

## **Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension**

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### **Abstract**

Learning strategies are crucial for gaining proficiency in a foreign language, particularly for students who want to improve their reading skills. Sometimes, students experienced misunderstandings when digesting a text they had read. Teachers, as facilitators, must be able to choose the right strategies to teach reading in order to enhance students' thinking skills in comprehending English texts. This study aimed to determine the strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading comprehension and how they implemented these strategies. It was designed as a descriptive qualitative study. The participants were two eighth-grade English teachers at MTsN 1 Palembang, selected by using purposive sampling. Data were collected through observations checklist and interviews with the interview sessions recorded and transcribed. The results indicated that teachers employed several strategies in teaching reading comprehension, including Tea Party, Say Something, Fascinating Facts, Reciprocal Teaching, Art of Understanding, and Jigsaw. Both teachers implemented and combined strategies across three stages of teaching reading comprehension: the pre-reading stage using the Tea Party strategy, the while-reading stage with the Say Something, Fascinating Facts, and Reciprocal Teaching strategies, and the post-reading stage using the Art of Understanding and Jigsaw strategies. The strategies used were very effective in teaching reading at the school, as evidenced by student motivation, attention, and the ease of the teaching and learning process for the teachers.

**Keywords:** *Reading Comprehension, Strategies, Teachers, Teaching Strategies.*

### **A. Introduction**

In this era, many people use English as their everyday language and the language for communicating with foreigners. Learning English is very important because English is an international language. Similarly, Bahasa Indonesia is the unifying language of the Indonesian nation, as well as English which is the unifying language between countries in the world. According to Nishanthi (2018), English is one of the most used and dominant languages in the world. It is essential to be able to speak another language, especially English, and it will be great if people prepare and introduce it early on, because English become one of the most

important languages that people have to learn. Therefore, mastering English is very important and useful for everyone in the world.

Reading is essential for acquiring new knowledge. Reading is a very important basic of the student's learning success allowance. Selong (2019) states that reading requires a variety of techniques and abilities because students must infer meaning from the text and ITS context. Therefore, reading is a basic foundation for increasing students' knowledge. Nugroho, et. al, (2019) highlight the basic skill that students require to master if they want to learn a foreign language is reading. Therefore, reading is a basic foundation for increasing students' knowledge. Reading in English can make a lot of positive encouragement. such as adding information, practicing pronunciations, increasing vocabulary knowledge and by reading students can also improve spelling in English writing.

Reading interest in Indonesia is still very low. Based on data from UNESCO through Press Release No. 307/HM/KOMINFO/08/2021, stated that the literacy rate in Indonesia was 0.001%. This means out of 1,000 Indonesians, only 1 person has an interest in reading. Students who are hesitant or uninterested in reading English in class are frequently those who find it difficult to pronounce the language because it sounds strange or who are worried about pronouncing it incorrectly because they lack confidence in their English. Tindale (2003) stated that poor strategies for reading are the reason for reading problem. which can be fixed by emphasizing strategies like identifying important ideas and inferring meaning from context. Therefore, based on the information gathered, it is the teacher's responsibility to inspire an interest of reading in the students.

Teacher's strategies in teaching reading is very important in the effectiveness of the reading class, the teacher must be a good director for students and providing instructions that can bring students a sense of interest in reading. Brown (2004) stated that the effective teachers who focus on teaching reading comprehension are aware that there are several ways to teach reading. Therefore, teacher who are successful in teaching reading are teacher who can modify existing strategies into more interesting strategies for students.

The preliminary study was conducted by doing an informal interview with one of the English teachers at MTsN 1 Palembang in May 2024. In teaching reading, the teacher uses several strategies to apply to students in class at each meeting. Each strategy has its own advantages and disadvantages when applied to students. Several strategies have a good impact on student achievement, students' reading comprehension develops better. From the results of the interviews conducted, the teachers' strategy in teaching is something that is useful for many

people to know. Therefore, in this study the researcher wants to know what strategies teachers use and how teachers implement these strategies.

