



# Using Narrative to Improve Students' English Reading Skill in School Literacy Movement

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## Abstract

The objective of this research is to design a set of instructional reading material for school literacy movement. The reading material developed is expected to support school literacy movement and to improve students' English reading skill. The reading material designed is based on narrative. Narrative is a sequence of series of events that is fictional and nonfictional that aims to entertain the readers at once to educate the readers about attitudes and behavior through moral values that are contained in the story (Abbot, 2008). The developed material consists of three chapters. These chapters are designed based on the three kinds of narrative text, there are romance, legend, and adventure. Each chapter consists of four parts, namely preparing for the journey, starting the journey, exploring the journey, and finishing the journey. Preparing for the journey part is aimed to activate students' prior knowledge about the learning topic and to help the students understand the learning material before the students do school literacy movement activity. Starting the journey and exploring the journey parts are designed to develop students' reading skills and to improve students' English. Finishing the journey part is aimed to help the students draw the conclusion and master the learning material better. The writers used the research and development method in conducting the study and designing the reading material. Then, the instruments of this research were open-ended questionnaires, close-ended questionnaires, and interview. The English reading material had been evaluated and deemed as very good after the revision. The reading material and the reading tasks are appropriate for school literacy movement activity. By mean of this research, it is expected that the instructional

reading material will be beneficial to support school literacy movement.

**Keywords:** Narrative; reading skill; school literacy movement

## **Introduction**

English is a language that has an important role in all parts of life. According to Lauder (2008), English is an international language that is very influential in the field of politics, diplomacy, science, technology, education, international trade and industry, communication, media, and commerce. In this case, the Indonesian government established English as one of the most important foreign languages that are taught from elementary level until the senior high level in Indonesia. Even, according to the Ministry of Education and Culture No.36 of 2018, English is a compulsory subject at a senior high level. Through this rule, the Indonesian government expects those Indonesian students will master all major English skills, there are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, the fact a lot of Indonesian students still lack English, especially in reading skill. One of the factors that cause this condition is Indonesian students still have low awareness of reading habits. It was proved by PISA which stands for Program for International Students Assessment (Syamsu, 2017). PISA is the triennial survey that was launched by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development or OECD and was followed by 79 countries in the world. PISA is a going program to assess the acquisition of knowledge and skills of science, reading, and mathematics. According to PISA, Indonesia always got a low reading ability rank in the world. Indonesia's reading rank in 1997 was 40 from 41 countries in the world. In 2000 Indonesia's reading rank was 64 from 64 countries, and in 2015 Indonesia's reading rank was 65 from 72 countries. Until 2018, Indonesia still got a low rank, there was 72 from 77 countries in the world (OECD, 2019). It means that Indonesia was a country that has a low acquisition of knowledge and skill reading predicate in the world.

Under those circumstances, The Minister of Education in Indonesia has a policy which is every senior high school must do school literacy movement or GLS activity 15 minutes before the regular class is begun (Kemendikbud, 2016a). School literacy movement is one of the Indonesian government efforts to increase reading habits and to build literacy culture in the Indonesian education field by habituating the students in reading books (Kemendikbud, 2016b). To support this program, it is very important if every school in Indonesia can provide the appropriate instructional reading materials. However, in Indonesia, there are a lot of schools that do not have enough books to do school literacy movement. Based on the statement of Hamid Muhammad, Ph. D., *Direktur Jenderal Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah* (Kemendikbud, 2016a), the fund of the purchasing books for school literacy

movement is an important thing in the book procurement. Hence, the directorate must use the funds from BOS or *Bantuan Operasional Sekolah* and DAK or *Dana Alokasi Khusus* to support school literacy movement by purchasing books for some schools in Indonesia. Hence, this effort is not effective because there are still a lot of schools that need the government's help. Having considered that some schools in Indonesia still need a lot of books to do school literacy movement, the writers designed the English instructional reading material for supporting school literacy movement and improving students' English reading skill.

