., Irawan, S., Amriani, A., & Putri, A. L. (2025). EFL Teachers' Readiness in Using ICT: Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes. Jurnal Edusci, 3(2), 182–202. <https://doi.org/10.62885/edusci.v3i2.961>
- Ramadhianti, A., & Somba, S. (2023). READING COMPREHENSION DIFFICULTIES IN INDONESIAN EFL STUDENTS. 6(1), 1–11.
- Saputra, J. (2020). Enhancing The Reading Comprehension of Students in Narrative Text Using Story Face Strategy. 2(2), 78–88.

- Saputra riyadi. (2020). Improving Students' Reading Comprehension by Using Multi Pass Strategy on Narrative Text at The Tenth Grade of Smk Start Up Dara Jingga. 21(1), 1–9.
- Snow, P. C. (2021). The Science of Language and Reading. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265659020947817>
- Staal, L. A. (2000). The Story Face: of story adaptation mapping that incorporates and discovery learning and. Wiley International Reading Association, 54(1), 26–31.
- Utami, E., & Anggerayni, V. (2020). The Use of Story Face Strategy to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension of Narrative Text at Ma Al-Kariim Bengkulu Tengah (A Classroom Action Research at the Second Grade Students of MA AL-KARIIM . 4(1), 29–44.