In addition, there are several studies related to this research. The first research was conducted by Aziz (2020) the results showed the English teachers most commonly use these six strategies when teaching reading comprehension in the classroom. They are monitoring understanding, recognizing story structures, summarizing, utilizing graphic and semantic organizers, say something and question-answer relationships. Gaol conducted a second study utilizing interviews and observation in 2019. Two reading strategies used by teachers are examined by the researcher: the reciprocal teaching strategy and the QAR methodology. In addition to helping pupils focus and comprehend the texts, the instructor used these tactics to promote the teaching of reading in the classroom. The other previous study was conducted by Giawa (2022), and the results show that QARs are an excellent teaching tool for English reading comprehension.

Based on the background, the researcher felt interested in conducting research on what the teachers' strategies were in teaching reading at the Eighth Grade of MTsN 1 Palembang. In this study, the researcher assumed that reading comprehension became a problem if the teacher did not use appropriate teaching strategies. Therefore, in this research, the researcher was interested in conducting qualitative descriptive research, was entitled "Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension at the Eighth Grade of MTsN 1 Palembang" to find out the strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading at MTsN 1 Palembang.

## **B. Research Method**

### **Research Design**

In this research, the researcher applied a qualitative descriptive research method. According to Creswell (2015), qualitative methods involved the use of text and visual data, specific data analysis techniques, and a variety of designs to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. Descriptive methods, as stated by Nassaji (2015), aimed to describe a phenomenon and its traits. By combining these approaches, the researcher was able to describe and analyze teachers' strategies in teaching reading comprehension comprehensively. This research focused on describing teachers' strategies in teaching reading comprehension and how the teachers implemented the strategies in teaching reading comprehension. By using

descriptive qualitative research, the researcher was able to gain insights into the teachers' strategies for teaching reading at the eighth grade of MTsN 1 Palembang.

### **Participant of the Study**

The purpose of this research was to find out the strategies used by teachers in teaching English reading to eighth-grade students. This research was conducted with eighth-grade students at MTsN 1 Palembang. Two English teachers were selected as samples using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a technique that deliberately involves participants who possess certain characteristics that can provide in-depth insight (Creswell, 2012). The criteria required were that the two teachers had at least five years of teaching experience and held certification.

### **Data Collection**

The observation and interview were used for collecting the data for this study. Sugiyono (2015) stated that observation is the method used in qualitative research to gather data. A group of information seekers known as observers directly observes the subjects of a given research project without interfering with it. The researcher used an observation checklist adapted from Sarjan (2017) to collect data while observing the teaching and learning process in English lessons in the eighth grade. The objectives of the observation in this study were as follows: (1) to use all documentation as a source of data; (2) to determine the location of the documentation; and (3) to confirm the validity and accuracy of the observation. As a result, the researcher obtained extensive information about the teaching strategies used by teachers to teach reading comprehension to students. The findings of this study were used to describe the natural data that occurred in the classrooms.

The interview was a crucial tool for gathering comprehensive data and information, and it was utilized as such. According to Fraenkel et al. (2011), conducting interviews is a highly valuable method for researchers to confirm or challenge the authenticity of images obtained from prior data. The researcher employed the interview instrument to question the instructor about the methods used to teach reading comprehension to eighth-grade students. Semi-structured interviews were used in this study to gather data. The information gathered was then transcribed into English. The purpose of conducting the interviews was to gather precise data about events that occurred in the field. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with a voice recorder, and the oral interview sessions lasted several minutes. To ensure clarity, the researcher asked for clarification if any answers were not clear. The researcher used the

interview data to examine the methods employed by teachers in teaching reading skills to eighth graders.

### **Technique for analyzing the data**

In this study, the researcher conducted thematic analysis to analyze the data. According to Braun and Clarke (2017), thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and interpreting patterns of meaning ('themes') within qualitative data. Creswell (2012) mentioned six steps for analyzing the data using thematic analysis.