The writers used narrative as the main learning topic. According to Abbott (2008), Narrative is a sequence of series of events that is fictional and nonfictional that aims to entertain the readers at once to educate the readers about attitudes and behavior through moral values that are contained in the story. In this case, narrative deals with problematic events, different representatives, and actual experiences. Narrative has some types, there are fable, legend, horror, romance, myth, fairytale, folktale, mystery, adventure, and historical narrative. Then, in designing the English instructional reading material, the writers combined the theories from Kemp's instructional design model (1997) and ADDIE instructional design model (as cited in McGriff, 2009) because there was a correlation between Kemp and ADDIE instructional design models in designing a set of instructional material which could support each other. According to Kemp (1997), instructional design is a method of the process of designing a set of learning materials that will help learners achieve the goal of learning. While ADDIE stated that instructional design is an approach that is systematic for both learning activities and materials (McGriff, 2019). In this case, the writers did not implement all of the steps of Kemp and ADDIE instructional design models. The writers implemented five steps, there were conducting need analysis, specifying the goals, topics, and general purposes, establishing the learning objectives, determining the teaching or learning activity and instructional resources, and doing evaluation.

Furthermore, the writers implemented the theories of guided discovery model from Eggen and Kauchak (2012) and Yuliani and Saragih (2015) in designing the parts of the book. According to Eggen and Kauchak (2012), the guided discovery model is the learning model that will help students in acquiring a deep understanding of learning topics and promote students' motivation and involvement in learning effectively. Guided discovery model has four phases, there are

introduction phase, open-ended phase, convergent phase, closure and application phase. While according to Yuliani and Saragih (2015), the guided discovery model is a model of learning that can make the students have a deep understanding of new learning material and help the students to achieve the goals of learning effectively. In the guided discovery model, the teacher is a facilitator who will set the learning activity. The guided discovery model enables the students to develop their critical thinking and intellectual by solving the problems and building their understanding of learning material. The writers also used K-W-L strategy theory from Ogle (as cited in Zwiers, 2010). K-W-L strategy stands from what I know, what I want to know, and what I have learned. K-W-L strategy is the strategy that is used by teachers to activate and build students' prior knowledge. Using the K-W-L strategy, students will be able to evaluate and reflect their learning experiences better. K-W-L strategy is suitable for both students and teachers because in this strategy students and teachers will work together. K-W-L strategy requires students to study independently. Indeed, in the K-W-L strategy, the teacher just leads the students by giving an oral introduction of each part of the learning material. Then, students will understand and process the whole part of learning material by answering some questions and drawing the conclusion of their ideas on a personal worksheet (Zwiers, 2010).

In choosing reading material and creating the reading tasks, the writers used theory of reading from Wallace (1992). According to Wallace (1992), reading is an important activity for learners which has three purposes. The three purposes of reading are reading for pleasure, survival, and learning. Besides, the writers also used theory of the principles of learning to read from Shepherd (as cited in Simanjuntak, 1988). According to Shepherd as cited in Simanjuntak (1988), there are some principles of learning to read. First, students should have purposes and motivations for learning. Purposes and motivations of learning are the needs for skill development. Second, learning must give meaning to students. The students can get the meaning of learning by understanding the goal of the competence standard of reading materials. Third, learning needs a background of knowledge and experience. It happens because new knowledge must be connected with previous knowledge and information. The background knowledge provides the basic understanding that will build new knowledge. In other words, students can improve their skills of critical reading while students have the background knowledge of learning materials that they are reading. The background knowledge will be a base of evaluation and comparison. Fourth, students must be active in the learning process. Learning to read is an active process. Students should practice a lot in learning to read. Fifth, learning to read requires practices. Students can practice their critical reading skills by doing some reading tasks. Sixth, favorable attitudes of a learning process can

build effective learning. Students must build favorable attitudes toward the reading process, then learn to read will be more effective and pleasant.

### **Method**

In this research, the writers implemented R&D (Research and Development) method. According to Borg and Gall (1983), Education Research and Development (R&D) is a process of developing and validating educational products. In this case, the writers made the instructional learning material. The writers conducted the research in a particular Senior High School in Yogyakarta. The writers chose the eleventh-grade students as the research participants because the eleventh-grade students had background knowledge of narrative which was the topic of the designed reading material. According to Curriculum 2013, grade XI students had learned about narrative when they were being students in the first year. The number of participants in this research were 35 eleventh-grade students of Senior High School and an English teacher of Senior High School. Besides, there were also two experts as the evaluators of the instructional learning material.