Firstly, the researcher transcribed the data from the audio recorder into text data and understood the data by reading the transcripts carefully and repeatedly, and even listened to the recorded interview again that was made during the data collection process in order to avoid mistakes in understanding the data. Secondly, the researcher codes were created using the data. Thirdly, the researcher grouped the relevant data extracts into themes after shortening the codes into several themes. Fourth, the researcher improved the developing coding system by dividing the topics into sub-themes and leaving out topics that were less relevant. Fifth, the researcher created a thematic map (visual representations of themes and subthemes and links between them). Finally, the researcher represented the results in a qualitative narrative, then went over a summary of the results and how the research questions were answered.

### **Establishment of Trustworthiness**

To increase the accuracy of this research data, the researcher used triangulation of data collection techniques. In qualitative research, triangulation was used as a method of testing validity by combining information from various sources. According to Sugiyono (2018), triangulation was defined as a technique that combined various data collection techniques and available data sources. The researchers conducted triangulation with a specific purpose.

## **C. Findings and discussion**

### **Findings**

#### **The Strategies Used by the Teacher in Teaching Reading Comprehension**

After analyzing the data from observation and interviews, the researcher found that there were several strategies used by the teacher in teaching reading comprehension to the eighth-grade students at MTsN 1 Palembang. There are some themes and codes were listed from the analysis of qualitative data shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Themes and Codes of the Strategies Used by the Teaches in Teaching Reading at Eighth Grade of MTsN 1 Palembang**

Themes	Codes
1. Tea Party Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The teachers provided pre-reading activities for the class.</li> <li>b. The teachers provided a text and encouraged students to think about and discuss it before reading.</li> <li>c. The teachers gave 10-15 minutes for students to discuss the text.</li> <li>d. The teachers encouraged students to make predictions about the text.</li> </ul>
2. Say Something Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The teachers created small groups at the beginning of the lesson.</li> <li>b. The teachers asked the students to read the text in turn.</li> <li>c. The teachers interrupted the students' reading to reflect on what they had read.</li> <li>d. The teachers asked the students to say something about what they had read.</li> <li>e. The teachers assigned the students to make predictions about what they would read.</li> </ul>
3. Fascinating Facts Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The teacher provided small sticky notes.</li> <li>b. The teacher asked the students to share what they had written on the notes.</li> <li>c. The teacher asked the students to work together in groups.</li> </ul>
4. Reciprocal teaching Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The teachers created small groups.</li> <li>b. The teachers assigned roles to each student to summarize, clarify, predict, and ask questions.</li> <li>c. The teachers asked the students to carry out tasks based on the roles they were given.</li> </ul>
5. Two Word Strategy	-
6. Alphaboxes Strategy	-
7. Art of Understanding Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The teachers assigned the students to demonstrate that they had understood the message from the text.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>b. The teachers gave the students a short time to complete the image and describe it.</li><li>c. The teachers instructed the students to find the main ideas and objectives of the text.</li></ul>
8. Jigsaw Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The teachers gave each student in the group their respective part of a sentence.</li><li>b. The teachers asked the students to read the section they had received.</li><li>c. The teachers encouraged the students to discuss their findings with other groups.</li><li>d. The teacher asked the students to take notes.</li><li>e. The teachers assigned the students to choose a travel expert responsible for listening to the results of other groups.</li><li>f. The teachers asked the students to submit summary assignments based on the results of the discussion.</li></ul>

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The themes and codes gained from the qualitative data as listed in the table were described to identify the strategies used by the English teachers in teaching reading at the eighth grade of MTsN 1 Palembang. The researcher found that the English teachers used several strategies while teaching reading at the eighth grade of MTsN 1 Palembang, namely Tea Party, Say Something, Fascinating Facts, Reciprocal Teaching, Art of Understanding and Jigsaw.