Furthermore, the instruments of this research were questionnaires and interview. According to Best (1977), the interview is an instrument of gathering the data in which the interviewee will answer the questions orally. While the questionnaire is an instrument of collecting the data which involves groups of individuals. Questionnaire consist of a printed list of statement or questions which should be answered by the respondents. In this research, the questionnaire forms were close-ended questionnaire, open-ended questionnaire, and likert scale for both students and experts. In this research, the writers distributed the close-ended questionnaires to the eleventh-grade students of a Senior High School for the need analysis. The purposes of distributing the close-ended questionnaires were to identify and analyze the problems that were faced by students in conducting school literacy movement and learning English especially in reading, and the English instructional reading materials that were needed by the students. The writers also distributed open-ended questionnaires and close-ended questionnaires to the two experts for evaluation process. The aim of distributing the open-ended questionnaires to two experts was to get the suggestions, comments, or critics on the instructional materials as an evaluation. Meanwhile, the purpose of distributing the close-ended questionnaires to two experts was to get the experts' opinions on

the instructional learning materials as an evaluation and validation. Meanwhile the writers interviewed an English teacher of a Senior High School in order to gain the information about school literacy movement, the English learning material for Eleventh-grade students based on the curriculum 2013, and the problems that were faced by students in learning English, especially in reading.

In conducting this research, the writers did several procedures. First, the writers asked for the permission letter from the university and the related school. Second, the writers distributed close-ended questionnaires to the students and interviewed an English teacher for the need analysis. Third, the writers analyzed the data of need analysis in order to create the instructional learning material. Fourth, the writers created the instructional learning material. Fifth, the writers sent the instructional learning material to the experts to be checked. Then, the writers revised instructional learning material based on the experts' feedbacks.

## **Results**

### **The Developed Materials**

#### **Chapter I: Romance**

The theme of chapter I is "Romance". Romance is one kind of narrative text which tells about the relationship that is mysterious, adventurous, spiritual, loveliness, and has strong values of love. This theme was chosen based on the result of the students' preferences that were taken from the questionnaires. In this chapter, the students will learn the romance story which is one kind of narrative text, text structures of narrative text, the characters, and setting of a narrative text. In this chapter, the students will explain the characteristics of a character in the narrative text correctly and give some opinions or comments toward characters and themes of a narrative text.

#### **Chapter II: Legend**

The theme of chapter II is legend. Legend is one of the kinds of narrative text that focus on the historical stories about unverified human actions or events which are believed by the story teller and the audiences. Usually legend stories tell about wars, victories, migrations, local tales of ghosts, fairies, buried treasure, and deeds of past chiefs, heroes, and kings. This theme was chosen based on the teacher's suggestion. In this chapter, the students will learn the legend story which is one kind of narrative text and text structures of narrative text deeply. The students will identify the conflicts of a narrative text. The students also will find the moral values and explain the conflict or problem of a narrative text. Create a new conflict of a narrative story.

### **Chapter III: Adventure**

The theme of chapter III is adventure. Adventure story is a story that has danger, excitement, and risk plot. Usually, the adventure story is dominated by actions. This theme was chosen based on the result of the students' preferences and the teacher's suggestion. In this chapter, the students will learn the adventure story which is one kind of narrative text and language features of narrative text. In this case, the students will identify past tense and time connectives. The students also will try to use past tense and time connectives properly. The students will write some sentences using the past tense and time connectives correctly.

#### **The Respondents' Comments and Suggestions toward Instructional reading materials**

##### **The Stories**

Based on the evaluation from the experts, the narrative stories were already interesting and suitable for school literacy movement. Then, the experts agreed that through reading the narrative stories, the students can develop their English reading skill. The experts revealed that reading skill was very important to support students' learning process in both inside and outside school. Through good reading skill, students could improve their vocabulary mastery and grammar which can be formed automatically because of reading habits. Besides, students would be able to have good speaking skills if their reading skills were good. Besides, the experts also agreed that the narrative stories can attract the students' interest in reading. Consequently, the school literacy movement program will be more effective.

##### **The Reading Tasks**

Based on the evaluation from the experts, the reading tasks were well formulated and can help the students to build their understanding better in reading. The experts agreed that the reading tasks were appropriate with the narrative stories that were chosen as the learning material.

##### **The Presentation of Instructional reading materials**

The experts agreed that the presentation of instructional reading material was already good and interesting. Besides, the experts stated that the layout has an attractive appearance and design which can attract students to read the instructional reading material for school literacy movement.

## **Discussion**

Based on the analysis of the results of questionnaires and interview that were conducted, the writers compiled the instructional reading material. The writers created a students' English reading textbook for school literacy movement activity. After reading and understanding the comments and the suggestions from the experts, the writers started to create the final design of the instructional reading material. For the activities in the students' English reading textbook, the writers gave more creative and interesting activities such as identify the characters and setting in the narrative story, writing sentences that represent the characters in the narrative story, and giving comments or opinions toward the characters of the narrative story.

The themes of each chapter that was used in each chapter of the English reading textbook were compiled based on the students' interest and the teacher's suggestion. The goal of the English reading textbook was understanding the meaning of the written narrative text in the form of legend, romance, and adventure in the context of accessing knowledge and understanding Indonesia and western cultures. While the general purposes of this English reading textbook were responding to the meaning, language features, and text structures in the narrative text that are used in written text accurately and fluently on the context of accessing knowledge and understanding Indonesia and western cultures in form of legend, romance, and adventure.

Furthermore, every chapter of the English reading textbook consisted of four parts. These parts were created based on the guided discovery model phases by Eggen and Kauchak (2012). The four phases of guided discovery model are introduction phase, open-ended phase, convergent phase, closure and application phase. In this case, the writers did not use the real names of those four phases of the guided discovery model but the writers changed the names of those phases become preparing for the journey, starting the journey, exploring the journey, and finishing the journey.

Preparing for the journey is the introduction phase of the guided discovery model. These learning activities aim to activate students' prior knowledge about the learning topic and to help the students understand the learning material before they do school literacy movement activity. Preparing for the journey activities are done outside school literacy movement activity. The students will do this activity in their home. So, the students should learn the learning materials and answer some questions related to the learning topic in their home before they go to school.

Starting the journey is the open-ended phase of the guided discovery model. The learning activities of starting the journey part aim to develop students' reading skills and to improve students' English. Starting the journey activities are done



around twenty minutes during school literacy movement activity (one meeting of school literacy movement activity). The students do these activities individually. Starting the journey part consists of a narrative story and some questions related to the learning topic. In this case, the students should read a narrative story related to the learning topic for 10 minutes. After that, the students should answer some questions related to the narrative story that they have read before around 10 minutes. Then, students and the teacher can discuss the narrative story and the answers together in the regular English class.

Exploring the journey is the convergent phase of the guided discovery model. The purposes of learning activities in this part are to develop students' reading skill and to improve students' English. Exploring the journey activities are done around twenty minutes during school literacy movement activity (one meeting of school literacy movement activity). The students do these activities individually. Exploring the journey part consists of a narrative story and some questions related to the learning topic. The questions of exploring the journey part are more difficult and critical than Starting the Journey part. In this case, the students should read a narrative story related to the learning topic for 10 minutes. After that, the students should answer some questions related to the narrative story that they have read before around 10 minutes. Then, students and the teacher can discuss the narrative story and the answers together in the regular English class.

Finishing the journey is the closure and application phase of the guided discovery model. The purposes of learning activities in this part are to help the students draw the conclusion and master the learning material better. The students do these activities individually. Finishing the journey part consists of a narrative story related to the learning topic, some questions related to the narrative story, and a column to write a summary of the learning material that the students have learned. The questions on exploring the journey part are more critical and need students' creativity. In this case, the students should read a narrative story related to the learning topic for 10 minutes. After that, the students should answer some questions related to the narrative story that they have read before around 10 minutes. Those activities are done during school literacy movement activity (one meeting of school literacy movement activity). Then, students and the teacher can discuss the narrative story and the answers together in the regular English class. However, students should write a summary of the learning material at home.

## **Conclusion**

Narrative is suitable as the learning material to attract students' interest in reading and to improve students' English reading skill. The three chapters of the English reading textbook were developed from the kinds of narrative, there were romance, legend, and adventure. Every chapter of the English textbook consisted of four parts that were created based on the goal which was understanding the meaning of the written narrative text in the form of legend, romance, and adventure in the context of accessing knowledge and understanding Indonesia and western cultures. The reviews of the English reading materials from experts showed that the English reading material was acceptable to use for Senior High School students in doing school literacy movement activity. For the future research, it is recommended to utilize narrative as source of learning. It is also recommended for English teacher to provide English reading books or English instructional reading material for school literacy movement because, in Indonesia, there are a lot of schools that do not have enough English books or English instructional reading material for school literacy movement activity.

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