## **Discussion**

### **Tea party**

The strategy used was the Tea Party, and it was the first strategy employed before reading the text. Teachers used this strategy when teaching reading. The Tea Party was a very systematic approach; when teachers used this strategy, they involved students directly in early reading activities. This strategy helped students understand the text from the beginning because the teacher encouraged them to think, discuss, and make predictions. To ensure that students had understood, the teacher asked clear and relevant questions. Students then worked together in their groups to discuss sentences and ideas and shared their predictions. This strategy encourages students to think critically, engage in discussions, and make predictions about the

text before reading it, promoting deeper textual understanding. It has been widely adopted in English reading instruction to activate prior knowledge and build connections to the text (Smith & Taylor, 2021). From the results of observations and interviews conducted, it was evident that pre-reading learning activities using the Tea Party strategy were implemented in the classroom. The researcher analyzed the data from these observations and interviews and found that the Tea Party strategy, which emphasized encouraging students to think, discuss, and make predictions about the reading text, was used by teachers at the beginning of reading lessons in class VIII at MTsN 1 Palembang. The results showed that at the beginning of reading lessons, the teacher focused more on the text and questions that were going to be discussed.

### **Say something**

The Say Something strategy was applied during the reading process by interrupting students' reading and asking them to explain what they had read. The main focus of the Say Something strategy was to reflect on what they had read. Say Something required students to stop frequently while reading. Students were placed into cooperative groups, taking turns reading the text aloud, to meet the objectives of the Say Something strategy, such as improving reading comprehension, vocabulary, identifying main ideas, and making predictions or asking questions. If students are unable to provide a meaningful response, such as making predictions or identifying the main idea, they are encouraged to reread the text to enhance their comprehension. Recent studies have further emphasized the efficacy of this strategy in fostering active engagement and deeper learning (Fisher et al., 2022). From the results of observations and interviews conducted, it was evident that learning activities using the Say Something strategy were implemented in the classroom. During learning time, the teacher occasionally stopped students and asked them to reflect on their understanding, as well as to make predictions or ask questions. Students who could not articulate their understanding of the text they had read were asked to reread their portion. This strategy was very effective for creating an active classroom atmosphere, as each student was expected to participate in their group. It required students to be more engaged during learning, with the teacher ensuring the process remained successful by interrupting and guiding students' reading. These results were consistent with the observations and interviews with class VIII teachers at MTsN 1 Palembang.

### **Fascinating facts**

Fascinating Facts was a strategy implemented during the reading process by providing students with a number of small notes. The teacher distributed sticky notes and asked students to write down what they understood. After that, the teacher asked students to work together in

groups, research by Permana et al. (2019) highlighted the positive impact of the Note-Taking Pairs strategy on students' critical thinking abilities in reading comprehension. From the results of observations and interviews conducted, it was evident that during learning time, the teacher provided sticky notes to students and asked them to share their notes and understanding. The teacher then asked students to work together in groups. The strategy was very useful for students to interact with peers using academic vocabulary found in the text. Observations and interviews with teacher E revealed that reading activities using Fascinating Facts were effectively implemented in class VIII at MTsN 1 Palembang.

### **Reciprocal Teaching**

The strategy used was reciprocal teaching, which involved students collaborating to enhance their comprehension of a text. This approach is often linked to four key cognitive strategies: summarizing, clarifying, predicting, and questioning (Palincsar & Brown, 2020). This method was very effective in helping students understand the material being read. After students had read their assigned part of the text, they were asked to stop and work on the assigned tasks. The process continued until each student in the group had completed their respective tasks or until the students had finished reading the text. From the results of observations and interviews conducted, it was evident that the teacher implemented learning activities using the reciprocal teaching strategy in the classroom. The researcher analyzed the data from these observations and interviews and found that the teacher formed small groups, then assigned each student roles to summarize, clarify, predict, and ask questions related to the text being discussed. Afterward, the teacher asked students to complete assignments based on their roles. The reciprocal teaching strategy emphasized students' understanding of the reading text. These findings were consistent with the results of observations and interviews with class VIII teachers at MTsN 1 Palembang.

### **Art of understanding**

The strategy used was Art of Understanding, which was applied after reading a text. Teachers employed this strategy when teaching reading comprehension to students. After reading a text, students were asked to immediately draw their interpretation of its meaning. Klein and Stuart (2013) discuss how integrating art into reading instruction can enhance students' understanding and engagement. They emphasize that such integration allows students to utilize both text and visual information, leading to more effective reading strategies. From the results of observations and interviews, it was evident that the teacher implemented post-reading activities using the Art of Understanding strategy in class. The teacher assigned

students to demonstrate their understanding of the text by drawing and describing their interpretation. Following this, the teacher instructed students to identify the main idea and purpose of the text. The researcher analyzed the data from these observations and interviews and found that the Art of Understanding strategy, which emphasized students' comprehension of reading texts, was effectively used by teachers in reading lessons in class VIII at MTsN 1 Palembang.

### **Jigsaw**

The strategy used was Jigsaw, which was the final strategy applied after reading the text. To implement Jigsaw, a text had to be divided into different, smaller parts. Students were then grouped and assigned to work on one of these parts. They were asked to read their assigned section and take brief notes. After having sufficient time to read and take notes, students were encouraged to discuss their interpretation of the text with their group members (Gonçalves & Oliveira, 2023). From the results of observations and interviews, it was evident that the teacher used the Jigsaw strategy in post-reading activities in class. The teacher assigned each student a section of sentences, asked them to read their section, and then encouraged them to discuss their findings with other groups. Afterward, students were asked to record the results of the discussion, including the main idea, key ideas, and other important details from the text. Finally, students were required to submit a summary assignment based on the discussion results. The researcher analyzed the data from observations and interviews and found that the Jigsaw strategy was effectively used by teachers in reading lessons for class VIII at MTsN 1 Palembang.

### **D. Conclusions**

Based on the findings and discussions about the teaching strategies used by the teachers at the Eighth Grade of MTsN 1 Palembang, as well as their implementation, the researcher provided several conclusions from this research.

There were five teaching reading strategies that teachers used in the eighth grade of MTsN 1 Palembang, namely Tea Party, Say Something, Fascinating Facts, Reciprocal Teaching, Art of Understanding, and the Jigsaw strategy. Teachers used these strategies to deepen students' reading comprehension of the texts, requiring students to focus on the reading material. Teachers also guided students in understanding the meaning of sentences by helping them identify unfamiliar vocabulary.

The implementation of these strategies proved successful in improving students' English reading skills. Starting with the teachers conducting pre-reading activities using the Tea Party strategy, they then moved to while-reading activities with the Say Something, Fascinating Facts, and Reciprocal Teaching strategies, and finally to post-reading activities using the Art of Understanding and Jigsaw strategies. As a result, this helped students comprehend the text more easily. Students became more active participants in learning and enriched their English vocabulary.

### **Suggestion**

Based on the conclusions outlined above, the researcher would like to offer some suggestions. It is hoped that these suggestions will be useful, particularly for English teachers, students, and other researchers. The suggestions are as follows:

1. For the English teacher

Each student has different characteristics, abilities, and interests. Therefore, as teachers, especially English teachers, we must understand which strategies can help and support students in learning to read. This research can enhance the quality of English language instruction in reading. The use of appropriate reading strategies by teachers can improve and support students' ability to read effectively.

2. For the Students

As students are still in the process of learning, they should read more in English to improve their reading comprehension. By practicing frequently, students will find it easier to understand what the author is conveying in the text. With the strategies employed by teachers, students are expected to gain a better understanding of reading comprehension and enjoy their lessons.

3. For the Other Researchers

The researcher hopes that the results of this study can help other researchers who wish to conduct research on strategies for teaching reading comprehension. They can apply similar methods at different school levels, further strengthen their research themes through more in-depth examinations, and present new, more modern phenomena.

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